



**Steve Bullock**  
Governor of Montana  
Chair

**Larry Hogan**  
Governor of Maryland  
Vice Chair

**Scott D. Pattison**  
Executive Director and CEO

December 18, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
US Capitol Building, Room S-230  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
U.S. Capitol Building, Room 232  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
U.S. Capitol Building, Room S-224  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
U.S. Capitol Building, Room 204  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan and Minority Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of the National Governors Association (NGA) we write to you in support of action on S.3747, the *First Step Act*.

Governors have long called on Congress and the federal government to implement smarter, fairer and more cost-effective policies, just as governors have done in their respective states to improve public safety outcomes. *The First Step Act* emphasizes many of the key [policy principles](#) adopted by the National Governors Association. In fact, this once-in-a-generation effort to modernize our federal criminal justice system wisely builds on reform initiatives at the state level from the last decade.

Earlier this year, the NGA Homeland Security and Public Safety Committee sent you [a letter](#) requesting that Congress include key policy principles in any final bill. Additionally, last month, NGA put out a [statement](#) in support of action on the legislation, noting the inclusion of many NGA principles and policies in the bill. Policies like these will help create an opportunity for greater state-federal partnership in the critical arena of public safety.

We commend negotiators for also including the reauthorization of the *Second Chance Act* in the final bill. The *Second Chance Act* provides vital Department of Justice grant funding to states for drug treatment, vocational training and other reentry or recidivism-reduction programs.

We are pleased to see the Senate take up this legislation and encourage the House to do the same.

Sincerely,



Governor Steve Bullock  
Chair  
National Governors Association



Governor Phil Bryant  
Chair  
NGA Homeland Security and Public Safety  
Committee

Cc:

Senate Judiciary Chairman, the Honorable Chuck Grassley  
Senate Judiciary Ranking Member, the Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
House Judiciary Chairman, the Honorable Bob Goodlatte  
House Judiciary Ranking Member, the Honorable Jerrold Nadler