



Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia

Office of Legislative, Intergovernmental and Public Affairs

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Washington, DC – Mayor Anthony Williams, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, and Reverend Donald Issac, along with leading members of the Faith Community of Washington D.C, will join with The Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) at a press conference tomorrow, January 8, 2002. DC Council Chairman Linda W. Cropp and Councilmember Kathleen Patterson who chairs the Council Judiciary Committee have also been invited to speak. Together they will encourage congregations throughout the city to join in a Day of Re-entry Worship this weekend, commemorating the partnership among the city, the faith community, and CSOSA to improve public safety by supporting offenders released from prison in establishing productive, law-abiding lives. The press conference will be held at 1:30 p.m. at the Correctional Treatment Facility located at 1901 E Street, SE.

The Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency and its partners in the District of Columbia's faith community will join together to launch a ministry of support and assistance to offenders returning to the local community from prison. CSOSA is the new federal agency responsible for supervising all individuals on parole, probation, supervised release, and pretrial release in the District of Columbia.

It has been reported that about 2,500 offenders will return to District of Columbia neighborhoods from prison next year. Most will have substance abuse histories. Many lack basic job and literacy skills. In many cases, they have lost touch with family and friends during incarceration, so their natural support systems are weakened. Research has consistently shown that positive relationships are critical if offenders are to avoid recidivism. Without those relationships and support services, such as drug treatment, career development and housing, offenders are more likely to relapse into patterns of drug use and criminal behavior. Re-Entry is about helping these individuals become productive, law-abiding members of our community. A Day of Re-entry Worship falls during National Mentoring Month. To emphasize the value of mentoring to returning offenders, mentor recruitment will be the first cooperative initiative of CSOSA and its partners in the faith community.

Jasper Ormond, Interim Director of CSOSA stated, "I am gratified by the reaction of the District's faith community in joining CSOSA in our efforts to reduce crime by providing mentoring and support services to these men and women returning from prison to their homes and neighborhoods. Through these coordinated methods we can reintegrate ex-offenders and make our streets safer for everyone."

"This partnership between CSOSA and the faith community will help reduce crime in the District by providing returning offenders with the support networks they need," said Mayor Anthony A. Williams. "I encourage District residents to join with the faith community in their efforts to help ex-offenders lead productive lives."