



ALL OF US OR NONE

NEWSPAPER

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Environmental Justice Queen **Ms. Margaret Gordon** and Taqwaa's Youth Diversion.

East Oakland Youth Leading the Campaign for Environmental Justice

by **Taqwaa Bonner**, LSPC Housing Advocate

East Oakland North Star

The East Oakland North Star, a community collaboration of:

- Taqwaa's Youth Diversion (TYD)
- Intricate Details LLC
- Reaching Every Child: Enrichment Support Services (RECESS)
- Earth's Legacy Care
- Block by Block
- Lifers Leaving a Legacy
- The East Oakland Boxing Association
- United Souls Inc
- Lending Hands United
- Celebrity Cole Foundation

Presents a collaborative proposal for environmental justice, public health, and

Assembly Bill 617 (Garcia, C., Chapter 136, Statutes of 2017) is a state-mandated program for air districts to implement a community-based approach to improve air quality in communities that experience the most air pollution.

East Oakland was designated as an AB 617 community and the youth of these communities have identified a priority that will improve the air quality and public health of their communities.



Youth Mentor **Teyon Lacy** explains how AB 617 can restore the community.

community empowerment in East Oakland. This proposal seeks the City of Oakland and County of Alameda's support for the development and implementation of the **East Oakland Clean Air Plan of Action**— a grassroots-driven initiative designed to address environmental injustice, improve air quality, and provide vital community services in the Elmhurst district. The centerpiece of this initiative is the transformation of the long-defunct restroom facility at Willie Wilkins Playground into a multi-purpose Clean Air Community Center: a replicable prototype for clean air hubs throughout East Oakland.

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Honoring Juneteenth: Prisons, Parole, and Slavery in America Today

by **Daniella Dane**
LSPC Policy Fellow

In May, we celebrated International Workers' Month to honor the struggles and victories of labor movements during the Industrial Revolution, yet it often fails to acknowledge that, during this same era, Black people in the United States remained enslaved—excluded entirely from the rights and protections being fought for by the labor movement. In June, we celebrate Juneteenth, the emancipation of Black people from chattel slavery in 1865. However, the struggle for freedom is far from over. That is why this month, this issue seeks to highlight the many ways in which slavery continues through the carceral system. Millions of people who are disproportionately Black and Brown, are caged and forced into labor without rights, dignity, or fair compensation. The fight for justice must continue. We must dismantle the systems of oppression that continue to exploit Black and Brown life.

In the year 2025, job access for formerly incarcerated people remains a huge challenge. These challenges are exacerbated for low-income, Black and Brown people due to the afterlife of slavery, racism, and ongoing exploitation of marginalized communities. Formerly incarcerated Black and Brown individuals must combat racism and discrimination, including common denial of employment due to their criminal record. Studies by the Prison Policy Initiative show that formerly incarcerated people are unemployed at levels higher than Americans during the Great Depression. They suffer from worse unemployment than any other demographic group.

State-sanctioned violence in this country is engineered to exploit incarcerated people. People in prisons are often forced to work for incredibly low, frankly dehumanizing, wages: most incarcerated workers make less than \$1 per day.

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by Alissa Moore

Alissa Moore, LSPC Re-Entry Coordinator, shares about how her experience coming home inspired her to start operating an emergency line for currently incarcerated people.

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ALL OF US OR NONE

NEWSPAPER

Our All of Us or None newspaper serves to link those of us who have been locked up, those who are locked up, as well as our families and allies in this struggle.

We want to ensure that the voices of our people inside are heard and that inside artists are recognized for their contributions to this movement. **Your stories matter!**

Read Online:
prisonerswithchildren.org/newspaper

Questions or Feedback? Contact our new editor, Uma Nagarajan-Swenson at uma@prisonerswithchildren.org

AOUON Newspaper Editor
4400 Market Street
Oakland, CA 94608

SEEKING ART, POETRY, AND CREATIVE WRITING SUBMISSIONS!

Send them to us by August 1 for consideration for our September Verse & Vision arts issue!



MAIL YOUR SUBMISSIONS TO:

Freedom & Movement Center
AOUON Newspaper Editor
4400 MARKET STREET
OAKLAND, CA 94608

Inside News Articles. Opinion Pieces. Reviews. Features: Creative or exploratory. News Analysis. Poetry. Art. Comics
We can't wait to hear from you!



SELF DETERMINATION PLEDGE

As members of All of Us or None, we pledge

- To demand the right to speak in our own voices
- To treat each other with respect and not allow differences to divide us
- To accept responsibility for any acts that may have caused harm to our families, our communities or ourselves
- To fight all forms of discrimination
- To help build the economic stability of formerly-incarcerated people
- To claim and take care of our own children and our families
- To support community struggles to stop using prisons as the answer to social problems
- To play an active role in making our communities safe for everyone

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

JUNE 11, 2025

DEAR AOUON,

I WANT TO WRITE THIS SHORT LETTER SAYING HOW I APPRECIATE ALISSA MOORE (WE DID TIME TOGETHER) ARTICLE RECOGNIZING MADONNA WATSON (HEALTHCARE). I WANTED TO SHARE THIS:

THE DAY BEFORE I WENT TO THE CHOWHALL (I NEVER GO) A GIRL WAS IN FRONT OF ME, SHE WAS TALL AND I INSTANTLY THOUGHT OF MADONNA THINKING BACK TO A DAY SHE CHECKED ON ME WHILE AT COLUFI. SHE SAW ME IN THE DAYROOM ASKING HOW I WAS DOING (NOT GOOD, BECAUSE OF A ROOMMATE) I STARTED CRYING, THEN WE HUGGED AND HER WORDS THAT WILL FOREVER HOLD IN MY HEART WAS "I F'IN LOVE YOU" MADONNA WAS LOYAL TO HER FRIENDS, SHE WOULD DO ANYTHING TO PROTECT THEM. ESPECIALLY HER ELDER (ME). WE BOTH WENDED UP HERE AT CIW WE WOULD RUN INTO EACH OTHER

Then COVID-19 HIT the world. People were dying but when I heard Madonna passed I didnt believe it. I JUST SAW HER HAPPY AS SHE ALWAYS WAS. I RECEIVED DETAILS OF HER DEATH AND NEVER KNEW MADONNA HAD CANCER BECAUSE SHE DIDNT LET THAT CHANGE THE LOVE SHE HAD. I MISS HER, SHE WAS SO BEAUTIFUL AND PRETTY MUCH, US WOMEN FROM VSPW WERE FAMILY. ITS SAD TO KNOW HEALTHCARE FAILED MADONNA AND SO MUCH OTHERS. MY OLD ROOMMATE (FROM VSPW) LISA CONWELLY DIED HERE BECAUSE MEDICAL DIDNT ANSWER THE KNOCKS ON HER DOOR. SOMETHING NEED TO CHANGE, IMPROVEMENTS NEED TO HAPPEN. I AM NOW 60 YRS OLD AND I'VE HAD MY ISSUES WITH MEDICAL NEEDS. THANK YOU FOR HONORING MADONNA'S LIFE I KNOW SHE'S UP IN HEAVEN SPREADING HER BEAUTIFUL SPIRIT WITH OTHERS. SHE WILL BE FOREVER MISSED. THANK YOU ALISSA

♡ BERNICE

Wake Up

by Glenn Deshon Green aka Jeruz
Northern Nevada Correctional Center

I watch alota ridiculousness
no Rob or Steelo
in the hood where brothers hustlin
and robbing for a kilo
Steady ducking bullets, tryna dodge the rico
high rates of homicide, taking lives like repo
Daddy in the pen, moms smoking primos
they cut WIC and welfare plus G moms doing kemo
Guess we destin for hell since money's the root to evil
at the end of the day you gotta take care of ya people
and the high paying jobs don't mess with ya average negro
bad enough we get profiled everywhere that we go
Stool pigeons singin and don't even know the key notes
Officer I can't breathe, would you please let me go
Mass incarceration got us in the system like aminos
Prison industries fulla blacks and latinos
So many souls rotten on Deathrow
it's the new Jim Crow in case you aint know
I hear em say it's a White World, I know you hear the white lies
All we want is revenge it's in the pupils, and the whites of our eyes.
Forget these fake black leaders, because they ain't on our side
remember no revolution get old, but revolutionist die
I could taste the vengeance
My people wanted freedom so bad some jumped off the Amistad and was eaten by sharks alive, others drowned in the tide
now here's a reason to ride for those wanting to slide
aint you sick and tired of being deprived?
you say there's no racial barriers
I beg your pardon
remember what zimmerman did to Trayvon Martin
How about George Floyd or Dialo
George & Jonathan Jack
Be careful they might kill you next because your @** is black.



DEDICATION

Rebecca B. Helm, AOUON Supporter

This dedication was shared alongside a donation to AOUON. We wanted to pass it on to our community.

I dedicate this to blessed motherhood, and to protecting the beautiful new souls in children. And I dedicate it to my Black family of all people oppressed and blessed by this category of human around the world. This is dedicated to all my ancestors and to all my descendants. May we all shine as our truest selves that all might see and shine too. And this is to the families that this money helps. May your lives become more than you'd hoped for, and that you hope for great things.

From the Editorial Team:

Hey AOUON Fam,

We're writing to acknowledge our recent delays in getting the paper out. We've been going through some organizational restructuring as we try to make our paper and org as good as it can be. Please accept our sincere apologies, and we hope to be on track in the near future. We're grateful for your patience and understanding.

In solidarity,

Uma & the AOUON Newspaper Team

East Oakland continued from page 1

Proposal Objectives:

A. Deconstruction and Reconstruction of Willie Wilkins Playground Facility

- **Current Status:** The existing restroom facility is in disrepair, has been chained off, and unused for decades.
- **Proposed Action:** Tear down the existing structure and rebuild it as a multi-purpose Clean Air Center.
- **Function:** Serve as a hub for free, year-round community programs including after-school tutoring, weekend enrichment programs, and summer learning academies.
- **Impact:** Provide a safe, educational, and supportive environment for East Oakland youth and families at no cost to parents and guardians.

B. Emergency Charging Station for Medically Vulnerable Residents

- **Need:** Many community members rely on electronically powered medical equipment, such as breathing machines and electric wheelchairs.
- **Function:** the new facility will include emergency backup generators and charging stations accessible to the community during power outages or PG&E public safety shutoffs.
- **Impact:** These are life-sustaining services that will ensure continuity of care during electrical blackouts currently inaccessible to many medically vulnerable residents.

C. Clean Air Safe Haven for Respiratory Health

- **Need:** East Oakland residents face disproportionate exposure to air pollution, exacerbating asthma, allergies, and other respiratory conditions.
- **Function:** Install portable high-efficiency air filtration systems within the center, creating a clean air environment.
- **Access:** Community members can use

the facility as a clean air safe haven on high-risk air quality days.

- **Impact:** improve health outcomes for individuals with respiratory issues, especially children and elders.

Community Collaboration and Stewardship

This proposal is submitted on behalf of a broad-based coalition of local organizations with deep roots in the community. These groups represent decades of service, cultural competency, and commitment to holistic well-being in East Oakland. Together, we are committed to participatory design and planning; ongoing stewardship and maintenance of the facility; and transparent collaboration with the city and county departments.

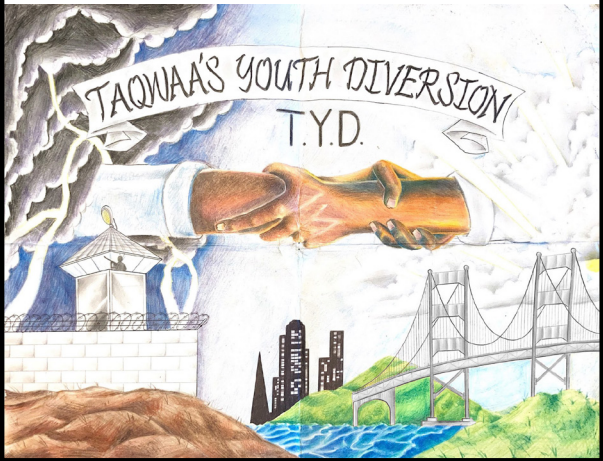
Call to Action

- We respectfully request the following from the City of Oakland and Alameda County:
1. Approval to decommission and remove the existing restroom structure at Willie Wilkins Playground.
 2. Allocation of capital funding and infrastructure support to build the new Clean Air Community Center.
 3. Partnership in establishing clean air standards and emergency preparedness protocols for the facility.
 4. Recognition and support of this project as a model for scalable implementation throughout Oakland.

Conclusion

The East Oakland Clean Air Plan of Action represents a vital investment in the health, safety, and empowerment of a historically underserved community. This initiative addresses urgent needs—from educational disparities to public health and environmental justice—with sustainable, community-led solutions. We are ready to partner with the City of Oakland and Alameda County to make this vision a reality.

Taqwaa's Youth Diversion is a juvenile awareness program designed by Taqwaa Bonner, LSPC housing advocate, to provide productive pathways for young people. It is led and staffed by formerly incarcerated people who relate first-hand to the paths leading to incarceration and support youth in avoiding them.



Zalika Bonner shows how the restrooms are not conducive to the community.



Kaliyah Robinson: **Plant more trees** for better air quality!



Temaria Lacy: I have a right to a **safe and stable environment**.



Deja Hurts: I have a right to **breathe clean air**.

Involuntary Servitude is Slavery: Excerpts from a Panel with Legal Experts.

On May 13, participants at Quest for Democracy were invited to attend a legal symposium about the basis of involuntary servitude in the US and CA Constitutions and how we can get them abolished.

As we celebrate Juneteenth, we honor this day and our ancestors who were forced into chattel slavery while calling attention to the the continuation of slavery through mass incarceration.

This transcript has been edited for clarity, grammar, and brevity.

Participants:

Erwin Chemerinsky, *Prof. & Dean of Berkeley Law School*

Carmen-Nicole Cox, *(then) Director of Government Affairs for ACLU California Action and (current) President of The Cox Firm for Law and Policy*

Lawrence Cox, *Regional Advocacy and Organizing Associate, LSPC*

Brandon V. Stracener, *Attorney and Senior Research Fellow, California Constitution Center*

J Vasquez, *Policy & Legal Services Manager, CURYJ*

Moderated by Eric C. Sapp, *Staff Attorney, LSPC*

Eric Sapp: Involuntary servitude as a legal concept in America even pre-dates the constitution itself. Dean Chemerinsky, what do you think the original meaning of involuntary servitude would have been in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787?

Dean Chemerinsky: I think when you focus on the Northwest Ordinance or early American history, you have to put it in the context of the society that existed then. Slavery was deeply entrenched in the southern states at the time. Slavery was protected by the Constitution when it was written in 1787: Congress couldn't ban the importation of additional people for 20 years –one of only two provisions that couldn't be amended in the Constitution, and the provision that enslaved people would count as three-fifths of a person for allocating seats in the House of Representatives. The fugitive slave clause in article four of the Constitution stated that if an enslaved person escaped from a slave state to a free state, the enslaved individual had to return to his or her owner. It was clear at the constitutional convention in 1787 that any effort to try to even chip away at the institution of slavery would have meant that there wouldn't be a new constitution. North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia all said that they would leave the constitutional convention if Congress had the power to ban the importation of additional individuals. So when you talk about the Northwest ordinance, it was very much a focus on slavery in the context in which it existed in the south for those of African descent.

Sapp: And does the state of California's concepts of involuntary servitude and slavery mirror those of the federal government, or is there room for difference in meaning in the concepts?

Carmen-Nicole Cox: I just want to note for y'all that in 1974, California reorganized its constitution. And one of the things they did that is interesting here is the language that we see now, that's the consequence of a ballot proposition from 1974. And before that reorganization, it was actually much more

conflated with involuntary servitude and slavery. In what was supposed to be more of a technical cleanup, we have the language that we see now, which intentionally tries to make involuntary servitude and slavery seem very different, very distinct. But at the end of the day, what we're talking about, **whether legally, logically, physically, spiritually, is that folks are being compelled to give over their talent, their human labor, their skill, their time, their ability, their effort, whether or not they want to.** So they land on the bottom the exact same and while there might be legal rationale behind why courts want to treat them differently, for our purposes, it is very important that people see that there is no distinction in the way that it lands on the body and the way that the exploiters previously the the colonizers, the masters, the slave owners, the way that those folks benefit today is there's still very much profit.

J Vasquez: We know that forcing somebody to labor and punishing them, right, takes away that person, dehumanizes them, right? And so, we're talking about here is saying that people have a fundamental right to how their bodies are used, right, even in the carceral state, regardless of what they've done. People should not be punished, which they currently are, for missing work because they're sick and they didn't get that medical time. People shouldn't be punished for being injured on the job, right, and then being expected to go back to work. Or maybe someone wants to do a different self-help program, not being able to because of their work hours, and if they choose to go to that self-help program instead of work, they get rid of them, right?

I think it was Brandon that talked about the 13th amendment. And the exception clause in California was 16 years before the 13th amendment, right? So I think what California got to look at is the unique perspective before even San Quentin was built, before even the first prison was built. There's so much that goes into it with California being accepted as a union. They have all these white men in California legislature like, oh crap, California has to enter as a free state. What are they going to do about slaves? Right? So they got very crafty and came up with the exception clause in 1849. Just five months later they came up with the Indian Indenture Act, the reason for the indenture act is because it was the native peoples that were exploited here in California. Blacks were exploited too, there weren't that many in California at the time. So, these people were already being enslaved. A lot of these white legislators who owned slaves were like okay the free state, how do we maintain our property, how do we maintain our businesses and part of that was saying, "Okay, well now we can exploit you or punch up crime." And then a few months later they did that, right? You're criminalized for being unemployed, you're criminalized for being homeless, or loitering, or living an immoral life. So any white man could take that native person before a white judge...So I just wanted to tie it back to the history of how they got in because when people look at it today it's very different.

Sapp: Does anyone want to add any thoughts about the conception of slavery involved in the founding perhaps?

Lawrence Cox: I'm not the constitutional expert. But guess what? This is so simple. If we're not trying to ban involuntary servitude

we can have any type of language, we can water this language down, we can leave open to leave loopholes, we can leave open for misinterpretation and litigation that follows. And guess what? The practice continues while all this is going on. I think the implications are great because if we put so much effort passing the legislative process and then just say we get to, you know, the ballot again and we pass. How much energy is it going to take to reinvent what we already fixed? If we're going to take the energy to go through these processes over and over and trust me, we're willing to do it because we've been doing it for years. Wouldn't we prioritize making sure that we close that loophole in every form and action period? Well, guess what? If the language that we have right now, 475 or ACA6, **if we can't amend this language and make sure that we're specific and we're calling out involuntary servitude as well, then guess what? We're not doing justice for the individuals that we're fighting for.** We're not doing justice, you know, for all the individuals that have been subjected to it like me and J and a lot of us in this room have experienced involuntary servitude who know exactly what that feels like. The implication I believe is great. We look at states that have already amended their constitution. We see guess what the practice still continues. If we look at all the legal matters that are still you know going forth the misinterpretations that you know are allowed to be matched back and forth on guess what it didn't do the job and the implications for California is this will follow in their footsteps. I think maybe Colorado may have had some of the strongest language that we could potentially I don't want to say draw from because language that we had like I said with ACA 8 when we passed that I think that would have been the strongest language in the nation because not only did we call out everything that needed to be called out but we also made sure that incarcerated population was protected through the constitution and they weren't punished for choosing to forgo a job a voluntary job should I say and you know decide they want to partake in rehabilitative courses. With the language that we currently have now, if we don't amend, then guess what? All that goes out the door. [...]and I'm pretty sure everybody else would agree that the language should be changed to something that's [...] significant and, you know, just do this symbolic dance all through the capital and then, you know, up and down California State with another campaign. I'm not trying to convince somebody. That's hard work. So, the implications really in so many different ways and factors is truly great.

Vasquez: Yeah, so part of the problem with the legislators is when they try to clean something up often times they get more confusing. When article 1 section 1849 was written, it was one sentence. It said neither slavery nor involuntary servitude unless for the punishment for crimes are tolerated by the state. So it was like one sentence, it combined them. What Carmen talked about in 1974, is when they tried to clarify things, they separated the two. So in other words it now says slavery is prohibited period and involuntary servitude is prohibited except for punishing a crime. So if we're talking about current ACA 6 as written or its absence [ie involuntary servitude clause], its absence is not saying involuntary servitude shall be prohibited, it's saying slavery in all forms is prohibited. Well guess what technically legally slavery is already prohibited in the constitution right so really it's not doing anything we got to be very specific to saying that involuntary servitude is prohibited as well.Because if we

"People have a fundamental right to how their bodies are used, even in the carceral state, regardless of what they've done" - J Vasquez

don't do that, then technically CDCR is going to keep trying to keep the status quo. They've done that for decades, we're not going to change that overnight. So, we got to ensure that they cannot continue the same working conditions, forced labor, which we know they're going to do if we just say slavery in all forms is prohibited, right? Because we're not touching involuntary servitude. That's just being absent all of a sudden. We have to strictly prohibit it because if we don't, we're likely to see the same conditions even if that ballot passes the votes. So, it's very dangerous. It's pretty much not going to do anything.

Carmen-Nicole Cox: I have so many thoughts. During the campaign, you talk to a lot of folks across age, across socio-economic status, race and gender identity. We talked to so many people and quite honestly there were a great many folks who do not understand the conditions inside. We are a very punitive society and we conflate accountability with strict punishment and I would say that particularly in certain communities that is true. So I think it is in part an attitude, but **our attitudes are learned, these are learned understandings about what it takes to make our community safer, about what rehabilitation looks like, about what redemption looks like, about what accountability is.** And I do think that in some ways, we fail to connect with enough folks who hold the attitude that this brutal and inhumane treatment of individuals is somehow accountability. People were literally using the word accountability, as if the only way that you can exact accountability, that you can achieve accountability, is to lash a man across his back. And failing to connect with more people to have the conversation to help them to unlearn. Literally, we are steeped in this social climate that says particularly for Black and Brown folks, these are people who need to be whipped into shape, and but for that they will not cannot join us safely in society. It's why we marshal so many of our folks, Black and Brown folks, into these cages in the first place. And the idea that they would sit in these cages and not be



whipped, folks genuinely felt like that would in some ways have people avoid accountability.

Sapp: We're at the announced end time. So I wanted to ask if you have any concluding observations.

Brandon Stracener: I think many people don't contemplate the value economic and otherwise of a reduced recidivism rate of having folks being able to get out of prison and live normal productive lives and have meaningful lives and be welcomed back into society and and you know yes there's tax revenues that come from that. On one hand, should the money really be an issue here? And on another I know an obstacle we often face when trying to convince the legislature or voters to do something is folks immediately run to think of their wallets even if that shouldn't be the primary consideration. So I think it's helpful to look at that complete picture. I will say that one of the values of being Californian is that we have multiple paths to victory on any policy issue. So if the constitutional amendment can't get across the line, I understand and I think was an excellent point raised by the panel that a constitutional amendment is more resistant

to change. Correct. And that that goes both ways. That's a benefit. It can be a drawback if the constitutional amendment creates worse effects for the folks who are trying to help. So there's always the path to pursue statutory amendments through the legislature and to push the legislature to quickly react when there's a mistake or an unforeseen consequence. So if a constitutional amendment doesn't seem to be able to break through with the voters, the legislature will move, it will act. And it may not always be a

benefit. Yes, there are concerns about blowback, but I would say, you know, I'd urge anyone, you know, in California trying to make change, look at all of your avenues and your paths and you may find an alternative path to accomplish the same result. And, sometimes that's just kind of the difficulty of getting something done in California. I commend the people here for pursuing this path.

Sapp: Thank you. Carmen?

Carmen-Nicole Cox: What I will say is, at

the end of the day where we are right now is we have two pieces of legislation that say they want to help us achieve our ultimate goal of ending the forced labor of all people in the state of California as we have. The legislation falls short. Thankfully, we have all you beautiful people here and all your friends and family, all your followers, all your caring folk, even the people who don't like you, the people your social media because they don't like, all you have access to. We need to let folks know we are on the verge of being the first state in the union to amend our constitution in a way that effectively, that meaningfully, that actually ends forced labor of all California and we need to hear different words. We need a few different words. Thankfully, it's all us. And there's one person that we can all reach out to to help us get to where we want to go. Her name is Assembly woman Lori Wilson. This lovely lady represents the assembly district that covers Solano, it covers Vallejo, there are all the people out there she represents, and we need to have our people get in touch with her people, and let her know that she's just a few words shy of where we need to be, so we can give her time to help.

Vasquez: You know I appreciate the choir, but just talk to your folks. Talk to people. You know, the more they hear from us, the more they understand what this would mean, right? Cause a lot of people, as we've talked about, don't know the experience of an incarcerated person. They see what's on TV. They see what's in movies. That's all they know, right? So, **it's up to us to educate them on this to shift that paradigm on them.** You know what I'm saying? So, they have an understanding. And it's our lived experience in here is going to do that.

Sapp: And Lawrence, I'll give you the last word. I just want to say thank you to all our panelists, it's been a great panel.

Lawrence Cox: I want to echo what both of y'all said in broader terms. Do the work, get out there, and get involved. A lot of us, we've been in it. You know what, keep that endurance and keep pushing. To those that haven't been in it, get involved. Whether it's talking to your legislative members, especially the author of this bill, whether it's going partnering with, colleges, community college, the UC's in your area. Educate, you know, enlist others to help you educate. Volunteer to go somewhere else in another county that you know you've never been to before, but maybe you know, need that education, too. **Get the work done, 'cause it's going to take all of us.**

LEGAL CORNER: How to Get Visitation While Incarcerated

by Meredith Wallis, LSPC Family Defense Attorney

The first step towards getting visitation while incarcerated is to gather information about your situation. Locate your child and your child's caregiver, and find out if there is already a court order that has given someone authority over your child. There are three courts that may have issued a court order about your child: juvenile dependency court (Child Protective Services (CPS)), probate court (guardianship petitions), and family court (divorces, dissolutions of domestic partnerships, child support, and "paternity" cases). If CPS or guardianships are not involved, the case will be heard in family court.

Before getting a court order for visitation, you should try to reach an informal visiting agreement with your child's caregiver. Write to the caregiver and ask that they bring your child for a visit or make other arrangements, such as them accepting regular phone calls, sending photos of your child, or keeping you informed of their school progress. Be sure to put the

agreement in writing and keep a written record of how your arrangement works. If you are not able to arrange a satisfactory informal visiting agreement with the caregiver, you will probably need to file a court order for visitation.

If there is already a court order regarding custody and visitation of your child (in any of the three courts), then you will likely have to file documents in that same court case to modify the court order and give you visiting rights while you are incarcerated. It is important to make a strong case on paper and include helpful documents, because you are not guaranteed a hearing. If you have a probate court case, you can write a letter to the Family Law Facilitator, an office that helps people get practical information on filling out court forms, to find out what forms your county probate court requires. You could also ask the Law Library clerks at your institution for help. If there is an existing family law case, you can make a written motion for visitation in the lawsuit already on file.

If there is no court order in any court regarding custody and visitation of your child, you'll need to file a new lawsuit and ask for visiting rights in family court. In each case, you will fill out the court forms, file them with the correct court, ask for a hearing date, serve copies of court papers on your child's caregiver, prepare for a court hearing, attend a hearing, and obtain a court order. It is generally a good idea to attend court in person when seeking visitation with your child, if possible, or alternatively, you may appear in court by telephone or video conference. During your hearing, clearly state what you want, why it's reasonable, and why it's in your child's best interest, and be sure to include any additional exhibits.

For more info, including how to fill out forms and prepare for court, please write us for the Legal Services for Prisoners with Children's manual on Child Custody and Visiting Rights for Incarcerated Parents.

Juneteenth continued from Page 1

The labor movement and labor resistance is a critical factor in the story of mass incarceration. As Ruth Wilson Gilmore reminds us, the state disciplined a surplus labor force through punishment during the rise of prison building. Upon returning home, this same labor force is unable to find stable employment, despite this being a regular condition of parole. Formerly incarcerated individuals not only face systemic barriers to securing employment essential for the survival of themselves and their families, but they are also frequently denied access to both private and affordable housing— even when close family members, who they rely on for housing, emotional, and other forms of support, are committed and able to provide shelter upon their release. Not only are people ripped away from their families when they become incarcerated, but they continue to be forcefully separated from their loved ones when they are finally free. These exclusions and conditions create an environment where overcoming recidivism is more than difficult. It is a recursive loop of dispossession and racialized class warfare.

Racial capitalism is a term used to describe the system in which we live: one where racial domination and economic exploitation are fundamentally intertwined, sustaining profit and power through the subjugation of marginalized communities.

In the United States, this began with the enslavement of Black people and the colonization and genocide of Indigenous peoples. In the US today, mass incarceration functions as one of its most enduring and violent expressions. Black and Brown communities are systematically targeted by the state through policing, surveillance, and criminalization. These tactics were not created as a means of responding to, or preventing crime but rather to perpetuate the imprisonment of Black and Brown people for the purpose of labor extraction. Incarcerated individuals ,who are disproportionately people of color, are routinely forced to work for pennies under threat of punishment, such as not being able to have visits with their family members or loved ones as well as phone calls.

The system of mass incarceration generates billions in wages for police, corrections officers, and more. Both state agencies and private industries benefit as well. This involuntary labor is legitimized by the

13th Amendment, which abolished slavery “except as a punishment for crime,” allowing carceral institutions to reproduce slavery in a legally sanctioned form. Upon release, formerly incarcerated individuals continue to be economically excluded, denied access to employment, housing, and basic civil rights. This produces an environment where those who are formerly incarcerated, as well as their families continue to experience class and wealth inequality.

Though many believe that mass incarceration is a broken system which needs to be improved to ensure the rehabilitation of incarcerated individuals, the carceral state is working precisely as designed to maintain racial hierarchies and ensure capitalist profit through the criminalization and exploitation of Black, Brown, and poor peoples’ lives. Parole and probation are just two of the many tools that demonstrate this goal of mass incarceration. Systems of parole and probation operate as extensions of the carceral state and function as mechanisms of state-sanctioned violence as a means of ensuring the continued coerced labor of Black and Brown people. Research conducted by the Prison Policy Initiative shows that more than 1 in 10 people admitted to state prisons every year have committed no new crime; they have simply “violated” one or more of the many conditions, or rules, of their probation. Roughly 2.9 million people under correctional control are on probation, surpassing the 1.9 million people currently incarcerated. The strict rules and conditions of parole and probation are strategically designed to ensure recidivism.

Technical violations often result in imprisonment, regardless of whether a new crime has been committed. This reinforces cycles of control and punishment under the pretense of rehabilitation. Moreover, parole and probation frequently impose financial burdens on individuals through fees for drug testing, ankle monitors, and mandatory programs. This criminalizes poverty and extracts economic value from those already marginalized and oppressed. By denying full civil rights, restricting autonomy, and perpetuating racial disparities, these systems extend the reach of the carceral state beyond

"Racial domination and economic exploitation are fundamentally intertwined, sustaining profit and power through the subjugation of marginalized communities."

prison walls.

Not only are probation and parole weapons of the carceral state and thus capitalism, so are the restrictions on employment and housing for formerly incarcerated. While there have been policies enacted to mitigate the barriers formerly incarcerated individuals face when it comes to employment and housing markets, we need to continue to fight for the restoration of human and civil rights for people who are incarcerated, formerly incarcerated and their families.

San Francisco fair chance ordinance is a policy that has been enacted to protect tenants from discrimination from affordable housing providers based on their criminal information history. Before checking criminal history the housing provider must determine eligibility for housing by reviewing all other qualifications and provide the prospective tenant with a

copy of their rights before performing the background check. Housing providers are barred from taking into consideration an

applicant's criminal history such as arrests that did not result in a conviction, a conviction that is 7 years old, juvenile records and records that have been expunged.

Ban the Box is another initiative that has been created so that people who are formerly incarcerated only have their background checks performed after a conditional offer of employment, and on the application itself they do not have to provide any information pertaining to their criminal record. An issue directly addressed by movements like the Ban the Box initiative, which seeks to restore the fundamental right to work for all.

Initiatives like Ban the Box are more than policy changes, they are acts of resistance against a system designed to permanently punish and exploit black and brown labor. As we celebrate these victories, we must continue to push for transformative justice that fully restores the rights, dignity, and futures of all those impacted by incarceration. And we must do so in solidarity and community with each other!

ANSWERING THAT CALL: Why I Started an Emergency Hotline

by Alissa Moore, LSPC Re-Entry Coordinator

As many of you may know, five years ago I started a hotline for incarcerated people facing emergencies while incarcerated. I did this because I had seen some mainey stuff go down while I was inside and I was leaving behind for the most part the only family I had ever known in a place I knew all too well could be a hell on earth.

I was free for the first time as an adult, still learning to navigate the complexities of everyday life. I wasn't sure what could be done in some of the cases that would come on the line. Being as stubborn as I'm known to be, I didn't give up and soon found surefire ways to get results for the problems people inside were



calling about

Even though in the beginning I was virtually clueless, I knew one thing for certain: I had to answer the calls. What stuck with me more than anything, aside from the issues I faced while inside, was the fact that there was literally no one I could call that would understand what I was facing or who could or would co-navigate the problem. Even more, there was nobody who was patient enough to just listen, and sometimes that's what people need most.

Since it's been five years now, I think the single most valuable thing I've been able to offer people is an ear and maybe a voice of reason. Or as Jodie Daniels stated so eloquently in a recent letter, just having someone to talk to that has gone through the same circumstances he is currently going through helps him to understand clearly and gives him confidence that he can find his way out: “I listened to your

ear hustle podcast episode and realized that you really know what I’m going through with this life sentence.”

Those of us who have done time and been fortunate enough to leave all too soon realize we are and were suffering from a term I’ve coined: Post-Traumatic Incarceration Syndrome. When we’re able to reach out to another individual who has survived similar circumstances, above all, the one thing that they give us is hope.

Remember to send your submissions for our Verse & Vision issue in September!

Flip to the back to help out AOUON by taking a quick survey about your experiences.

Pride in Policy: Implementing the Transgender Respect, Agency, and Dignity Act

Editor's Note: As we celebrate Pride Month, we want to recognize and center our transgender and LGBTQ+ members in custody, who face unique challenges and discrimination due to their identities. California has taken steps to improve the conditions transgender people endure in prisons, most notably in 2020 with SB 132: the Transgender Respect, Agency, and Dignity Act. In 2025, CDCR proposed several changes to the implementation of SB 132.

LSPC' Staff Attorney Eric C. Sapp wrote to CDCR Undersecretary Johnson and staff about the proposed changes. The letter focused on four main issues in implementation: 1. The erasure of the term gender dysphoria; 2. The maintenance of privacy in the questionnaire process; 3. The burdensome housing transfer request process vs the arbitrary transfer return process; and 4. The incompatibility of search rules with federal Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) standards. Below is a summary and explanation of the letter's key points.

1. Erasure of “Gender Dysphoria”

NCR 25-04 proposed removing the definition of gender dysphoria from the law, with CDCR’s justification explaining that incarcerated persons are now allowed to self-identify. Though this explanation is logical, it leaves room for interpretation that the Department no longer recognizes the condition described by the term. In the future, this could manifest in people invalidating gender dysphoria as a valid diagnosis or basis for accommodation. The Department should clarify now.

2. Privacy

California Penal Code Section 2605 mandates that the initial intake process includes asking a person entering custody about their gender identity in a private setting, as well as prohibiting discipline for declining to answer. The incarcerated person can amend their identity at any time, and CDCR must repeat the private process as specified above. The proposed changes to implementation state that the questionnaire process is to be repeated, without specifying that it must be offered privately. The proposal also gives no regulations as to privacy or accessibility of the Gender Identity Questionnaire when stored in the department’s electronic databases. For the safety and protection of transgender incarcerated people, privacy is critical.

3. Housing Transfers and Return Transfers

Currently, incarcerated people have the right to “be housed at a correctional facility designated for men or women based on the individual’s preference” PC §2606 (emphasis added). Exceptions must be proven to be necessary in writing by the Department. The proposed regulations make the approval process tedious and difficult, and the rejection process easy. In addition, the regulations involve conducting a “social inquiry” with the person’s work or program supervisor, which risks outing someone at a pre-approval stage. The proposed regulations would make it easy for the warden of a receiving institution to send someone back to the institution they came from, which in this case, could entail a serious threat to

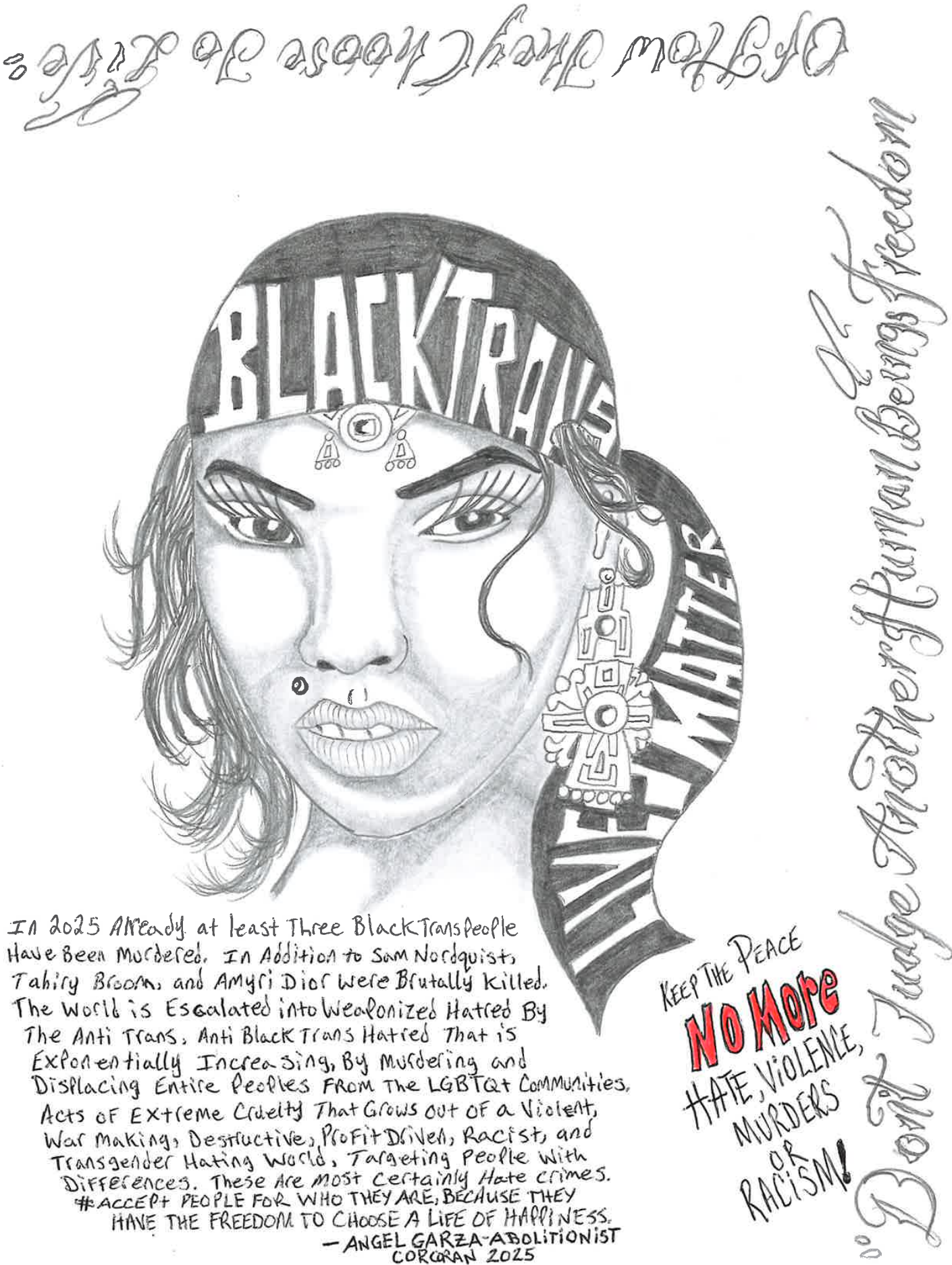
the incarcerated person’s safety. In sum, these proposed changes could lead to acts of discrimination and retaliation, either before the request is successful, after it is unsuccessful, or after a return.

4. Search Standards and Compliance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)

Possibly most concerning, these proposed regulations institute new search rules that enable much more invasive searches at a lower standard of circumstances warranting the search. Currently, Federal Regulation 28 CFR

§ 115.15(f) limits the need to “security,” while CDCR proposed regulations invoke a much wider definition that includes institutional order as well. This lowers the burden of justification on CDCR, enabling them to commit more potentially invasive searches on people without a credible security threat.

The Department should address the foregoing concerns as the rulemaking progresses. The Transgender Respect, Agency, and Dignity Act was, in many ways, a historic piece of legislation, and its implementation by this agency should be up to the tasks of dignity and respect.





ALL OF US OR NONE

Slave, who is it that shall free you?
Those in deepest darkness lying.
Comrade, only these can see you
Only they can hear you crying.
Comrade, only slaves can free you.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.
One alone our lot can't better.
Either gun or fetter.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.

You who hunger, who shall feed you?
If it's bread you would be carving,
Come to us, we too are starving.
Come to us and let us lead you.
Only hungry ones can feed you.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.
One alone her lot can't better.
Either gun or fetter.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.

Beaten one, who shall avenge you?
You, on whom the blows are falling,
Hear your wounded comrades calling.
Weakness gives us strength to lend you.
Come to us, we shall avenge you.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.
One alone his lot can't better.
Either gun or fetter.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.

Who, oh wretched one, shall dare it?
We who can no longer bear it.
Counts the blows that arm our spirit.
Taught the time by need and sorrow,
Strikes today and not tomorrow.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.
One alone our lot can't better.
Either gun or fetter.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.

Bertolt Brecht (1898–1956)

REQUEST: SURVEY

All of Us or None is collecting data about the experiences of our in-custody members. Please fill out the form below and mail it back to us at

AOOUN HQ
Attn: Robert Bowden
4400 Market St
Oakland, CA 94608

Before your current incarceration, were you ever involved with the foster care system?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Before your current incarceration, were you ever in custody in a juvenile facility?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Are you currently a parent?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

What is your ethnicity? _____

What level of yard are you currently on? _____

If you'd like to elaborate on any of your answers, write here:

ALL OF US OR NONE CHAPTER CONTACTS



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www.allofusornone.org

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All of Us or None Membership Form

| Yes, I want to become a member of ALL OF US OR NONE!

Name & Number: _____

Institution: _____

Address: _____

Country of Origin: _____

Do you have children? YES / NO. Do you need support with family issues? YES / NO

Earliest Parole/Release Date: _____ County of Parole/Probation: _____

- o I can organize & facilitate group meeting
- o I can help with membership outreach
- o I can distribute materials & resources
- o I can address & pass along feedback

Mail this form & any questions to:
AOOUN
4400 Market Street
Oakland, CA 94608

