**Criminal Justice Protection & Advocacy Bill Talking Points**

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* People with disabilities often encounter discrimination throughout the criminal justice system. Right from the start, people with disabilities have actions or behaviors that are related to their disability misunderstood by untrained law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, and judges leading to arrest and conviction.
* Many P&As are involved in all stages of an individual’s involvement in the criminal justice system. The demand for assistance is high and the P&As collectively work on thousands of individual cases and systemic work in the prison system.
* According to the 2016 Survey of Prison Inmates conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice, nearly 2 in 5 (38%) state and federal prisoners had at least one disability.
* The bill would provide a dedicated source of funding that would allow each P&A to have an absolute priority and dedicated staff focused solely on addressing the needs of people with disabilities in the criminal justice system.
* This is a cost-effective and efficient way to achieve positive outcomes for people in the criminal justice system. Because the P&A system already exists, new funding would be directed towards the hiring of advocates and staff to provide this needed advocacy rather than the establishment of a new administrative structure, computers or rent.