NAACP Legal Defense Fund Offers Support for Key Provisions of Proposed Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act of 2017

Today, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) sent a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee offering support for several provisions of the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act of 2017 (SRCA), while also urging the passage of comprehensive reform that will improve every stage of the criminal justice system. The SRCA is a bipartisan effort to address inequities in federal sentencing and promote rehabilitation and re-entry for incarcerated individuals. The Senate Judiciary Committee will consider the bill tomorrow.

LDF’s letter offers support for key provisions of the bill that would: allow people who were incarcerated prior to the enactment of the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010 to benefit from the Act’s reduction in the crack and cocaine sentencing disparity; reduce certain mandatory minimum sentences, including mandatory life sentences for a third drug felony; and ban solitary confinement for young people held in federal corrections facilities, among other elements of the SRCA. At the same time, LDF’s letter also suggests crucial ways to improve the bill and the criminal justice system generally, such as eliminating the remaining 18:1 crack and powder cocaine sentencing disparity; ending mandatory minimum sentences entirely; restoring voting rights for individuals who were formerly incarcerated; and reinstating federal PELL grant eligibility for people in federal and state prisons, among other reforms.

Read LDF’s letter on the SRCA here.

###

*Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation’s first civil and human rights law organization and has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF's Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF.*