



April 2, 2024

Chairwoman Abrams  
House Criminal Justice Committee  
77 South High Street, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: House Bill 196

Chairwoman Abrams and Members of the House Criminal Justice Committee:

I write to you today to extend the Justice Action Network's support of House Bill 196, legislation that reduces the periods of community control for lower-level felonies and misdemeanors and mandates the evidence-based use of graduated sanctions as a response to technical violations of community control (e.g., missing a check-in with a probation officer, *not* committing a new crime).

House Bill 196 aligns Ohio's system with national best practices on community sentencing and will significantly reduce the number of individuals who will be sent to prison for minor infractions as a result of a sentence revocation. Data shows that if a person is to violate their community sentence, they will likely do so in the first 24-36 months. Continuing a community control sentence beyond that period for those convicted of low-level felonies and misdemeanors who show they can abide by the rules is not an effective use of taxpayer dollars.

By requiring a graduated sanction response for minor infractions, this will equip supervision officers with better tools to respond to minor violations and rule breaking and will help those on community control understand that there is a swift and certain punishment to follow infractions. Importantly, the use of graduated sanctions means a person will not have their sentence revoked and be sent to prison but will give them a chance to correct the behavior immediately and maintain family and community connections.

This bill will further create a stronger structure frameworks that allow for individualized approaches to sentencing that are based on rehabilitative needs. States that have adopted similar frameworks have seen revocations and recidivism rates reduced, public safety enhanced, and taxpayer savings that can be reinvested into measures that positively impact public safety and rehabilitation.

This is a great, public safety focused bill and we urge members of the committee for their support. We appreciate the sponsors, Representatives Seitz and Williams, for bringing this commonsense change forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lauren Krisai". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lauren Krisai  
Deputy Director  
The Justice Action Network