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February 15, 2022

Chairman Dick Durbin  
Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
711 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin,

As a nationwide advocacy group, United Voices for Sex Offense Reform, we are writing today to express our extreme disappointment in the fact that those individuals who are incarcerated under a sexual offense are ineligible to be considered for any opportunities afforded by the First Step Act (FSA).

While we are very pleased that the FSA is finally in the beginning stages of being implemented, and that people are beginning to be released, it is very disheartening for those of us with loved ones who are still incarcerated on a sexual based offense.

While NONE of us condone the choices our loved ones made, we also firmly believe that they should not be perpetually punished for their crimes. They are serving their time and should be afforded the same opportunities that others in prison have. Many people convicted of these types of crimes are first time offenders without a criminal history. They deserve a second chance to have a productive life after serving their penalty. We understand that there are other crime categories which are also excluded from the FSA, however, sexual based crimes appear to be one of the few, if not the only offense where these offenders are punished repeatedly in many ways. The Sex Offender Registry is just one example of this problem as it creates daily and often life-long restrictions which do not serve the purpose for which the registry was intended.

An issue most concerning to us with this exclusion from the FSA is the fact that all sexual based offenses are NOT created equal, yet they are some of the most severely punished. Our judicial system, for various political reasons, refuses to look at these cases individually and instead, chooses to lump all offenders under the same umbrella. This is unacceptable. There are many low-level, non-violent offenders in this broad category, and they should be given the same chances to be considered for the FSA as offenders convicted of other crimes.

We are asking that you take another look at those who are incarcerated under a sexual offense charge. Please consider adding them to the list of those who are eligible for the First Step Act. Our country leads the way in mass incarceration - implementing the FSA for these offenses will not only help alleviate the problem of overcrowding in our prisons but will promote fair treatment of all incarcerated individuals, regardless of offense.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss this further and look forward to hearing your thoughts on this matter. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Board of Directors, United Voices for Sex Offense Reform ([contact@uv4sor.org](mailto:contact@uv4sor.org))