

(Washington D.C.) - Today Congressman Robert C. “Bobby” Scott (D-VA), Chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security, introduced his Youth Prison Reduction through Opportunities, Mentoring, Intervention, Support, and Education (“Youth PROMISE”) Act.

The Youth PROMISE Act will provide resources to communities to engage in comprehensive prevention and intervention strategies to decrease juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity. Under the Youth PROMISE Act, communities facing the greatest youth gang and crime challenges will each form a local council called a Promise Coordinating Council (“PCC”).

The PCC will include representatives from law enforcement, court services, schools, social service organizations, health and mental health providers and community-based organizations, including faith-based organizations.

The PCC will then develop a comprehensive plan for implementing evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies.

These strategies will target young people who are at-risk of becoming involved, or who are already involved in, gangs or the criminal justice system to redirect them toward productive and law-abiding alternatives.

“The Youth PROMISE Act could be a critical component to reducing crime across the United States,” said Congressman Scott. “For years, we have been codifying slogans and soundbites that do nothing to reduce crime. As a result of these policies, the average incarceration rate in the United States is far above the incarceration rates in other countries and incarceration costs have risen to \$65 billion per year.”

This legislation implements the recommendations of researchers, practitioners, analysts, and law enforcement officials from across the political spectrum concerning evidence- and research-based strategies to reduce gang violence and youth crime.”

The bill is supported by a variety of juvenile justice and civil rights organizations, including Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, the National Juvenile Defender Center, the Justice Policy Institute, the NAACP Washington DC Office, the ACLU, the Coalition for Juvenile Justice, and the Campaign for Youth Justice.

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