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## Booker Statement on Laken Riley Act

JANUARY 20, 2025

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Today, U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ), a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, issued the following statement:

“Make no mistake, Congress must take actions that make our communities safer. But this bill will make us less safe.

“As written, the bill mandates the indefinite detention of any noncitizen of any age for even the most minor of infractions – even if charges are dropped and even if the subject is a child. This will command billions of taxpayer dollars to be used in ways that countless law enforcement officials agree is a waste. Our resources should be better spent, targeted toward threats to public safety, not directed away from them.

“The bill’s provisions open the door to awful abuses. They serve as an invitation for domestic abusers, corrupt employers, and vigilante neighbors to threaten and falsely accuse undocumented people to exploit them or prompt their detention. And while the law is supposed to keep dangerous people from being in the country, it’ll be used against children and Dreamers who are here legally, too, and could start another family separation disaster all over again. I agree with state law enforcement officials who have said the legislation will undermine trust in law enforcement and hinder public safety.

“Furthermore, the legislation’s provisions enabling states to sue the federal government if they disagree with federal immigration policy will cause a massive disruption to the federal government’s ability to regulate our legal immigration system, which has already suffered from Congress’ inability to pass common sense reforms to update our immigration laws.

“I’d hoped Senate Republicans would have supported amendments to improve the bill, including a carve-out for Dreamers, removing the unconstitutional and disruptive provisions granting states the power to sue the federal government and disrupt our legal immigration system, and provisions that would have built in due process and ensured children are not detained. Unfortunately, they didn’t.

“I remain committed to pursuing common sense, bipartisan legislation to modernize our immigration system so that it aligns with our fundamental values and mandate to make our communities safer, but this bill fails to meet those standards and could in fact lead to more crime. That’s why I voted no.”

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