



# DUE PROCESS

INSTITUTE

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## **Due Process Institute Looks Forward to Senate Vote on the First Step Act**

The Due Process Institute is heartened by the news that the US Senate will take up the First Step Act and consider it on the floor as early as this week. The First Step Act is supported by the Due Process Institute and dozens of organizations from both sides of aisle because it recalibrates the federal criminal justice system to focus on rehabilitation and redemption, rather than punishment for its own sake. The bill would also change some particularly long sentences.

“The First Step Act will bring relief to so many individuals languishing in the federal prison system today,” said Due Process Institute President Shana O’Toole. “For years, the system has been handing out unnecessarily long sentences with no regard for the impact on incarcerated individuals and their families. It has also failed to recognize the needs of individuals returning to their communities. We urge Senators in both parties to quickly pass this historic bill to send it to the House for a final vote so that it can be sent to the President’s desk.”

“The changes this bill will bring to the federal criminal justice system cannot be overstated,” said Director of Rule of Law Initiatives Joe Luppino-Esposito. “Political ‘solutions’ for public safety have only focused on sentence length, and not on rehabilitation. The First Step Act institutes the critical risk and needs assessments and the resulting development of programing for incarcerated individuals, which will help to ease the transition from a life behind bars. In the long term, this is an approach that increases public safety far more than what we are doing today.”

“Leader Mitch McConnell and Senator John Cornyn should be commended for making this a priority on a tight Senate calendar,” said Luppino-Esposito.

*The Due Process Institute is a bipartisan nonprofit that works to honor, preserve, and restore principles of fairness in the criminal legal system.*