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## Schiff, Poe Introduce Legislation Creating Innovative Program to Address Drug Use and Crime

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Adam Schiff

*HOPE Program would reduce recidivism through closely-monitored probations paired with strict consequences for violators.*

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressmen Adam Schiff (D-CA) and Ted Poe (R-TX) introduced legislation that will create a new program to fight drug use and crime. The Honest Opportunity Probation with Enforcement (HOPE) Initiative Act, builds on an initiative started in Hawaii that uses intensified supervision of probationers and implements swift and immediate consequences for violators.

"There are far too many repeat offenders plaguing our streets and clogging up our judicial system," said Schiff. "Innovative approaches like HOPE help reduce drug use and crime by rehabilitating offenders before long costly jail sentences are necessary."

"As a former judge and prosecutor for 30 years, I have a good understanding of the problems plaguing our criminal justice system and communities as a result of repeat offenders," said Rep. Poe. "I regularly used creative sentencing requirements to deter recidivism by minor offenders and it was proven to be highly effective. The HOPE Act gives judges more authority to impose stricter conditions of supervision on law violators and hold them more accountable to the law and the community."

In traditional probation programs violations such as illegal drug use, missing probation appointments, treatment and drug tests are too often ignored. When punishments are finally handed down, they tend to be lengthy and costly jail sentences.

In 2004, Judge Steven Alm of Hawaii launched a pilot program to reduce probation violations by offenders at high risk of recidivism. The original program -- called Hawaii's Opportunity Probation with Enforcement -- used hands-on supervision and set consequences of short jail stays for noncompliance.

The new federal HOPE program, introduced today by Reps. Schiff and Poe, builds on the success of the Hawaii program. The bill will create a new competitive grant program for state and local courts to establish probation programs to reduce drug use, crime, and recidivism by requiring swift, predictable, and graduated sanctions for noncompliance with the conditions of probation.

Preliminary evaluations show that HOPE probationers have significantly improved outcomes compared with probationers assigned to probation-as-usual in terms of drug use, missed probation appointments, new arrests, and probation revocations.

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