November 16, 2018

The Honorable Rob Portman
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Support for the Second Chance Reauthorization Act of 2018

Dear Senators Portman and Leahy:

On behalf of the American Bar Association (ABA), with over 400,000 members worldwide, I write to thank you for introducing the Second Chance Reauthorization Act of 2018 and to express our support for the bill. We hope that the introduction of this bill will lead to a swift passage this Congress.

The Second Chance Act provides support for cost-effective, evidence-based programs in 49 states and the District of Columbia. These programs increase public safety and reduce recidivism by helping men, women, and juveniles transition from correctional confinement to productive lives in their communities by providing grants for employment training, education, housing, and other necessary support.

According to the Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics, the total number of Americans in prisons and jails has declined over nine straight years, in part due to “smart on crime” policies like the Second Chance Act. Even so, over 1.5 million persons were being held in prisons at the end of 2016, the majority of whom will be released in the future. Support for these proven programs must be continued.

Again, we thank you for introducing the Second Chance Reauthorization Act of 2018. If the ABA may provide any assistance in the passage of this bill, please contact Kenneth Goldsmith in our Governmental Affairs Office at (202) 662-1789.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Carlson