



H.R. 1809, the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2017

H.R. 1809 reauthorizes the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) of 1974, which was last reauthorized by Congress in 2002. The bill is centered on three core principles: education, safety, and prevention. It is a bipartisan bill similar to legislation introduced last Congress by Senators Chuck Grassley (R-IA) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI).

H.R. 1809 includes:

- Provisions to ensure the continuity of a young person's education while incarcerated;
- Clear guidance and directions for states and localities on how to reduce racial and ethnic disparities among incarcerated youth;
- Better reporting of important juvenile justice metrics to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; and
- Provisions to ensure accountability in the use of federal resources devoted to juvenile justice initiatives.

H.R. 1809 improves protections for children detained in the juvenile and adult systems through amending the four core mandates, which include:

- Improving the 'Jail Removal' and 'Sight and Sound Separation' core protections by simplifying the definition of contact, and phasing in sight and sound separation for youth under the age of 18 being held pretrial in adult criminal court;
- Strengthening the 'Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders' (DSO) core protection, which prohibits the secure detention of status offenders, by phasing out the valid court order (VCO exception); and
- Strengthening the 'Disproportionate Minority Contact' (DMC) core protection by requiring states to report data on decision points in the juvenile justice system and identifying key points where disparities occur.

The bill also repurposes the Title V Local Delinquency Prevention Grants to allow communities to plan and implement evidence-based prevention and intervention programs specifically designed to reduce juvenile delinquency and gang involvement, based on the model proposed in Rep. Scott's Youth P.R.O.M.I.S.E. Act of 2015 (H.R. 2197 in the 114th Congress).