September 12, 2018

Re: Support for H.R. 2899 - Second Chance Reauthorization Act

Dear Chairman Goodlatte and Ranking Member Nadler:

On behalf of the American Bar Association (ABA), with over 400,000 members worldwide, I write in advance of tomorrow’s scheduled committee markup session to reaffirm our support of H.R. 2899, the Second Chance Reauthorization Act, as introduced. We urge you and the members of the committee to approve the bill and report it to the full House of Representatives for swift passage this Congress.

As detailed in our letter of October 18, 2017, 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. Continued support for these proven programs must be continued.

Again, we urge your support for H.R. 2899. If the ABA may provide any assistance in your deliberations, please contact Holly Cook in our Governmental Affairs Office at (202) 662-1860.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Carlson

cc: Members of the House Judiciary Committee