

11-10-19

To whom,

My entire life, I am now 67 years old, I believed our justice ^{system} was the best and it worked satisfactorily. I believed one was innocent till proven guilty and our court system worked on that presumption. Now that I have seen first hand I can say our system is in need of repair. The tax paying public, who votes, needs to read stories such as mine, be empathetic and make needed changes. Our over crowded prisons not only cause hardship for those who are incarcerated but cost tax payers hundreds of millions dollars that need be spent more wisely.

We must address "Over Crowded Prisons" as soon as possible. This is the easiest, quickest problem to attack. There are, from my observation, a large percentage of people incarcerated who could and should be productive members of society not burdens. "Especially the aged," who have been proven to be of little harm. Reasons for over crowding are many. Foremost, most estimates agree 10% of inmates are in fact innocent. I believe that may be low. Plus you can add the many who have been over prosecuted and given unfair sentences such as myself and a picture starts to develop. Then add NERA, no early release act, which I believe the Clinton administration passed and it equals over crowded prisons. NERA and mandatory minimums need to be erased and new legislation enacted.

Over Crowded prisons obviously, at estimates of 70 thousand per prisoner, cost the tax payers dearly. Unseen by the public is that most prisons were not built for current capacity. This causes extreme hardship amongst those who are incarcerated. For example, I am currently housed at N S P (NS). This facility appears to have been constructed as a single occupancy per cell prison. Each building has 4 units, with each unit having 40 cells designed for one person. Being only 3 showers per unit verifies the design along with small cell size. Fact is there are 2 people in every cell, 80 per unit, and 3 showers. On most days there are 5 hours allotted to shower. Needless to say, do the math, 80 people can not shower in one day. Showers average 10-15 minutes. From this example one can easily see how if NERA was abolished and prison populations reduced more humane conditions can be achieved plus save tax payer dollars.

The reasons why we have "Over Crowded" prisons are many and harder to address. One might ask, why are innocent people convicted and why are some overly prosecuted and or sentenced? In many cases perhaps an over zealous prosecutor is to blame. Skimming, as stated by the US Supreme Court, should not be the prosecutors main goal but making every effort to find the defendant innocent should be. I believe the

prosecutor sometimes equates winning with career opportunities. Evidence, such as circumstantial or that the prosecutor instructs the jury to infer can lead, and does, to false conviction. Prosecutors have also been known to withhold culpatory evidence and make up or infer false evidence themselves.

Myself, never having been a criminal, always a tax paying-up-standing community member, who I believe is one of many unfairly convicted, am asking for public empathy. It's my goal to have NERA repealed and to be set free. I am a perfect example of a person who could benefit society rather than burden it. I can honestly say my community would be a better place with me working my farm than dying in an over crowded prison system. Everyone needs to call their legislators and tell them to repeal NERA for the benefit of "Everyone". This first step would begin the process to make our system better.

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Truly,
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