



Crisis Stabilization and Community Reentry Act of 2020

Representative David Trone (D-MD)

Background: A significant number of justice-impacted individuals have mental health needs that are often overlooked or inadequately addressed. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1 in 7 individuals incarcerated in state and federal prisons and 1 in 4 individuals in jails self-reported experiences of serious psychological distress.

Many justice-involved individuals with mental illness respond to medical and psychological treatment including medication and consistent, continued care. But incarceration introduces challenges to this care. Many individuals lose medical benefits when incarcerated, and 80 percent have reported they do not have access to benefits when they are released.

On top of this, a majority of state corrections departments reported providing less than a two-week supply of medication to incarcerated individuals upon release. We know, however, that appropriate medications are an essential component to treating serious mental illness and can even improve health outcomes and reduce criminal recidivism in patients with schizophrenia.

As we seek to improve our criminal justice system, it is imperative that we consider and support those with mental health needs who are reentering our communities each day.

About the Crisis Stabilization and Community Reentry Act: The bill would amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to allow for law enforcement to partner with mental health providers to 1) provide mental health treatment and crisis stabilization for incarcerated individuals, and 2) promote warm handoffs to community-based care upon reentry. More specifically, the bill authorizes:

- Collaborative programs involving justice and mental health agencies and community-based behavioral health providers that would help ensure access to appropriate medication and long-term health care for returning citizens
- Community-level crisis response programs that involve all stakeholders in building and implementation
- Targeted training programs for law enforcement related to medication adherence and continuity of care
- Strengthening local agency and provider capacity to reduce suicides during incarceration
- A national technical assistance center to support stakeholders in developing training and treatment approaches for justice-impacted individuals with mental illness, as well as promote best practices for administration of programs

Original Co-Sponsors:

Representatives *John Rutherford (R-FL)*, *Madeleine Dean (D-PA)*, *Guy Reschenthaler (R-PA)*, *Mary Gay Scanlon (D-PA)*, *Kelly Armstrong (R-ND)*;
Senators *John Cornyn (R-TX)* and *Richard Blumenthal (D-CT)*