

TALKING POINTS: H.R. 3072

To Revive the System of Parole For Federal Prisoners

1. In a Dan Jones survey in Utah in 2003, almost two-thirds of respondents who registered an opinion supported the cause of parole. http://www.sltrib.com/portlet/article/html/fragments/print_article.jsp?article=2562337.
2. 97% of all federal inmates are eventually released. Approximately 45,000 federal inmates were released last year in the United States.
3. The costs of incarceration are soaring, including both the costs of building new facilities and the costs of operating new and existing facilities. Estimated yearly cost to house one inmate amortizing property and personnel is \$40,000 per inmate.
4. As of July 2006, there were almost 191,000 inmates in the federal system.
5. Total yearly cost to house these inmates is \$7.64 billion.
6. The average age of those inmates is 38 years. Some 16,260 people are serving sentences more than 20 years in length, and some 47,300 people are serving sentences longer than 10 years. Over 5,485 people are serving life sentences.
7. The Bureau of Prisons now operates Over 106 federal prisons, 6 regional offices, a Central Office (headquarters), 2 staff training centers, and 28 community corrections offices.
8. The female prison population, overall, has increased over 600 percent in the last 20 years.
9. Forty percent of all federal inmates are black, and 16.8 percent of all the inmates are Mexican citizens."
10. The majority of federal inmates are non-violent low-level drug offenders with very long sentences. Moreover, the majority of this segment of the federal inmate population is being incarcerated for the first time. Some 5,000+ people in prison are serving life sentences for non-violent offenses without the possibility of parole. The vast majority of these people are also first time offenders.
11. The new sentencing guidelines eliminated parole and made it necessary to complete all but forty-seven (47) days of good time each year. The new system doubled the sentences that judges were forced to impose. Despite Booker vs United States sentencing has remained the same. Judges are sentencing above the guideline range twice more then pre-Booker.
12. Inmates can be rehabilitated and should have a second chance to lead positive lives.
13. Prison overcrowding is a real danger to both inmates and staff. The federal Bureau of Prisons is presently 40% over capacity. Many facilities are operating 100% over capacity with no end in sight.
14. Inmate physical assaults are on the increase.
15. Inmate sexual assault is on the increase with the result that more inmates are HIV positive.
16. Communicable diseases such as TB, Hepatitis C, HIV and AIDS are on the increase endangering inmates and staff.
17. Released prisoners constituted 33% of all Americans with TB in 1996. Of those, 27% had drug resistant TB. http://www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/rel/icps/fighting_tuberculosis.pdf.
18. The cost to house older inmates is twice that of younger inmates because of increased medical costs.
19. It will cost the federal government more than \$700,000 over the life of a prisoner 50 years of age or older to house that prisoner for the rest of his life.
20. There is no money for rehabilitation programs. Voters favor rehabilitation over punishment 8 to 1. http://www.nccd-crc.org/nccd/pubs/2006april_focus_zogby.pdf.
21. The sentences today are too long, especially for non-violent crimes and first time offenders.
22. Lengthy sentences have an inordinate impact on inmates' families, particularly on children who must be raised in broken families.
23. With the loss of a wage earner, inmates' families are forced on to the welfare rolls with the resulting negative impact on state budgets.
24. There will be 700,000 inmates released this year nationally. Most of these inmates have been released with little or no post-incarceration supervision having maxed out their sentences with good time.
25. First time non-violent offenders should not be given non-paroleable sentences for drug charges equivalent to sentences given to serial violent offenders.
26. Inmates do not get the same health care they can request on the outside. Lengthy non-paroleable sentences cause medical emergencies within the facilities and huge indigent health costs when inmates are finally released.
27. Further prison growth is not sustainable monetarily or morally.
28. FedCURE estimates that reinstatement of the Old Law parole guidelines would release 50,000 inmates immediately.
29. An existing federal agency with inmate release expertise is standing by to take over supervision of this plan.
30. New technologies, proven and in practice today in 40 states, utilize state-of-the-art Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) tracking and report solutions to supervise parolees in real time--24x7x365--for as little as \$4.00 per day. http://www.corrections.com/ezine/this_week_on_corrections%5Fcom_special_report.htm and <http://www.isecuretrac.com/>.

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