

## CONGRATULATING JOYCE ANN BROWN

### CONGRATULATING JOYCE ANN BROWN ON CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF FREEDOM AND FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS OF ILLINOIS  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2009

- Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam speaker, I rise to express my best wishes to celebrate the life and achievements of Joyce Ann Brown. I had the pleasure of having Ms. Brown serve on a reentry panel during the 39th Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Annual Legislative Conference. Ms. Brown was unjustly convicted of a crime she did not commit and served nine years, five months and 24 days in prison before this injustice was realized and the guilty verdict was reversed. Upon release, Joyce started the not for profit organization, Mothers (Fathers) for the Advancement of Social Systems Inc. (MASS Inc.) in Dallas, TX. This organization focuses on assisting released ex-offenders reintegrating into society.

- The reentry of ex-offenders is an issue of very high priority and importance to me and I am personally invested in the success of organizations like MASS, Inc. With the passage of the Second Chance Act in 2008, organizations such as MASS will benefit from additional federal grant funding to strengthen programs that aid ex-offenders in becoming productive contributing members of society.

- Throughout my career, I have fought for the underserved and underrepresented and on my journey have come to admire Joyce Ann Brown for all her work and achievements in the area of social justice. Ms. Brown spent three years writing letters to appeal the atrocious injustice she faced and continued to fight upon release. Therefore, I am delighted to be included in commending Joyce Ann Brown and would like to thank her for her assistance with our work here on the hill. The organization she has created has helped many ex-offenders as well as their families, and has provided the support needed for a healthy society.

Providing support to ex-offenders is paramount to becoming productive citizens, taxpayers, mothers and fathers. Research has shown that successful employment interventions among ex-offenders benefits not only the ex-offender, but also his or her family, social networks, communities and society at large. The benefits reaped by society through the MASS organization and the work of Joyce Ann Brown are vital to the preservation of a healthy society and should rightfully be congratulated and recognized.