

REPORT [Crime And Justice](#)

The D.C. City Council Failed at Criminal Justice Reform—Congress Must Fix It

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SUMMARY

The District of Columbia’s City Council and the D.C. Criminal Code Reform Commission failed to enact a sensible, safety-based, modern criminal code. They failed because they were, and continue to be, convinced that those charged with crimes and those convicted of crimes in the District are victims of “the system.” Clearly, “the system” is benefitting criminals. Congress has the right and the duty to fix this problem once and for all and should design a criminal justice system that protects District residents, respects victims, provides meaningful opportunities for deserving defendants to get on the right track, and punishes the worst offenders with serious prison time.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1** The problem with D.C.’s effort to rewrite its criminal code runs much deeper than its divorced-from-reality, soft-on-crime proposed sentencing plan.
- 2** The process that produced the revised code was calculated to benefit criminals at the expense of victims and public safety.
- 3** Congress should enact commonsense solutions, such as those that helped drive down crime rates in the 1990s, and adopt meaningful, proven programs that work.



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