

## Murphy Applauds Progress in State Juvenile Justice Policies

Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5), a leader on juvenile justice policy, today applauded a new report by the Campaign for Youth Justice that outlines how more than 20 states have changed or are considering changes to their policies about youth in the adult criminal justice system.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5), a leader on juvenile justice policy, today applauded a new report by the Campaign for Youth Justice that outlines how more than 20 states have changed or are considering changes to their policies about youth in the adult criminal justice system. Connecticut has been a leader in making real changes to improve outcomes for at-risk youth and keep the public safe. When Murphy was in the state legislature, he wrote legislation to create the Office of Child Protection and played a key role in pushing the successful "Raise the Age" Campaign, which is currently being implemented and increases the age of adult court jurisdiction in Connecticut from 16 to 18.

"It's good to see that other states are catching up to Connecticut's reforms of our juvenile justice system. We certainly have more work to do, but we are seeing a trend towards rehabilitation instead of locking kids up without any thought to the consequences," said Murphy.

The report outlines how in the past five years, fifteen states, including Connecticut, have updated their juvenile justice laws. At least another nine states are in the process of enacting reform measures. The report identifies four trends, including efforts to remove youth from adult facilities, to raise the age of juvenile court jurisdiction, to change laws to keep more youth in juvenile court, and to revise sentencing laws. The Campaign for Youth Justice's report can be viewed here. Connecticut's work is highlighted throughout the report.

"We appreciate the recognition of the work Connecticut has done to come into line with best practices for addressing juvenile crime in terms of the outcomes for public safety and the youth themselves. We are slowly seeing other states adopt reasonable reforms like Connecticut's 'Raise the Age' law, which we will continue to phase in through next year. We know that changing the way we treat juvenile offenders makes a difference in their lives and in our society, and so I hope this trend towards reform continues across the nation.," said Abby Anderson, Executive Director of the Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance.

Murphy has continued his work on juvenile justice at the federal level by introducing legislation to replicate some of Connecticut's reforms across the nation, such as improving conditions of confinement in juvenile justice system facilities. He has put forward a second bill to direct additional funding to states through an incentive grant program to help them move toward research-driven best practices in the juvenile justice field.

And last year, Murphy passed an amendment to the health care bill in the House to allow kids coming out of juvenile detention centers who had health insurance via Medicaid prior to their incarceration to regain their Medicaid coverage when they are released. Medicaid is a federal program to help low income individuals and families gain access to health care services. The amendment was not part of the final bill that became law, so Murphy is pursuing the idea as its own bill this year.

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