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Bipartisan Juvenile Crime Bill Shows How Data Can Make Policy Better

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It's easy to feel cynical about our political system these days. All too often, it seems like our leaders are too busy fighting with each other to come together and find real solutions for problems in our communities.

Meaningful, evidence-based policy can still be passed to improve lives, and with bipartisan support. In May, the Louisiana state Senate unanimously passed Senate Bill 183. The House soon followed suit, and the bill was signed into law by the governor, becoming Act 124 of the 2024 Regular Session.

Act 124 is an important new law designed to protect vulnerable young people in our state. Thanks to its passage, all children under 21 in the criminal justice system will soon be provided with connection to age-appropriate vocational training, as well as educational, health, and mental health services upon release. These services can be a lifeline for young offenders, supporting their re-entry into the world and helping reduce the likelihood that they will offend again.