

Demands of The Campaign To End Mass Incarceration

www.endmassincarceration.org



- 1. Restore voting rights to all convicted persons, including those currently confined in prisons and jails.** The U.S. is alone among advanced industrial nations in depriving prisoners the right to vote.
- 2. End the lifelong discrimination against convicted persons in employment, housing, and civil and public benefits of all kinds** by enacting simple and transparent expungement processes and by prohibiting employers and others from inquiring into the police and criminal records of applicants and job seekers.
- 3. Ban the imprisonment of juveniles with adults, and over the next three years phase out all youth prisons and prison-like facilities in favor of appropriate educational, therapeutic and family-building institutions.** Imprisoning youth with adults is indefensible. The prison state has proven an utter failure at educating, protecting or healing troubled youth. The [2008-09 National Survey of Youth in Custody](#) revealed that one in eight youth in custody nationwide reported one or more incident of sexual victimization in the past 12 months, with more than 90% of these committed by staff.
- 4. Institute meaningful education, self-improvement and skills programs for all those confined in prisons and jails.** Thousands of Georgia prisoners are illiterate. Every year hundreds of thousands are released from the nation's prisons and jails into communities no better than when they left, with little affordable housing or health care, few jobs or educational opportunities.
- 5. Remove all financial incentives that police and sheriffs' departments currently receive for increasing the numbers of low-level drug arrests and ban the use of confiscated funds by law enforcement agencies.** Paying police departments per volume of drug arrests, and allowing law enforcement agencies to seize funds for their own use are invitations to corruption and selective enforcement.
- 6. Acknowledge and abolish racial and class injustices inherent in the selective over-policing of poor communities of color,** in the plea bargaining system, in unfettered prosecutorial discretion, mandatory minimum sentences and a host of other law enforcement policies that differentially affect communities of color and the poor. Require statements of anticipated racial and ethnic impact for future sentencing legislation and other practices proven to have disparate racial impact, and sunset all two strikes and mandatory sentencing laws.
- 7. Ban price gouging on phone calls between prisoners and their families, institute transparency in accounting of inmate funds and make it easier for families of prisoners to visit their loved ones behind bars.** It's not the job of prisoners or their families to financially support the prison state or profiteering businesses. Maintenance of family ties is crucial to the
- 8. Provide decent health care in the nation's prisons and jails.** Health care is a human right, period.
- 9. Institute full transparency in the fines and punishments levied upon inmates and the grievances filed by inmates.** Nobody outside prison administrators knows the number, character, or disposition of inmate filed grievances or sanctions applied to prisoners. To ensure these are being fairly handled this information must be available to some community entities outside the Department of Corrections.
- 10. Decriminalize drug use, homelessness and mental illness.** The forty year drug war has failed, and even though jails and prisons are wildly unsuited to treat mental illness they are where most of the nation's mentally ill are currently housed.
- 11. Stop the racist profiling and roundups of immigrants and repeal legislation that encourages or requires it.** Cease participation in the Secure Communities initiative, and repeal measures that promote and require profiling of suspected immigrants.
- 12. Tell the Truth!** Challenge, rather than reinforce, common misconceptions about crime and base policy on empirical evidence, not political convenience. Initiate mature and balanced media discourse that serves to counter myths and misunderstandings. Criminal behavior is not born of hedonism or moral weakness. It is politically defined, arising out of economic inequality and marginalization. Nobody went to jail for the mortgage meltdown or the BP oil disaster or many similar crimes committed by people and corporations who are not poor or persons of color.
- 13. Georgia's Commission on Criminal Justice Reform must hold a series of public hearings around the state including at least one in an adult state prison and one in a juvenile facility soliciting public input into measures that produce true reform and begin to undo the direct and collateral damage the prison state has caused our families and communities.**