

## **Crime Survivors' and Advocates' Support for the Proposed Presidential Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Prosecution**

September 10, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

cc: Vice President Kamala Harris

Attorney General Merrick B. Garland  
U.S. Department of Justice

Ambassador Susan Rice  
Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy

Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco  
U.S. Department of Justice

Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta  
U.S. Department of Justice

Dear President Biden:

We, the undersigned, include crime survivors, victim assistance professionals, and allied providers who are committed to helping crime victims and to promoting equitable justice for all. We strongly support the creation of a **Presidential Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Prosecution**, as proposed in a [recent white paper](#) by Fair and Just Prosecution (FJP), and believe this initiative will strengthen the capacity of our criminal and juvenile justice systems to better identify and meet the needs of crime survivors.

We know that other voices have weighed in supporting this proposal – including [over 100 law enforcement and criminal justice leaders](#), [R Street](#), [former DOJ leaders](#), [editorial writers](#) and others. We are writing to add our voice to this growing chorus.

The Task Force's clear commitment to include survivors of crime and those who serve them on the Task Force and within this important initiative – as that body is conceptualized in the FJP white paper -- is very heartening to us. Too often, survivors are an afterthought or not included in important policy and programmatic justice reform discussions which ultimately have a significant impact on their lives. The power of the personal stories of survivors and their lived experiences will be a huge benefit to the Task Force. And there are many promising and proven practices specific to prosecutors and crime survivors – including restorative justice, measures to improve meaningful interactions with survivors, and strategies to improve the implementation of victims' rights – that we look forward to sharing with the Task Force.

Crime victims and survivors deserve insight and a voice in efforts to improve the administration of justice. Their personal safety and autonomy must be goals centered by any effective commission on justice reform – goals which we have confidence the proposed Task Force would address.

## President Joseph R. Biden

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The “17 pillars” that comprise the Task Force proposal so well defined in the FJP white paper are all critically important to its success. We are particularly pleased with the specific focus on “better serving crime victims” – a priority that is central to our individual and collective work. And we strongly believe that “addressing racial and ethnic justice” and “envisioning success, metrics and culture change” are also foundational to improve our capacity and collective lenses to meet the needs of increasingly diverse victim/survivor populations.

We are also committed to working closely with the Task Force to address and hopefully mitigate the false dichotomy that exists among crime survivors and persons who cause harm, and their respective systems of support. We know that most people who cause harm also have histories of previous victimization or acute and chronic trauma in their lives that are important factors to address their needs, and to reduce crime and recidivism. We look forward to being an integral part of this conversation.

We appreciate your consideration of our support for the creation of the Presidential Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Prosecution, and stand ready to assist the Task Force in this timely and important endeavor. And we hope that you and your Administration act quickly to move this proposal forward and bring a long overdue focus to reform and improvement of our criminal justice system.

Sincerely,

Lenore Anderson, President & Co-founder  
Alliance for Safety and Justice

Claire Ponder Selib, Executive Director  
National Organization for Victim Assistance

Alexander Busansky, President  
Impact Justice

Danielle Sered, Executive Director  
Common Justice

Amy Fettig, Executive Director  
The Sentencing Project

Anne Seymour, Director  
Fairness, Dignity & Respect for Crime Survivors  
Project

William Kellibrew, Founder  
The William Kellibrew Foundation

Bridgette Stumpf, Executive Director  
Network for Victim Recovery of DC

Dean Kilpatrick, PhD, Director  
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Katie Monroe, Executive Director  
Healing Justice

Renee Williams, Executive Director  
National Center for Victims of Crime