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October 3, 2006

The Honorable John F. Kerry  
304 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kerry:

I am writing to you to ask for your support for legislation that addresses the ongoing issues around transitioning individuals exiting prison back into the community. Each year, over 600,000 individuals exit prison in need of stable housing. Legislation that provides state and local governments with the tools to effectively address their needs is critical.

For those who have gone through the process of reentry, housing is often the key missing piece to avoid the peril of recidivism. Statistics and the experience of many service providers have shown that individuals who leave prison without stable housing in place are many times more likely to commit a new crime that leads to a return to prison than people who have access to stable housing upon release. It is imperative that Congress pass legislation to provide support to the families of people returning from prison upon whom 80% of those exiting the prison system rely on for their post release housing. Housing must also be included in the planning, research, and policy agendas on prisoner reentry.

An important first step would be the passage and enactment of legislation such as HR 1704 / S 1934, the Second Chance Act. This bill would move us in the direction of more fully addressing the needs of the hundreds of thousands of persons returning to the community from correctional institutions and, for a lack of access to stable housing are at risk to enter a destructive cycle of recidivism.

Although Congress did not pass this important legislation before adjourning this year, I urge you in the strongest possible way to continue to work on this issue and to cosponsor the Second Chance Act when it is reintroduced in the 110th Congress.

If you have any questions about the issue of prisoner reentry in particular or homelessness in general, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Joe Carleo  
Executive Director



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**AIDS HOUSING CORPORATION**