Event Recording: Pretrial Justice, Sentencing and Corrections—Finding Common Ground in State Capitals

On May 15, the leaders of the Council on Criminal Justice Centering Justice initiative – Khalil Cumberbatch and Marc Levin – led a discussion exploring bipartisan cooperation on pretrial justice, sentencing, and corrections with three experts from the field: Insha Rahman, Vice President for Advocacy and Partnerships at the Vera Institute of Justice; FAMM President Kevin Ring; and Kate Trammell, Vice President of Advocacy at Prison Fellowship. The panelists discussed trends in 2023 legislative sessions as well as their perspective on the potential for finding common ground on key policy changes in the coming year.

Ring noted that despite a "tough climate" for sentencing reform fueled by a recent rise in violent crime, there had been 73 second look bills introduced in 28 states and 33 compassionate release bills introduced in 21 states in 2023.

Trammell said that while "corrections agencies are really struggling" to fill staff vacancies, her organization "sees lots of reasons for hope" going forward, noting that "stories of personal redemption and renewal" remain a powerful advocacy tool.

Rahman said that while there had been significant "backlash against bail reform," polls show public support remains strong for the notion that "safety, and not wealth, should determine the front end of the criminal justice system." Underscoring the importance of bipartisanship in advancing reform, she said it's clear "the way to move forward on pretrial policy is by linking arms across the aisle."

Listen to the recorded event

About the Centering Justice Initiative

- The Centering Justice initiative is a collaborative project engaging a diverse range of the nation's top thinkers and doers in an ongoing, ideologically vibrant conversation about criminal justice policy.

Additional Resources:

- To join the Centering Justice email list, please click here.