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### STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN DANNY K. DAVIS AT THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL WORKFORCE, POSTAL SERVICE AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

#### HEARING ON

#### “Doing Time: Are DC Prisoners Being Adequately Prepared for Reentry with Equal Access to BOP Services?”

October 16, 2007

Good afternoon, welcome to today’s hearing to examine the rehabilitative services at Rivers Correctional Institution (RCI), a privately-run Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) facility housing D.C. inmates and foreign-born residents. There are two million Americans in prisons in the United States. Each year, more than 650,000 ex-offenders released from state and federal prisons will return to civilian life. These men and women deserve a second chance to break the grip of a drug habit, a chance to support a family, to pay taxes, and to be self-sufficient. Many of these ex-offenders return to their communities unprepared and without the support they need to sustain their new lives.

This is why I have sponsored H.R. 1593, the “Second Chance Act”; it is a bipartisan bill that addresses reentry reform with a comprehensive approach to help eliminate barriers and increase access to transitional services for ex-offenders. A third of all correction departments provide zero services to released ex-offenders, and most do not offer a transitional program, thereby, placing a heavy burden on families and communities. Without structure and support to help ensure a lasting transition, we are unwittingly creating a revolving door for former inmates. These individuals pay a price, as do their families, and society.

Ex-offenders face many barriers that impede their return to society, which include: serious physical and mental health problems, homelessness, and lack of education or minimal qualifications to hold a job. As a result, two out of three ex-offenders will be rearrested for new crimes within the first three years after their release. This hearing will help shed light on the importance of transitional services for ex-offenders not only in the District of Columbia, but across the country. Currently, 7,000 District inmates under federal jurisdiction are spread across 75 institutions and 33 states. Since the passage of the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997 Congress has not conducted any hearings into BOP's management of DC prisoners.

My colleague, Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton has been to Rivers Correctional Institution, in Winton, North Carolina, and the Federal Prison Institution in Cumberland, Maryland. She spoke to inmates and prison officials at both institutions. I commend her for her efforts to learn more about the educational and transitional services offered to DC inmates at BOP facilities.

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from today's witnesses.