

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2506

December 15, 2025

Ms. Alice Johnson
Pardon Czar
White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Ms. Johnson,

The Trump Administration has regularly exercised its pardon authority since taking office earlier this year. Nearly two thousand people have benefited from clemency action, outpacing every administration in the history of the United States. Despite frequent grants of clemency, the people who need it the most have been overlooked and neglected. We write to urge you to prioritize clemency for people who have been disproportionately harmed by systemic injustices in our criminal legal system.

The United States has a higher incarceration rate than every other democratic nation in the world, a direct result of flawed policies and biased enforcement. Black and brown people are disproportionately put behind bars, along with individuals from low-income communities, LGBTQIA+ folks, and those with disabilities. In our bloated federal prison population, over 90% of people are convicted of non-violent offenses and thousands are serving sentences that would be significantly shorter under current laws. Mass incarceration is a crisis, and clemency is an essential tool to begin repairing the harm.

Pardons and commutations have the power to transform people's lives. It should not be limited to wealthy people and political allies. Your own personal story is a powerful testament to the importance of granting clemency to those directly harmed by systemic injustices. As a Black woman who was serving a life sentence for drug-related offenses, you know firsthand that there are people currently incarcerated who deserve clemency but lack access, connections, or a public platform. Your prior partnership with Congress on the *FIX Clemency Act*, which would establish an independent board to review applications, demonstrates your commitment to transforming the clemency process to one rooted in fairness.

Despite the many problems with the federal clemency system, you are best situated to greatly influence how the pardon power is exercised during the Trump Administration. We urge you to help reunite families, address injustices in our legal system, and set our nation on the path toward ending mass incarceration.

Sincerely,



Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress