WHY ARE YOU RECEIVING A NEWSLETTER IN JANUARY?

Since George Washington was President, Congress has met for two-year sessions every other year. Normally a Congress ends in November. But, this Congress which was the 116th Congress ended January 3, 2021.

PELL GRANTS ARE BACK IN PRISON

The most important reform was the return of Pell Grants (federal financial aid) for incarcerated students seeking a college education. In 1994, CURE urged Congress not to do away with this aid. But, the Crime Bill shortsightedly did. For the past 26 years, we have advocated to lift this ban on Pell Grant eligibility for prisoners.

The good news is that there are no exclusions in the Grants for the criminally committed based on offenses. However, there is a question whether those civilly committed for sex offenses are included.

The language states that one needs to be enrolled in "a prison education program." If a civil commitment facility doesn’t provide this program, CURE is not sure if it can use the recently passed Pell Grants.

Longtime CURE supporter Cong. Bobby Scott (D-VA), Chair of the House Education & Labor Committee, was the key to Pell grant restoration. Also, Sen Brian Schatz (D-HI) was able to organize hundreds of organizations in support. Finally, Health, Education Labor & Pensions Committee leaders Senators Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Patty Murray (D-WA), worked hard together.

MONEY FOR INCARCERATED

During the 116th Congress, checks for $1,200 and $600 went to people in prison from the Internal Revenue Service. Federal Judge Phyllis Hamilton of Northern California ruled that prisoners were entitled to these stimulus funds. Dependents such as their children were also entitled to more of the funds.

MADE SURE IT HAPPENED

In October, Alan Mills and his staff at the Uptown People’s Law Center in Chicago with volunteer Northwestern law students mailed these above completed forms from all Illinois prisoners to the IRS. Photo by Terab Tolner

Dear CURE Supporters, While walking in our neighborhood we saw this sign "These are not ordinary times." How true! COVID-19 has made necessary changes. Now, in our apartment we keep up with the issues through zoom and webinars. Our office at St. Aloysius Church is now used for CURE storage. The then pastor, George Anderson, S.J., provided this office for us twenty-five years ago. This past year, Father Anderson died at 86 and is greatly missed. He was devoted to the poor especially prisoners.

So, as we begin a new year we thank each of you for your generous support. We are grateful for all the volunteers who give of their time and talents to bring about justice. CURE Co-Founders Pauline and Charlie Sullivan

I DO WANT TO HELP CURE CONTINUE ITS WORK IN 2021.

Here is my tax-deductible contribution. CURE PO Box 2310 Washington, DC 20013

| $5 | $10 | $25 | $50 | $100 | $500 | $1,000 | Other $ |
|----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|--------|

Name:__________________________________________

Address:________________________________________

City:_________________________ State:_________ Zip:________________________

Email:__________________________________________
Shown left is a young woman overdosing on drugs. On the right is a Supervised Injection Site (SIS) or often called an Overdose Protection Site (OPS) in Vancouver, Canada. This facility provides a location to inject drugs that has clean needles and access to treatment and other help. This assistance can include food, clothing and housing as well as services such as primary health care, dental and mental health. In the last newsletter, we asked you to vote on whether (SIS) or (OPS) is a solution to the drug crisis.

FOR

We received 68 “yes” votes. Explanations included “my brother overdosed and his body was found in a dumpster. If he had a safe place to use his heroin, he would be alive today.” Also, “I have been to Europe and have seen first hand how well it has helped there” and “as a former paramedic who has dealt with the realities in our streets, I recognize the sense that having SIS makes.” Finally, “despite my disdain for drugs we can’t stop this opioid epidemic without assistance” and “within each site there should be counselors to help with overcoming addictions, locating jobs and obtaining medical care.”

AGAINST

26 voted “no” comments included “it appears to be another band-aid, and feeble attempt to be perceived as doing something about the problem” and “don’t make legal what is illegal.” Also, “it would only help turn our country into a bunch of brain dead junkies” and “supervising drug abuse should not be publicly funded programming.” Finally, “it would create a whole section of other problems outside the SIS such as people living on the streets and used needles lying near them.”

MAYBE

12 voted that they may support it but “I don’t know enough to say” and “would like to hear/learn all of the facts—the good, the bad and the ugly.” Also, “yes, if cities are willing to pay for trained staffers, doctors, nurses and counselors and “are there any stats on money saved by traditional medical institutions vs. money spent on SIS?” Finally, “it may work in some cases, but in others there may be problems.”

What do you think of “Decrim” first?

Although your votes show great support for SIS or OPS, should we push first to have drug sentences decriminalized like Oregon voted to do recently? This is not legalization. Drug prohibition would still exist for hard drugs, but the fine would be about the same amount as the cost of a “parking ticket.”

Also, simple drug possession/use sentences would be a civil fine, no jail time and no record. Many drug sentences would be “defelonized,” which means felonies would be reduced to misdemeanors.

Finally, two results of decriminalization would be a greater respect for police officers in that instead of booking people, neighborhood police would immediately direct them into drug treatment or other supportive services. And secondly, “decrim” would soften the community for acceptance of a SIS or OPS.

Should CURE advocate for decriminalization first before advocating for a SIS or OPS? Please check one. Feel free to explain on a separate piece of paper.

Yes________________________  No____________________  Maybe____________________
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www.curenational.org

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ISSUE CHAPTERS (National Jurisdiction)

CURE-SORT  (Sex Offenders Restored through Treatment) PO 1022, Norman, OK 73070-1022 Ph 405-639-7262 Email: info@cure-sort.org www.cure-sort.org Leader Wayne Bowers

LIFELONG-CURE, 4417 Second Ave. #211, Detroit, MI 48201-1214 Phone: 313-324-2666, 313-282-3889 Leader: Willis X. Harris

NDRAN of CURE/NCCAN, (National Capital Crime Assistance Network) PO Box 758, Mancos, CO 81328 Phone: 970-533-7383 Email claudia@celldoor.com web: ndran.org/nccan.org Leader Claudia Whitman

OTHER COUNTRY CURE CHAPTERS
www.internationalcure.org

Pan Africa-CURE, PO Box 2903-80100 Mombasa, Kenya. Ph +254724944181 www.panafricanacure.org office@panafricanacure.org seeks to network country chapters listed below and others. Leaders are Peter Onyango Olwa onkols@gmail.com & Seth-Benoit Niyakumi ikikishalom2@gmail.com

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AMERICAS

Canada-CURE Wayne Northey wayne@smartsettle.com and Joshua Agaba jmagaba@gmail.com

COTA CURE Of The Americas, cure@curenational.org seeks transformative justice & start country chapters.

Please become a member of your state, issue, or country chapter of CURE. Support their wonderful work. CURE is unable to assist you with your legal representation thus please do not send us your case.
2 Awesome Freebies

Every person incarcerated should immediately send for the free 24-page directory from Prison Activist Resource Center.

PO Box 70047, Oakland, CA 94612 (510) 893-6448. Or, print it from https://www.prisonactivist.org/

Also, subscribe to the free News Inside published by The Marshall Project, 156 W. 56th St. Suite 701, New York City, NY 10019 (212) 803-5200. People “in” can receive it by mail if you do not have email.

Conditions: HEARD, SW & SLEEP

Helping Educate to Advance the Rights of Deaf Communities (HEARD) PO Box 1160, Washington, DC 20013; info@behearddc.org; HEARD is now focusing on wrongful convictions of deaf people.

Solitary Watch, PO Box 11374, Washington, DC 20008 Email: info@solitarywatch.org is a national watchdog group that investigates, reports on and disseminates information on the use of solitary confinement in prisons and jails.

Christopher Lipsey Jr., a person in a California prison, has filed a lawsuit Lipsey v. Pfeiffer that he and others have been subjected to virtual “torture” through loud and too frequent nightly checks.

Help for People Convicted of SOs

On the first Saturday of each month, Eldon Dillingham hosts a national conference phone call about civil commitment. To receive notice of the call, email eldondillingham@gmail.com or call 786-458-9546. https://vimeo.com/423495927/1dedf9e422 shows Eldon speaking in 2019 at a CURE conference.

Titus House Ministries, PO Box 2376, Tijeras, NM 87059 505-286-8807 donmagicjohnston@gmail.com www.titushouseministries.org helps all people who are registered, or about to be released to reintegrate back into society. Includes helping families/friends.

Women Against Registry, PO Box 463, Arnold, MO 63010 www.womenagainstrgistry.com Email: contact@womenagainstrgistry.com 800-311-3764

Just Future Project brings shadow prisons (civil commitment facilities) into the light. 202-350-0531 Contact@ajustfuture.org www.ajustfuture.org

NARSOL (National Association for Rational Sex Offender Laws) PO Box 25423, Raleigh, NC 27611 888-997-7765 www.Narsol.org contact@narsol.org

Organizing Against both the Death Penalty & Life Without Parole (LWOP)

Pope Francis continues to speak out not only against the death penalty but also life without parole which he calls “a secret death penalty.” To abolish the death penalty globally, google the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty.

Also, in the United States, please help Death Penalty Action in memory of Bill Pelke, longtime organizer of the Journey of Hope, who died recently. CURE worked with DPA against the many executions in 2020 by the Trump Administration and will work with them to abolish the death penalty in the 117th Congress that began in January, 2021.

Finally, rather than life without parole, a life sentence should end at twenty years or sooner. Email Nicole Porter nporter@thesentencingproject.org to receive notices of national meetings to discuss releasing those serving life/practical life sentences.

Go to: Httsp://vimeo.com/e1a0ed05a5 for a short presentation by Claudia Whitman about the legal challenges of releasing those serving life and practical life sentences. Claudia has done this work for years.

BOOKS

Bleak Walls Bright Minds has been compiled by Sue Hutchins of Iowa CURE. It is 27 lifers stories “and a rare opportunity to read their thoughts and accomplishments in their own words.”

Aging Behind Prison Walls By Tina Maschi and Keith Morgan

When Truth Is All You Have is a memoir by Centurion’s founder Jim McCluskey. Centurion seeks freedom for the innocent in prison.

We Are Not Slaves: State Violence, Coerced Labor, and Prisoners’ Rights in Postwar America by Robert T. Chase is a comprehensive reform of the Texas prison system. CURE began in Texas and as the book explains played a major role in the reforms especially in abolishing prisoners being used as guards.
Books, etc. (cont.)

Shown is Nkechi Taifa, the author of *Black Power, Black Lawyer: My Audacious Quest for Justice*. Nkechi is founder of the progressive Justice Roundtable. Google their website.

*Correctional Health Care Delivery* by Kenneth L. FaIVER Charles C. Thoms Publisher.

*Aging Behind Prison Walls* by Tina Maschi and Keith Morgan

*Justice that Transforms* Vol.1 by Wayne Northey

Human Kindness Foundation, PO Box 61619, Durham, NC 27715 www.humankindness.org mails over 300 free spiritual books a week to people in prison that are written mostly by Bo Lozoff.

Adopt-A-Prison (AAP) is based on the same idea as adopting a highway or a park. For more info, email Hans Hallundbaek  hanshall@optonline.net

www.prisonlaborreform.com is a very new Prison Labor Reform website. For more information, email Tom Petersik  tkpetersik@yahoo.com

Editor Todd Clear of the *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* is planning an issue on Violence, Voice and Incarceration. He is seeking personal reflections by March 21, 2021 in a 1000-2000 essay by those who have had these experiences. For more information, email todd.clear@rutgers.edu or mail a self-addressed stamped envelope to Todd Clear, 59 Crestwood Dr., Whitefish, MT 59937.

Congrats Human Rights Defense Center, POB 1151, Lake Worth Beach, FL 33460 for being there 30 years! See www.humanrightsdesebencecenter.org

In November, Utah and Nebraska joined Colorado in approving removal of the exception clause in the 13th amendment. People convicted of crimes would no longer be slaves. Called the Abolition Amendment, it was introduced in the 116th Congress and has 6 Senate and 21 House cosponsors. It is a top priority and 2/3 of Congress and 3/4 of states must vote for it. A big challenge, but we are on our way!

National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls, 100 R Warren St., Roxbury, MA 02119 https://nationalcouncil.us/ Phone (617) 905-2026.

For People in AZ, FL, HI, NE, NH & WI

Middle Ground Prison Reform, Inc. 139 East Encanto Drive, Tempe, AZ 85381 (480) 966-8116 email: middlegroundprisonreform@msn.com website:www.middlegroundprisonreform.org/ Donna and James Hamm are leaders.

Florida Rights Restoration Coalition (FRRRC) Get In Touch 407-901-3749 Get Help Now info@floridarrc.org

Community Alliance on Prisons, PO Box 37158, Honolulu, HI 96837-0158 (808) 927-1214 Kat Brady, Coordinator

Nebraska Criminal Justice Review, Holy Family Ministries, 1715 Izard St., Omaha, NE 68102 (402) 558-2085  Editor: Mel Beckman

Citizens for Criminal Justice Reform-New Hampshire, PO Box 3942, Concord, NH 03302-3942 (603) 832-1555 info@ccjrhnh.org

The Community, Box 100392, Milwaukee, WI 53210 email: thecommunitywis@gmail.com website:thecommunitynow.us provides anit-mass incarceration news and connections.

**Government Assistance (Nationwide)**


SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) 800-662-HELP (4357) is available 24/7 and answered by a live operator.

**Employment 1-877-5627** will transfer you to American Jobs Center in your state. Ask about Federal Bonding program and Work Opportunities Tax Credit that will help with being hired.

**Employment Discrimination** Run it by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission 1-800-669-4000 if your criminal history was the only reason that kept you from being hired.

**Health 1-800-318-2596** www.healthcare.gov

**Housing 800-955-2232** Ask about Section Eight.

**When you get home**

Call 2-1-1 or 3-1-1 for local needs as above.

A program of Successful Release is *Companies that Hire Felons* which has a nationwide list. Use a computer in local library to find it.
Pan Africa Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants

P.O Box 2903 - 80100 Mombasa, Kenya.
Tel. +254 724944181 Email: office@panafricanacure.org  www.panafricanacure.org

MISSION:
“To use prisons for only those who have to be in them. And, for those who have to be in them, to provide the rehabilitative opportunities to turn their lives around.”

MISSION
“Utiliser les prisons uniquement pour ceux qui doivent y être. Et, pour ceux qui doivent y être, offrir des possibilités de réadaptation pour changer leur vie.”

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LEADER, ZAMBIA CURE

CHARLES HOUNMENOU

SUPPORT US BY GOING TO www.internationalcure.org.

International CURE based in Washington, DC, The United States has consultative status from the United Nations (and thus, the Pan Africa CURE Chapter does too.)