



## U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney  
Southern District of Alabama

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September 30, 2011

Dear Friends,

As you may be aware, the United States currently has the highest prison population in the world in that 2.3 million people are incarcerated in our nation. According to the Center for Public Policy, 97% of the offenders in prison today will leave prison and return to the communities from which they left upon their incarceration. Sadly, 30% of adult offenders released from state prisons are re-arrested within the first six months of their release, and within three years of release 67% or two out of three of the adult offenders are re-arrested.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, revocations are the fastest growing category of prison admissions - parole violators account for 35% of all new prison admissions today as compared to only 17% in 1980.<sup>2</sup>

Although these statistics are both sobering and saddening, there is something that can be done to change these alarming trends. That's where you come in. I need your help in establishing Project H.O.P.E. (Helping Offenders Pursue Excellence), an initiative designed to help ex-offenders successfully re-enter society without returning to prison and otherwise assisting them in becoming contributing and productive members of our community. This initiative seeks to set up a permanent statewide re-entry network that would bring together service providers and stakeholders to discuss re-entry issues on a regular basis. The idea is to have subcommittees in each federal district in the state that will handle making sure that the re-entry need that they are assigned to is met in the community. In most instances individuals will be assigned to a re-entry need topic in an area that they are already working professionally. Then, each district will have an executive committee that the subcommittees will advise of their progress on a monthly basis. District executive committee members will then meet with other district executive committee members from the two other districts to form a Statewide Executive Committee that will meet on a semi-annual or quarterly basis to discuss re-entry efforts that are of statewide importance and to discuss general re-entry strategy. The aim of this plan is to meet the re-entry need of both State and Federal ex-offenders.

I have scheduled a Project H.O.P.E. organizational meeting for 3 pm, Wednesday, October 12, 2011, in my office in the sixth floor conference room. Please see the additional attachment for a listing of the proposed subcommittees. Lastly, I have attached a "Save the Date" flyer for your convenience.

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<sup>1</sup>Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2002.

<sup>2</sup>Travis & Lawrence, 2002.

United in purpose and cause, we can help countless countrymen return to a life of good citizenship by helping them break the cycle of crime, poverty and self-degradation in their lives. I look forward to seeing you on October 12th.

Sincerely,

*Kenyen R. Brown*

Kenyen R. Brown  
United States Attorney  
Southern District of Alabama

## **RE-ENTRY SUBCOMMITTEES**

### **1. Drug Treatment & Health Services**

- drug counseling
- mental counseling
- exposure to traumatic experiences counseling

### **2. Community Education & Linkages**

- Prepare landlords and residents to welcome former inmates by providing objective information about the men & women leaving incarceration
- getting information on re-entry in prisons prior to release
- keep current list of community service providers
- find ways to facilitate family support
- restoration of voting rights
- identify target locations/key areas for re-entry specific initiatives
- raise public awareness re re-entry through media & events.

### **3. Education**

- GED/educational/vocational training
- liaison to Bishop State & other schools
- soft skill training to enter workplace
- financial literacy of ex-offenders

### **4. Housing & Transportation**

- ensure access to quality housing opportunities and provide information about possible housing alternatives to prisoners prior to release.
- driver's license
- homeless issues
- meals
- temporary residence w/family & friends
- transitional housing

### **5. Employment**

- vocational training/GED
- liaison to Alabama Career Center
- liaison to Mobile Works
- federal bonding program
- employer recruitment
- ex-offender job fair
- ex-offender employment workshop
- workplace clothing