Session Description: Policing, Pretrial, Sentencing, Supervision, Release and Reentry. Whether you are just starting to work on criminal justice reform or are thinking about the next phase, this session is for you. Hear from the champions leading their state’s efforts, learn from experts who are analyzing data and interact with organizations providing support to states.

Biographies

Van Jones
TV Host, Author, Changemaker
CEO, REFORM Alliance
Van Jones is a U.S. media personality, the founder of multiple social enterprises and a world-class change maker.
MEDIA: A three-time New York Times bestselling author, Jones hosts two shows on CNN: “The Van Jones Show” and “The Redemption Project.” He is the host of CNN’s “Incarceration, Inc.” podcast series. In 2013-2014, Jones was a co-host of “CNN Crossfire,” along with Newt Gingrich. He later hosted a special event series on CNN called “The Messy Truth.” He is the co-founder of Magic Labs Media LLC, a producer of the WEBBY Award-winning Messy Truth digital series.
SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR: Jones’s life mission is to close prison doors and open doors of opportunity. He has been a leader in the fight for criminal justice reform for more than 25 years. To achieve his goals, he co-founded a series of social enterprises, including: Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, ColorOfChange.org, GreenForAll.org, Rebuild The Dream and the Dream Corps. The Dream Corps houses three social impact initiatives: #YesWeCode, Green For All and #cut50. Today, Jones is the CEO of the REFORM Alliance, an initiative founded by Jay-Z, Meek Mill and six billionaires to transform the criminal justice system.
SOCIAL IMPACT: In 2018, Jones and #cut50 led the winning campaign to pass the FIRST STEP Act — a bipartisan federal bill that the New York Times called the most substantial breakthrough in criminal justice in a generation. This was not his first history-making legislative victory: A decade earlier, Jones was the primary champion of the Green Jobs Act of 2007. In 2009, he worked as the green jobs advisor to the Obama White House. Jones has won numerous awards, including: The World Economic Forum’s “Young Global Leader” designation; Rolling Stone’s 2012 “12 Leaders Who Get Things Done”; TIME’s 2009 “100 Most Influential People in The World”; the 2010 NAACP Image Award and; a 2017 WEBBY special achievement award.
Born in Jackson, Tenn., Jones lives in New York City and Los Angeles. He is a proud father of two sons. In 2017, he signed a management deal with Roc Nation, becoming the first political commentator in their family. In 1990, he earned a B.S. in communication and political science from the University of Tennessee at Martin. In 1993, Jones earned a degree from Yale Law School.

Governor Phil Bryant
State of Mississippi
Phil Bryant was sworn in for his second term as Mississippi’s 64th governor on Jan. 12, 2016. Before becoming the state’s chief executive, Bryant was lieutenant governor from 2008-2011. He also served as state auditor and represented his legislative district in the Mississippi House of Representatives for five years. He earned an associate degree in criminal justice from Hinds Community College and completed his bachelor’s degree at the University of Southern Mississippi. He holds a master’s degree in...
political science from Mississippi College, and before assuming his role as governor, Bryant served as an adjunct professor of government there. Bryant began his career as a deputy sheriff in Hinds County and later worked as an insurance investigator before being elected to the House of Representatives in 1991. In 1996, then-Governor Kirk Fordice appointed him state auditor, a position he was re-elected to in 1999 and 2003.

**Senator Jeff Brandes**  
**Florida Legislature**  
Jeff Brandes is a lifelong resident of St. Petersburg, Fla., a veteran, and a local businessman. After serving in the Army from 1999 to 2006, he joined his grandfather in the family lumber business. He was first elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2010. He was elected to the Florida Senate in 2012, then re-elected in 2014 and 2016. He has chaired the Senate committee on Transportation, the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism and Economic Development, and currently he is chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Criminal and Civil Justice. He is nationally recognized as a policy leader in the areas of autonomous vehicles and mobility, flood insurance, and criminal justice reform.

**Senator Shelley Hughes**  
**Alaska Legislature**  
Shelley Hughes represents District F in Alaska. She is chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee and Senate Transportation Committee, vice chair of the Senate Education Committee, and member of the Joint Armed Service Committee, Bicameral Permanent Fund Working Group, Senate Judiciary Finance Subcommittee, Senate Law Finance Subcommittee, Senate Public Safety Finance Subcommittee and Senate Transportation & Public Facilities Finance Subcommittee. She was the co-chair of the Conference Committee on HB 49.

**Assemblyman Steve Yeager**  
**Nevada Legislature**  
Steve Yeager represents Assembly District 9 in the Nevada Legislature. He chaired the Assembly Committee on Judiciary in both the 2017 and 2019 Legislative Sessions. In addition, Yeager served as Speaker pro tem in 2019. When the legislature is not in session, he practices law at Battle Born Injury Lawyers, focusing primarily on personal injury. Prior to that, Yeager was a Chief Deputy Public Defender at the Clark County Public Defender’s Office, a position he held for more than eight years. After law school, he worked as an associate at a large law firm for five years, specializing in class action and commercial litigation defense. He is a graduate of the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor, MI) and Cornell Law School (Ithaca, NY).

**Representative Nicholas Zerwas**  
**Minnesota Legislature**  
Nick Zerwas has served on the Health and Human Services Finance Committee, the Public Safety Policy and Finance Committee, the Subcommittee on Corrections, the High Education Policy and Finance Committee, and as the chair of the Health and Human Services Licensure Subcommittee. With a nearly 10-year background in a forensic science unit and lab before being elected to the Legislature, he is a public safety policy leader in Minnesota with a focus on criminal justice reform.