



# SHORTER COLLEGE

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*"the nation's only private two-year historically black college"*

YOU FIT HERE

August 18, 2016

The Honorable John Boozman  
U.S. Senator  
141 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rick Crawford  
U.S. Representative  
1711 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cotton  
U.S. Senator  
124 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Steve Womack  
U.S. Representative  
1119 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Boozman and Cotton and Representatives Crawford and Womack:

The purpose of this written communication is to request you to support the Shift Back to Society Act (H.R.5644). The students, faculty, and staff of Shorter College located in North Little Rock, Arkansas, and this country's only private 2-year Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), are fully aware of the positive results this bill, introduced by Representative French Hill, can provide for qualified offenders enrolled at HBCUs.

The Shift Back to Society Act would greatly facilitate access to quality education for ex-offenders and soon-to-be ex-offender transition back into society. The bill would provide five-year grants to a maximum of ten HBCUs to offer inmates, on the path for release, a variety of opportunities to earn College Credits including GED courses, College-Career readiness programs, and baccalaureate degrees. Masters and doctoral degrees could also be attainable. Please consider these facts; 1) By 2020, 65 percent of all jobs will require some form of postsecondary training; 2) incarcerated men and women report lower levels of educational attainment than their counterparts in the community; 3) Students who participate in postsecondary education in prison commit fewer crimes and fewer violations of community supervision after they are released, and 4) a recent landmark study covered 30 years of research – found that incarcerated people who participate in prison education programs are 43 percent less likely to recidivate than those who do not. Given these considerations this legislation is a step in the right direction.

The 105 HBCU's have long served traditional and non-traditional students from diverse backgrounds and are well positioned partners for this pilot initiative. Shorter College is, "poised to see in action all of the promise that College education holds for these incarcerated men and woman, their families and their communities." A partnership developed between Shorter College and the Department of Youth Services, commenced in the summer of 2015, allows youth under

the care of the state juvenile justice department system to enroll in classes through Shorter College. Also, through a partnership with the Arkansas State Department of Community Corrections, Shorter College has been able to recruit individuals currently participating in parole or probation program through our Altering Negative Conduct and Habits for Offender Reentry (ANCHOR).

More recently, July 2016, Shorter College was one of three HBCUs among a total of 69 institutions of higher learning selected to participate in the U.S. Department of Education Second Change Pell Grants Experimental Sites Program. We have partnered with the Arkansas Department of Corrections and the Arkansas Department of Community Corrections to offer an Associated of Arts degree in Entrepreneurial Studies to 250 incarcerated prisoners in five sites during this 3 year experiment.

We believe in second chances to succeed. The Shift Back to Society Act is cost effective and factors in a 50 percent match requirement which can be offset by in-kind human and material resources within the limits of our fiscal constraints –a welcome provision.

Appreciation is extended to Representative Hill for the leadership on this issue and many thanks to you in advance as you support this bill.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "O. Jerome Green", with a stylized flourish at the end.

O. Jerome Green, Esquire  
President of Shorter College