

RECIDIVISM

PART 1

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Florida Statute 944.012(3) (2019) notes that Florida has a "high recidivism rate".

What this statute does not note, however, is that the "high recidivism rate" is due, in large part, to bureaucratic whim.

For example, the police stop you for a routine security check. Back to prison you go. Unauthorized contact with police.

For example, a tool that you use on your job is declared to be a "weapon". Back to prison you go.

For example, you are kicked out of your residence without warning. Back to prison you go. Failure to maintain a residence.

For example, you cannot find a job. Partly because you have no marketable skill since the legislature barred you from vocational training programs. Back to prison you go for failing to be employed.

For example, Inmate A (who was convicted of crime X) commits a more serious crime while on Work Release. All other prisoners who committed crime X who are on Work Release or Parole are returned to prison. They might, like Inmate A, commit a serious new crime.

For example, your employer gets arrested for violating the law. Back to prison you go - even though you had no knowledge of your employer's illegal activities.

For example, you have a flat tire and are thirty (30 minutes) late in getting home. Back to prison you go.

The list goes on because the politicians have refused to take the revocation decision making process out of the hands of the bureaucrats who make decisions based on political (catering to special interest groups and political donors) and/or personal agendas.

(Further Reading: Beyond Bars by J. I. Ross, Ph.D. and S. C. Richards, Ph.D.; copyright 2009.)

PART 2

As noted above the Florida Legislature has noted that Florida has a "high recidivism rate".

One article I recently read stated that in 2016 Florida incarcerated 60,000 people who were on Probation, Parole and Conditional Release (Parole by another name).

Only a court can revoke Probation. So if an individual on Probation is sent to prison it is (presumably) because they broke the law once again.

But who determines if someone on Parole or Conditional Release is to be returned to prison?

THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS (DOC).

The very bureaucrats who are dependent upon others being incarcerated are the ones who decide if someone on Parole or Conditional Release is to be incarcerated.

What happens to DOC bureaucrats if the prison population level remains stable?

Continued employment.

What happens to DOC bureaucrats if the prison population level increases?

Continued employment and more opportunities to obtain raises in pay and other benefits.

What happens to DOC bureaucrats if the prison population level is reduced?

In Florida it would result in an ending of illegal (and dangerous) staff shortages. And more opportunities to obtain raises in pay and other benefits.

But at some point the number of people incarcerated MIGHT go so low as to result in a reduction in staff.

DOC bureaucrats MIGHT have to look for ~~x~~ jobs elsewhere.

Jobs that would be available because the government would have funds for other programs.

How much longer are the citizens of Florida going to be exploited by government bureaucrats who are placing political and personal agendas ahead of the needs of the citizens? To be exploited by government bureaucrats who send people back to prison just as fast as the OVC releases people, making sure that the prison system stays full?

How much longer are the politicians going to leave revocation decisions in the hands of bureaucrats who are being paid to keep people in prison?

The author is a former death row prisoner who has been incarcerated in Florida since 1971.