

Sentencing Times

A publication of **The Sentencing Project**, Washington, D.C.

Fall 2011

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ADVOCACY

U.S. Sentencing Commission Extends Reform

The campaign to address the unfair sentences for federal crack cocaine offenses did not end with President Barack Obama's signing of the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010.

The Sentencing Project had to work with its allies to ensure that implementation of the law – always key – benefited as many people as possible.

The result: On June 30, the U.S. Sentencing Commission voted unanimously to apply the amended crack cocaine sentencing guidelines of the new law to 12,000 people currently incarcerated for a federal crack cocaine offense. The decision was critical because it allowed retroactive application of the law to those sentenced prior to its enactment, reducing the average sentence from 13 to 10 years.

The Commission's decision resulted from advocacy by The Sentencing Project and others in the reform community as well as tens of thousands of family members and citizens concerned about fair implementation of the

U.S. Sentencing Commission continued on page 3



Judge Patti B. Saris, chair of the U.S. Sentencing Commission, during June hearing that extended reductions of the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010 to crack cocaine offenders in prison.
AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite

OUTREACH

Ministering Justice

Can taking just one course spur someone to action?

For the 13 seminary students from eight states who took Payne Theological Seminary's *Race, Crime and Justice* course, taught in conjunction with The Sentencing Project's Marc Mauer and Terry Nixon, the answer was a resounding "yes."

The three-day course, which took place in April, was the brain-child of The Reverend Dr. Leah Gaskin Fitchue, the first woman president of Payne Theological Seminary, a 166 year-old institution sponsored by the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME).

Ministering Justice continued on page 4



Race, Crime and Justice participants: From left, Craig Wright. Merritt Graves. Lyvette Johnson. Tonya Anderson. Andra Henning. Haywood Davidson. Sylvia Roberts. Rodney Smith. Stefon McBride. Pamela Dickey. Marc Mauer. Dr. Leah Gaskin Fitchue. LaWanda Felton. Samuel Tolbert Jr. Kenneth Davis.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

"It Was 25 Years Ago Today"

Yes, a quarter century ago The Sentencing Project came into being. On that day in 1986, about 800,000 Americans were behind bars in prison or jail. And while that represented a significant increase over the previous decade, little did we realize that an incarceration explosion was about to happen.

Looking back on that year we can now see how the death of basketball star Len Bias and political grandstanding contributed to "tough on crime" drug laws in 1986, including the notorious crack/powder cocaine sentencing disparity. We can also recall how the ensuing political developments led almost every state to make it easier to try young people as adults, as well as to sentence record numbers of juveniles to life without parole sentences.

Much has changed today. As is now quite apparent, the political climate on issues of crime and punishment has been shifting in recent years – yes, slowly – in a more rational and compassionate direction. In little more than a decade the reentry movement has taken hold, with a range of programming and research projects underway throughout the country. Similarly, restorative justice and justice reinvestment projects are exploring new ways of handling conflict and consequences. And a number of states have achieved substantial reductions in the numbers of adults and juveniles housed behind bars.

I'd like to think that the work of The Sentencing Project over a quarter century has helped to pave the way for this evolving political climate. We've tried to do this through research exploring the consequences of mass incarceration, along with targeted advocacy designed to promote more effective and compassionate criminal justice responses. A few highlights of this work include:

- In 1989, we sponsored the first of a series of National Conferences on Sentencing Advocacy, bringing together advocates working to promote sentencing alternatives in "prison-bound" cases.
- In 1990, and then 1995, we documented

the shockingly high rate of criminal justice supervision of young African American males, nearly 1 in 3 on any given day.

- In 1991, the first of the "Americans Behind Bars" series found that the United States had become the world leader in its rate of incarceration.
- In 1992, we launched the Campaign for an Effective Crime Policy, a coalition that gained the support of over 1,000 criminal justice leaders in its "Call for a Rational Debate on Crime and Punishment."
- In 1997 and 1998, our two reports on felony disenfranchisement helped to launch a national movement that has resulted in reform policies being enacted in 23 states.
- Throughout the past decade, our policy reports on "the war on marijuana," the scale of life imprisonment, the racial dynamics of the war on drugs, state sentencing reforms, and other issues have provided both policymakers and advocates with the tools and analysis they need to promote reform.



Marc Mauer, Executive Director

While we are proud of our contributions to the criminal justice reform movement, we cannot overlook the fundamental change of the past 25 years. That is, unfortunately, that the incarcerated population in the United States has nearly tripled during this period, having reached a record 2.3 million people in prison and jail. That figure does not suggest that the accomplishments of The Sentencing Project and many others have not been significant or important to individual lives. But it remains as a poignant reminder that we still have a long way to go.

Our reform work over the years has been aided by the partnerships and insights we've gained from a range of scholars, criminal justice leaders, policy advocates, and many others. While these are challenging times, we value these relationships and remain optimistic about the prospects for change. We have no choice but to do so.

law. During the process, The Sentencing Project met with staff from the U.S. Sentencing Commission, Department of Justice and the White House, urging a fair application of the law and the retroactive application of the amended sentencing guidelines. The Sentencing Project also submitted comments to the U.S. Sentencing Commission over the last year and testified at two Commission hearings on the subject.

Following the Commission's decision on retroactivity, Attorney General Eric Holder revised a Justice Department directive to federal prosecutors that had opposed applying the law to defendants whose crimes were committed prior to the law being changed. After numerous rulings against the Justice Department's position and with several appellate court cases pending, as well as pressure from the reform community,

Holder issued a new directive allowing "pipeline" cases to benefit from the reduced sentencing structure.

Much progress has been made this year in advancing fairness in federal crack cocaine sentencing, providing relief to thousands of people facing excessive penalties. The work continues, however, and The Sentencing Project is helping lead the fight to expand upon the success of the Fair Sentencing Act. This year, The Sentencing Project worked with allies to incorporate an important expansion of federal good time credits within legislation to reauthorize the Second Chance Act. The Sentencing Project regularly meets with staff on Capitol Hill to promote cost saving measures that increase sentencing fairness at the federal level.

POLICY

Building Momentum for Juvenile Justice

An unfortunate reality is that many in America's adult jails and prisons have passed through the juvenile justice system. Instead of effective strategies to prevent and resolve juvenile delinquency, the tough-on-crime approach, which makes matters worse, has too often won.

The result: Young people under the supervision of the juvenile justice system are more likely to remain in it than get treatment and redirection. Untreated, these young people become at-risk for admission to adult prisons and jails.

The Sentencing Project continues to press for juvenile justice reform through a variety of means. On the advocacy front, research analyst Dr. Ashley Nellis serves as a co-chair of the nation's largest juvenile justice coalition, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Coalition, a group of more than 50 national and state organizations working on juvenile justice reforms. We are also frequently asked to testify on juvenile justice matters, advise policymakers on legislative proposals, author reports and articles, and respond to media requests. We also provide guidance to the National Reentry Resource Center, a grantee of the Second Chance Act, through participation in its Advisory



Many of the 2.3 million prisoners incarcerated as adults today were once involved in the juvenile justice system but failed to receive effective rehabilitation support to turn their lives around.

Committee on Juvenile Justice. Among The Sentencing Project's juvenile justice priorities are:

- Reauthorization of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP);
- Appointment of a permanent Administrator to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), now vacant for more than two years;
- Reauthorization of the Second Chance Act, including a stronger focus on reentry for youth exiting the juvenile justice system; and
- Elimination of juvenile life without parole.

Public Education

The Sentencing Project has made presentations to the following organizations and institutions in 2011:

Speaking Engagements

American Society of Criminology
College and Community Fellowship
Centerforce
Drug Policy Alliance
Florida Rights Restoration Coalition
Georgetown University Law School
Hunger Fellows Conference
International Drug Policy Consortium, London
Maryland DMC Conference
Maryland Child Service Systems
Mental Health in Corrections Conference
National Association of Counties
National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
National Employment Law Project
National Institute of Justice, Canada
Princeton University, "Imprisonment of a Race" Conference
Rowan University
United Methodist Florida Prison Conference
University of Minnesota Law School
University of Pennsylvania Law School
University of Texas, Barbara Jordan Freedom Foundation
Yale University Law School

Legislative Testimony/Briefings

Congressional Black Caucus
Florida Senate Judiciary Committee
Maryland Senate Judiciary Committee
Office of Equal Opportunity, Madison, Wisconsin
U. S. Sentencing Commission

"It was quite insightful," said The Reverend Kenneth Maurice Davis of Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church in D'Iberville, Mississippi. "We have a prison ministry here in south Mississippi, and the facts and figures we got from The Sentencing Project about incarceration of African Americans, which we recognize a bit from our local community, were just astounding."

He said the course "gave us a sense of awareness" about the magnitude of over-incarceration, especially of African Americans.

Participants learned firsthand the dynamics of the courtroom, from the appearance of defendants to how a drug court operates on an outing to the District of Columbia Superior Court. They visited *Our Place*, a local program that aids formerly incarcerated women in re-entering the community. On Capitol Hill, they gained an overview of criminal justice politics from The Sentencing Project's advocacy staff.

"They got an understanding of how correct data – and the cutting edge information that The Sentencing Project deals in – must be a part of their portfolio if they're going to be effective reformers of the criminal justice system," said Dr. Fitchue

Like the biblical Joshua who sent spies to bring back intelligence about the Land of Canaan, the seminarians returned to their communities armed with tools and knowledge to work for reform. In Dothan, Alabama, Reverend Rodney Smith of Park Chapel AME

Church called the course "life-altering"; he has started a re-entry program for ex-offenders and gotten his bishop to have all the state's 400 AME churches listed by the state as resources for those newly released from prison.

In Columbia, S.C., Reverend Sylvia Roberts of Bishop Memorial Church did a survey of resources for re-entry and discovered there were no dedicated programs for those formerly incarcerated.

"The synergy between a prestigious national advocacy organization and a storied religious institution like Payne Theological Seminary provides a way to intervene locally before a crime is ever committed," said Terry Nixon, Director of Operations for The Sentencing Project and a deacon at Mount Airy Baptist Church in Washington, D.C.

Reports of the course had an impact even on those on the seminary's campus in Wilberforce, Ohio.

"I was so inspired by hearing about the course that I'm now going to do my senior thesis on the incarceration of African American men in the Philadelphia area," said Stanley Hearst, who is in his final year of seminary work. "And if my schedule permits, I'll be in Washington at the course next year."

Dr. Fitchue said that a course is being planned for 2012. "Our institution has a strong Afro-centric ethos and issues of social justice are part of the ministry of the AME church," she said. "We can't move ahead unless we touch base with The Sentencing Project."

Race, Crime and Justice participants: Row 1- Marc Mauer, Dr. Leah Gaskin Fitchue, LaWanda Felton, Row 2-Stefon McBride, Terry Nixon



In the News

Media outlets that cited The Sentencing Project's work in 2011 include:

ABC TV
American Prospect
Associated Press
Bangor (ME) Defender
Boston Globe
Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
Carroll County Times
Charlotte Observer
Chicago Tribune
Cleveland Plain Dealer
Congressional Quarterly
Research
C-Span
Daily Kos News.com
Final Call
Fox TV
Guardian.co.uk
Hawaii News Now
International Business News
Kansas City Star
Los Angeles Times
Michael Eric Dyson Show
National Public Radio
New Haven Register
Oregon Register
Philadelphia Daily News
Talk Business Net.com
Tennessean
Texas Tribune
The Huffington Post
The Nation
The New York Times
The Philadelphia Inquirer
The Rachel Maddow Show
The (Ohio) Vindicator
The Washington Post
USA Today
Virginia Pilot

Staff Profiles

Marc Mauer EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

My career as a criminal justice reformer began in a converted garage in a back alley in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where my mentor and now long-time friend, Barbara Cartwright, had set up a community bail fund to post bail for indigent defendants. The point was that money shouldn't determine release from jail pending sentencing. I was soon visiting prisons and learning about prison life both for those locked up and those guarding them. Over time, I worked closely with many lifers, many of whom had committed serious crimes in their late teens, but had become very different people by their thirties and forties. Many of these men are still behind bars today, although some have come home and become assets to their community, including one who earned a doctorate in African studies and is now a tenured professor at a major Midwestern University.

I take my work very seriously, but I also try to achieve some balance by spending time with family and friends. Weekends usually find me on the soccer field, in a pickup game with 20-to-75-year olds – I'm #6, right defender.

Karen DeWitt COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

I am a former journalist, a collector of facts, both trivial and profound. Long before I joined The Sentencing Project in February 2011, I had taped to my home office wall a paper with what appears to be a large "X" on it. Up close, the "X" reveals a Justice Department graph of black/white incarceration, 1926 - 2000. Blacks are low on the y-axis; whites are high. 1986, the trend lines intersect, dramatically invert. I spent a lifetime writing who, what, where, when, why and how. I know how to tell and sell a story. At this point in my life, I could be selling soap. I'd rather sell justice.

Kara Gotsch DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY

A member of Amnesty International and part of a youth in government program, I was already an advocate for sentencing reform in high school, hoping to end the death penalty in my home state of New Jersey. Interest in policy reform and a desire for a more humane justice system brought me to Washington, D.C., 14 years ago.

At The Sentencing Project since 2005, I spend most days on Capitol Hill or meeting with like-minded advocates to pressure the federal government to reform its mandatory minimum drug sentences, reduce mass incarceration, re-enfranchise and provide reentry programs for the formerly incarcerated, and establish a National Criminal Justice Commission to evaluate the nation's criminal justice system.

Commitment and hard work pay off: This year, the U.S. Sentencing Commission voted to allow sentence reductions for prisoners under new guidelines of the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010 – meaning an average three-year reduction for 12,000 people.

Away from The Sentencing Project, I enjoy playgrounds and swimming lessons with my husband, Darren, and two-year-old son, Oliver.

Marc Levin DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

My job as development director of The Sentencing Project is to raise money from two primary sources: Individual donors and private foundations. This involves proposal writing, grant reporting, fundraising campaigns, and making sure donors know how valuable they are to The Sentencing Project's mission. Over 40 years ago, I went to prison as a result of opposition to the United States waging war in Southeast Asia. In prison, I experienced ever-present and random violence; was strapped in a cot for four days in pain with kidney stones and denied medication; held thousands of miles away from family and friends, often denied

access to mail. Most people I was locked up with had it much rougher with 10-year plus sentences. Few experienced the unearned privileges I had as a white male with a college education that limited the collateral consequences of my felony conviction. And none of them have the privilege I enjoy of working for The Sentencing Project.

Cody Mason PROGRAM ASSOCIATE

I'm currently the program associate at The Sentencing Project, where I assist with work in advocacy, research, communications, and operations. I attend meetings and prepare issue briefing papers, work on a national survey on juvenile life without parole, and help maintain The Sentencing Project's website, email messages, and Facebook page.

I served as an intern with The Sentencing Project during my senior year at American University – where I majored in political science – after learning about the organization's work from an article in *The New York Times*. I joined the staff full-time after graduation in June.

My initial interest in criminal justice reform grew out of the war on drugs after seeing a documentary in high school, "In Pot We Trust," on medical marijuana. This interest expanded during college after I took several justice classes. It led me to minor in justice and to work for the Essex County Prosecutor's Office in Newark, New Jersey for a summer.

My father is a prosecutor, and I'm currently considering applying to law school. I'm an avid music fan and I enjoy attending concerts in the Washington metropolitan area.

Serawit Mekonnen DATABASE MANAGER

Since June 2007, I've managed The Sentencing Project's database of advocates, allies, media contacts and donors. Previously, I managed data for a trade association and performed web design and content coordination for a consulting firm.

I grew up in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. I have a Diploma in Office Management from the Commercial College of Addis Ababa and a BSc Honors in Information Technology from Middlesex University, London.

I speak French and hope to learn Spanish in the future. Away from The Sentencing Project, I enjoy reading, swimming and jogging with my husband on a trail near our home. I'm also an avid cook who makes the food of my homeland with Western ingredients. My latest culinary challenge is trying to make gluten-free injera, a traditional yeast risen flatbread made from teff in Ethiopia, but usually made from wheat flour in the U.S.

Staff Profiles continued on page 6

Ashley Nellis, Ph.D.

RESEARCH ANALYST

I've been with The Sentencing Project since 2008 and lead its juvenile justice work. Curiosity about the administration of justice in America led me to pursue an undergraduate degree in criminal justice while engaging in social justice advocacy and research on prisons in Texas. I then earned a Masters and Ph.D. in criminal justice from American University while working at a national nonprofit research organization, an experience that allowed me to combine academic learning with real-life data collection, management and analysis of juvenile justice systems. I continue to combine research with progressive sentencing reform at The Sentencing Project because I believe that fairness, investment in rehabilitation and second chances for reformed offenders should be integral to our justice system, especially for juveniles. In my spare time, I'm a long-distance cyclist.

Terry Nixon

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

As director of operations for The Sentencing Project since 2009, I'm responsible for day-to-day operations, including the design and implementation of all administrative and operational policies, coordination of financial functions, management of employee benefits and relations, review of all organizational agreements and contracts, and acting as liaison to The Sentencing Project's board of directors.

I'm known to lighten work with humor to help and encourage others. As the father of a 19-year old son and mentor to young African American men and women, I use material from The Sentencing Project to help keep them on the "right side" of the law. I'm a country music fan and still

cherish my teenage hope of clog dancing on the Grand Ole Opry, though now it's on my "bucket list."

Prior to joining The Sentencing Project, I worked for the Institute for Higher Education Policy. Before that, I was Director of Administration and Human Resources for the National Academy of Social Insurance. I'm a graduate of Georgia's Albany State University, earned a Master's in Applied Sciences from Florida A&M University and a Master's in Theology from Maple Springs Seminary in Maryland.

Nicole Porter

STATE ADVOCACY COORDINATOR

My interest in mass incarceration developed when many of the young men I grew up with in the Greenspoint area of Houston, Texas, ended up under the supervision of the criminal justice system. Trying to understand those dynamics led me to study public policy at the University of Texas, where I earned a Master's in Public Affairs at the LBJ School with a thesis on self employment as an economic development strategy among formerly incarcerated African Americans.

I have been at The Sentencing Project since 2009 and spend most of my time working with reformers outside the Beltway, linking The Sentencing Project's research to state reform initiatives and monitoring changes and reforms in state criminal justice policy. A good deal of progress has been made in criminal justice reform as evidenced by our documentation of state prison closures, but a great deal still needs to be done. Outside of work, I enjoy searching for new songs for my playlist and taking my 2004 Suzuki to the mechanic.

MEDIA:

The Sentencing Project in the News

The Washington Post

July 17, 2011

Five myths about Americans in prison

By Marc Maurer and David Cole

No country on Earth imprisons more people per capita than the United States. But for America, mass incarceration has proved a losing proposition. The Supreme Court recently found California's overcrowded prisons unconstitutional, and state legislators want to cut the vast amounts of public money spent on prison warehousing.

Why are so many Americans in prison, and which ones can be safely released?

Let's address some common misunderstandings about our incarceration problem.

1. Crime has fallen because incarceration has risen.
2. The prison population is rising because more people are being sentenced to prison.
3. Helping prisoners rejoin society will substantially reduce the prison population.
4. There's a link between race and crime.
5. Racial disparities in incarceration reflect police and judges' racial prejudice.

Los Angeles Times

July 1, 2011

The commission's mail, about 43,500 letters and emails, ran overwhelmingly in favor of the reductions. The Sentencing Project, a Washington group that pushes for reform in sentencing laws, also strongly encouraged approval of the reductions.

Kara Gotsch, director of advocacy for the Sentencing Project, said the panel's vote "confirms that fairness and equal treatment under the law are fundamental principles of our criminal justice system."

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Your Support Makes A Difference

Support our efforts to promote fair and effective criminal justice policies and alternatives to incarceration by sending a contribution today.

Contribute online at www.sentencingproject.org, or send a check to: The Sentencing Project, 1705 DeSales St, NW, 8th floor, Washington, DC 20036.

Make a long-term investment in sentencing reform

For information about how you can make a bequest or a stock gift to The Sentencing Project, please contact Marc Levin at (202) 628-0871

THE SENTENCING PROJECT

works for a fair and effective criminal justice system by promoting reforms in sentencing law and practice, and alternatives to incarceration.

To these ends, it seeks to recast the public debate on crime and punishment.

To receive news and updates from The Sentencing Project electronically, send an email to: staff@sentencingproject.org

RESEARCH

Reports Document Prison Closings and Sentencing

A report released by The Sentencing Project documents that 13 states have closed correctional facilities or are considering doing so this year, reversing a 40-year trend of prison expansion. By year-end there will be a potential reduction of 15,500 prison beds nationally. The report, *On the Chopping Block: State Prison Closings*, by Nicole D. Porter, attributes these developments to the impact of recent state sentencing reforms along with the constraints on state budgets.

In recent years Michigan had led all states with its closure of 21 facilities, including prison camps, as a result of sentencing and parole reforms. Overall, Michigan has reduced its corrections capacity by over 12,000 beds for a total cost savings of \$339 million.

Two other policy reports issued this year illustrate both the ongoing problem of excessive sentencing as well as the potential for reform. In *Cracked Justice*, The Sentencing Project documented that 13 states maintain sentencing disparities between crack and powder cocaine offenses, despite scientific consensus that the drugs are pharmacologically the same. In Missouri, for example, there is a 75:1 differential in the quantity of drugs required to trigger a ten-year mandatory minimum sentence.

Since publication of the report, Ohio has eliminated its sentencing disparity. In Missouri and Oklahoma, staff of The Sentencing Project

have been working with state legislators and advocacy organizations to advance reform of these laws.

Reform of state sentencing policies has advanced in many parts of the country, as featured in an annual review of legislative initiatives by Nicole Porter. In 2010, legislatures in at least 23 states and the District of Columbia adopted policies that may contribute to reductions in prison populations and eliminate barriers to reentry. These include modifying “drug free school zone”

laws in New Jersey, reallocating corrections funds from reduced incarceration to reentry services in Colorado, and establishing an incarceration reduction goal in Vermont.

The Sentencing Project staff has also provided support to sentencing reform advocates in a number of states this year, including:

- Support and technical assistance for a Connecticut measure to modify a mandatory minimum sentencing provision to limit the number of drug offenses subject to a “school zone” enhancement.
- Support of legislation to assess the racial impact of proposed sentencing legislation, introduced by Oregon State Senator Chip Shields.
- Support of efforts in Minnesota to provide a second chance for persons with prior convictions seeking employment.



Central Unit, a minimum-security prison in Houston, Texas' Sugar Land suburb, which closed this year.

Justin Dehn for The Texas Tribune

DONOR PROFILE

Helping to Right a Wrong

Thousands of individuals donate to The Sentencing Project each year. Each has his or her reasons. Sometimes, as in the case of Michael Blake and his wife, Barbara Howald, it is as simple as the discovery that an immense wrong has been quietly perpetuated while most of us weren't looking.

“If we were suddenly to put a million people behind bars, Americans wouldn't stand for it,” Blake, vice president of finance at the Haas Jr. Fund, told The Sentencing Project. “But if you do it over years, it's a change that goes unnoticed.

“Two million people behind bars. It's horrifying. It's Kafkaesque.

“We donate to a number of organizations that focus on the problems of incarceration, but The Sentencing Project is going after the root of the problem: the systems that serve to boost prison populations to stunning levels.”



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Media continued from page 6



May 24, 2011

Opposing view: Reduce prison populations

By Marc Maurer

Since 1980, California has developed a bloated prison population for two key reasons. First, the state's punitive sentencing policies such as "three strikes and you're out" have produced such bizarre outcomes as an offender serving 25 years to life for stealing three golf clubs. And second, California leads the nation in sending offenders back to prison for violations of parole, many for technical reasons, such as failing a drug test, rather than a new crime.

The court's ruling will not result in the release of any offender who represents an immediate threat to public safety. But because 95% of inmates will eventually be released

from prison, the key issue centers on use of resources. That is, should the state continue to spend \$48,000 a year to imprison a low-level drug offender or provide treatment in the community at far less cost?

The Philadelphia Inquirer philly.com

February 21, 2011

Editorial: The Prison Industry

Remember when "lock 'em up and throw away the key" was part of the right-wing catechism? No more. While many conservatives still believe you can't go wrong with incarceration, budget-busting prison costs across America have forced some new thinking.

In fact, well-known conservatives such as Newt Gingrich, Grover

Norquist, Richard Viguerie, and Ward Connerly have formed a new organization called Right On Crime, which is promoting alternatives to imprisonment.

State Auditor General Jack Wagner says more prison construction could be halted if the state embraced alternatives that could save \$50 million in fiscal 2011-2012 and \$350 million over four years....

The Sentencing Project, a prison reform group, also has a new report documenting this country's penchant for jails. It says the U.S. incarceration rate of 743 inmates per 100,000 residents is the highest in the world.

There are now more than 7.2 million Americans either incarcerated or on probation or parole, which is a 290 percent increase since 1980.