

S 328

Equal Justice Under Law Act of 2017

Congress: 115 (2017–2019, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Crime and Law Enforcement

Introduced: Feb 7, 2017

Current Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. (Feb 7, 2017)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/328>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Booker, Cory A. [D-NJ]

Party: Democratic • **State:** NJ • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors

No cosponsors are listed for this bill.

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Judiciary Committee	Senate	Referred To	Feb 7, 2017

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Crime and Law Enforcement

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
115 HR 968	Related bill	Mar 9, 2017: Referred to the Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice.

Equal Justice Under Law Act of 2017

This bill states that an indigent individual facing criminal prosecution or juvenile delinquency in a state court is entitled to the effective assistance of counsel, as guaranteed by the Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments, at the state's expense.

It authorizes a federal class action lawsuit against a state for its systemic failure to guarantee the right to effective assistance of counsel. The assistance of counsel is ineffective when a class of individuals demonstrates that counsel's performance was not reasonable under prevailing professional norms.

Additionally, the bill amends the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to modify the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program. Specifically, it requires a state or local government to consult with public defenders before distributing JAG funds to community organizations and local governments.

Actions Timeline

- **Feb 7, 2017:** Introduced in Senate
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