

# Americans for Prosperity-Wisconsin: Thanks Speaker Ryan and Rep. Sensenbrenner for leadership on criminal justice reform

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## **AFP-WI State Director Eric Bott issued the following statement:**

“This reform is a crucial first step toward breaking the cycle of incarceration, bringing families together, and creating safer communities in Wisconsin and across the country. The FIRST STEP Act is also proof that we can make meaningful progress on key issues, break down barriers to opportunity, and help people improve their lives when lawmakers have the courage to put policy ahead of politics.

“Wisconsin should be a place where people who want second chances get them. Speaker Ryan has been a leader on several bold reforms, but his parting gifts to Wisconsinites this holiday season – increased safety and redemption – is notably welcome. We thank Speaker Ryan for his service as a representative for Wisconsin and we thank Rep. Sensenbrenner for his work on criminal justice reform.”

## **BACKGROUND:**

- The FIRST STEP Act requires the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) to place inmates no more than 500 driving miles from home, helping spouses, parents, and children more practically visit their family members behind bars and making it easier for inmates to reintegrate into society upon release.
- Fixes a mistake in federal law to ensure that all well-behaved prisoners not serving life sentences can accrue 54 days of “good time credit” off their sentences per year, instead of the 47 per year that 178,000 inmates currently

receive.

- Directs the BOP to let low-risk low-needs inmates serve home confinement for up to 6 months of the end of their sentences.
- Retroactively applies the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010, which reduced the crack-cocaine sentencing disparity from 100:1 to 18:1, to current inmates sentenced before 2010.
- Expands eligibility for the federal “safety valve” (18 U.S.C. § 3553(f)) to keep more low-level drug offenders from incurring mandatory minimums meant for high-level drug traffickers, creating more proportional punishments.

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