



**Prepared Remarks of Attorney General John Ashcroft
Department of Justice Offender Re-Entry Conference
Monday, September 20, 2004**

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One of the many success stories of the re-entry initiative is Fort Wayne, Indiana's Allen County Re-entry Court program.

The Allen County re-entry program was one of the first of its kind in the nation, and is now a national model. Following release from prison, re-entry initiative participants are monitored regularly and re-evaluated by the re-entry court. Participants receive job-training and housing assistance, as well as counseling to meet their needs.

The results are impressive. During the initial two years of the Re-entry Court's operation, offenders in the program had a recidivism rate of approximately half that of inmates released with no supervision. Within the first year, almost 50 percent of re-entry candidates were placed in full time jobs. Just as important, Fort Wayne's citizens have seen a reduction in crime, while gaining a savings of almost \$5 million as a result of lower law enforcement, criminal court and parole costs.

To build on the success of the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative, I am pleased to announce today the release of an additional \$6.6 million in grant money, which will be available to affiliates of the initiative. As the Fort Wayne re-entry initiative shows, by investing in the future of the lives of the men and women rejoining society, we are achieving a positive return for our communities.

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