

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Robert C. "Bobby" Scott (D-VA-03) delivered this week's Congressional Black Caucus Message to America. To listen to the message, please [click here](#) [c](#)

Transcript of Congressman Scott's message:

"Hello. This is Congressman Bobby Scott, of Virginia's Third Congressional District, speaking to you today on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus. Five months ago, I discussed with you the Youth PROMISE Act, a bill I introduced to address youth crime by investing in research-based prevention and early intervention programs for at-risk youth. I would now like to update you on the status of the bill and our plan to enact the Youth PROMISE Act into law.

"Our first step in passing the Youth PROMISE Act was to stop competing bad legislation from becoming law during this Congress. We defeated the other youth gang bill, which included many of the same old slogans and rhymes that may sound good but do nothing to reduce crime and may actually increase crime. As a result of years of slogans, the United States now incarcerates a higher portion of its population than any country on Earth by far.

It's so bad that the Children's Defense Fund calls the prison situation a 'Cradle to Prison Pipeline.'

“The Youth PROMISE Act would use a fraction of the money spent on jails and prisons for investments in proven, cost-effective programs to help our young people before serious crimes are committed.

“The City of Richmond, Virginia recently spent \$2.5 million on such programs, and the result was a 40% drop in the crime rate. Compare that to the \$90 million the city and state now spend on jails and prisons for Richmond and you can see how cost-effective the Youth PROMISE Act could be on a nationwide scale. With this kind of evidence, why would anyone reject cost-effective investments in children and choose instead to wait until they commit a crime and then spend more money on jails and prisons.

“As we approach the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress and the administration of President-elect Barack Obama, it is my belief that if you encourage your elected officials to support sensible crime policy, we will be able to pass the Youth PROMISE Act and make a serious investment in the lives and futures of our nation’s youth.

Our children are counting on your help.

“This is Congressman Bobby Scott on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus.”

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