



National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact

Theresa Spinner

Director, Media and Public Relations

Direct: 202-783-5551

tspinner@naccho.org

Statement by NACCHO Chief Executive Officer Lori Tremmel Freeman on Passage of the FIRST STEP Act

Washington, DC, December 20, 2018 — The National Association of County and City Health Officials commends the passage of the bipartisan FIRST STEP Act, an important effort to begin to reform our nation’s criminal justice system.

“Public health professionals know mass incarceration has a devastating effect on the communities they serve. It is both a mental and a physical public health crisis that severely affects those imprisoned, their families, and whole communities, especially African American and Latino communities. The results of prolonged incarceration often include the denial of basic resources and benefits, limits on participation in society, onset of mental disorders in prisons and jails, lack of services and reintegration support upon release, exposure to disease, and severe forms of discrimination.

“The FIRST STEP Act’s sentencing reform approach is an important effort to begin addressing inequality and health equity issues related to our criminal justice system. We hope that the FIRST STEP Act will live up to its name and be truly the first step towards comprehensive criminal justice reform to more fully address the public health effects of mass incarceration.”

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About NACCHO

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's nearly 3,000 local health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities. For more information about NACCHO, please visit www.naccho.org.