



DUE PROCESS

INSTITUTE

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Due Process Institute Urges Congress to Pass the Emergency GRACE Act

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The Due Process Institute endorses the Emergency GRACE Act, one provision of which will ensure everyone incarcerated in a federal prison can apply directly to a judge for compassionate release and loosens some requirements of doing so amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Compassionate release is an important mechanism for reducing our prison populations during the COVID-19 crisis,” said Shana O’Toole, President and Founder of the Due Process Institute. “By passing the Emergency GRACE Act, Congress can ensure a court will promptly hear that motions for compassionate release from the most vulnerable individuals held in our federal prisons.”

The legislation would also extend the reforms included in the First Step Act (that we worked to pass) to federal prisoners who have been serving sentences rendered before November of 1987.

“The First Step Act focused on improving the compassionate release process, and the ability for an individual or his representative to file directly to a court is particularly important in a time like this, when the Bureau of Prisons is bogged down in requests,” said Joe Luppino-Esposito, Director of Rule of Law Initiatives at the Due Process Institute. “Being able to apply the same standards to all BOP prisoners, regardless of their sentencing date, is a full expression of the intent in the First Step Act.”

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