

SLAVERY IN WISCONSIN

by dominic Marak

State Senator Lena Taylor plans to reintroduce a change to the Wisconsin Constitution, which would ban slavery in the state, when the Wisconsin Legislature reconvenes in January 2017

Slavery is permitted in Wisconsin as a punishment for crime under the Wisconsin and the United States Constitutions.

The Wisconsin Department of Corrections told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel inmates "are not required to work," except "as a penalty for violating prison rules." This in itself stinks of Jim Crowism, when law enforcement in the post Reconstruction South arrested hordes of African Americans to work for violating "laws." With Wisconsin leading the nation in the incarceration rate of African Americans.

But Wisconsin does in fact force prisoners to work for free, even when they don't violate prison rules, therefore making them slaves.

The Division of Adult Institutions created a policy prohibiting prisoners from getting paid more than forty hours for work per week. However, when short on laborers, prison officials will regularly force prisoners, who have already reached their forty hour pay limit, to work for free. Refusing to do so subjects prisoners to violating the prison rule against refusing "to perform a work assignment."

The penalty for which can land a prisoner in solitary confinement for as much as ninety days. A strange rule and penalty to have if prisoners are not forced to work, as the DOC claims.

Slavery is utilized within Wisconsin's prison system. as permitted in the Wisconsin and U.S. Constitution. State Senator Lena Taylor would make this practice illegal, if her proposed change to the Wisconsin Constitution passes.

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REPORT OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE STATE OF WISCONSIN

IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE SENATE OF WISCONSIN, FEBRUARY 18, 1850, AND A RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF WISCONSIN, MARCH 12, 1850.

WISCONSIN: G. W. BARRETT, STATE PRINTER, 1851.

THE STATE OF WISCONSIN, SENATE, JANUARY 1851.

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