



U.S. Sentencing Commission

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NEWS RELEASE

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UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION ADDS CHRISTINE M. LEONARD AS LEGISLATIVE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIRECTOR

WASHINGTON, D.C. (November 2, 2015) —The United States Sentencing Commission announced the appointment of Christine M. Leonard as Director of Legislative and Public Affairs.

“Leonard is a recognized leader on criminal justice issues and has worked in multiple senior positions within the Executive branch, Senate, House of Representatives, and the public advocacy community,” Judge Patti B. Saris, Chair of the Commission, said. “She is energetic, charismatic and pragmatic. The Commission will benefit from her rare ability to pull people together from across the political spectrum.”

Leonard most recently served as the founding Executive Director of the Coalition for Public Safety, where she helped build bipartisan consensus around criminal justice reform initiatives. Prior to leading the Coalition for Public Safety, Leonard served as the Director of the Vera Institute of Justice’s Washington D.C. office from 2011 to 2015.

Leonard’s prior government work experience includes serving as the Associate Director of Legislative Affairs of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, where she worked from 2009 to 2011, as well as serving as a Senate Judiciary Committee Senior Counsel for the late Senator Edward M. Kennedy from 2005 to 2009. Leonard also served as Legislative Counsel for Congressman William Delahunt from 2003 to 2005 prior to working in the Senate.

Leonard worked as a litigation associate for Holland and Knight LLP in her home state of Massachusetts where she also received a juris doctor from the Boston College Law School and a bachelor’s degree from Boston College.

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The United States Sentencing Commission, an independent agency in the judicial branch of the federal government, was organized in 1985 to develop a national sentencing policy for the federal courts. The resulting sentencing guidelines provide structure for the courts’ sentencing discretion to help ensure that similar offenders who commit similar offenses receive similar sentences.