

# U.S. Rep. Moore: Fights to re-enfranchise incarcerated Americans

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**Washington D.C.** – Yesterday, **Congresswoman Gwen Moore (D-WI)** introduced H.R. 7359, the Voter Information and Access Act (VIAA). VIAA would provide detained and incarcerated persons, who are eligible to vote, information on voting eligibility, registration, and access to absentee ballots and polling places. Upon the bill's introduction, **Congresswoman Moore** released the following statement:

“The freedom to vote and the power to have our voices heard is a fundamental tenet of our democracy. However, in jails and prisons across the country, nearly half a million individuals awaiting trial or on the precipice of release are being systematically disenfranchised and denied access to essential information about their voting rights,” said **Congresswoman Moore**. “The Voter Information and Access Act would help right this wrong by supplying detained and incarcerated persons with the information they need to access the ballot box. At a time when the right to vote for so many Americans is under attack, it's essential we pass this legislation and move forward in our fight to reduce recidivism and increase societal reintegration.”

“The Campaign for Youth Justice supports the VIA Act, sponsored by Congresswoman Moore. We know that too many children, particularly those charged as adults, become eligible voters while pending trial. In addition, thousands return home from a period of incarceration with no history of voting. Too often, these youth come from communities that are disenfranchised and grossly over-represented in prison. The VIAA would enable them to engage in the democratic process and take a critical step to renegeing positively in civic life,” said **Marcy Mistrett, CEO, Campaign for Youth Justice**.

“The VIAA will provide critical voting rights information and assistance for millions of

eligible voters who currently are hindered in participating in the electoral process. Hundreds of thousands of these potential voters need assistance while jailed awaiting trial without access to voter registration or voting access. Tragically, an estimated 17 million, eligible Returning Citizens, are caught in a limbo of fear, confusion, miseducation or lack of information about their voting rights and do not participate as voters. The VIAA answers a vital need in fulfilling the quest for an inclusive and robust Democracy,” said **Barbara R. Arnwine, President, Transformative Justice Coalition.**