



LSPC Newsletter, Nov-Dec 2019

More than Just a Chance: We are the Opportunity

Message from the Executive Director



Dorsey Nunn

Earlier this month, Hamdiya and I participated in [Justice Votes 2020](#), the first presidential forum organized and moderated by formerly-incarcerated and convicted people. While we appreciated Senators Harris and Booker and Mr. Steyer for showing up and engaging us, the fact that only three candidates—and the only Black candidates—participated made me wonder about how those in power value us.

There are 70 MILLION people with conviction histories in the U.S. **That's a population size of TWO Californias.** So you'd think that anyone running for president would want to engage with us and address our issues. Especially as convictions don't affect just one person—entire families and communities “do time” along with their loved ones, supporting them emotionally as well as financially. But apparently most candidates don't value us.

Even the ones who do show up have a habit of framing policies and legislation as offering another “chance” to us. Our [Ban the Box campaign](#) is routinely rebranded as a “Fair Chance” employment or housing measure. We currently support [Senator Booker's “Fair Chance Act”](#) to Ban the Box on employment applications for federal and federal contractor jobs. These are all noble and necessary endeavors, but I can't help but see the word “chance” as reinforcing the dominant narrative that we are a **risk** rather than an **investment** or an **opportunity**.

How can we change the dominant paradigm if we continue to maintain the current power dynamic that relegates formerly-incarcerated and convicted people and family members to a secondary status, with fewer rights, resources, and humanity than others?

How can we shift the metrics to reflect a true investment in people, in “justice”?

Currently the system claims its success in public safety by number and length of convictions, and reentry by recording no new arrests. But what if success was measured by how many people had access

to the resources needed to start a healthy life? By the services and quality jobs available? By the credit score developed, or the letters of reference provided? By how many families were kept together?

Given how much we invest in prisons —[California will spend \\$15.8 BILLION this year](#)—how much are we willing to invest in freedom? We've spent hundreds

of years and billions of dollars building and maintaining a system of incarceration and oppression—how much will we spend for systemic support for our formerly incarcerated and convicted loved ones, our families, and our communities?

Join us to speak up and ensure we're investing in more than a chance, but an opportunity. Contact your State Senator to urge them to pass ACA 6 (see below) and restore voting rights for 50,000 Californians on parole. All our voices deserve to be heard, and must speak for ourselves.

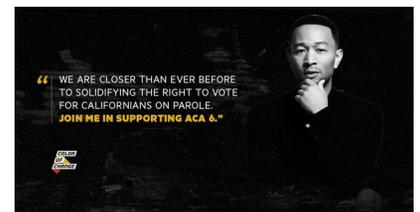


All of Us or None hosts a homecoming celebration for people recently released from incarceration at the Freedom & Movement Center in May, 2019.

Policy Update

Round Two of our Legislative fight to restore voting rights for Californians on parole starts in Spring!

Assembly Constitutional Amendment 6 (ACA 6) is now in the California Senate and will be heard in committees starting in January. **ACA 6 will restore voting rights to 50,000 Californians currently on felony parole, plus all future people on parole!**



The bill will also simplify California voting rights for people with conviction histories, defining two distinct categories:

- Are you incarcerated in prison? You cannot vote.
- Are you outside prison? You CAN vote!

("Outside prison" includes being incarcerated in county jail, or on parole or probation or community supervision)

Call [your CA State Senator](#) and tell them to vote to get ACA 6 on the 2020 ballot!

For more information about ACA 6 and the



#FreeTheVoteCA campaign, [check out our coalition website here at Free The Vote.](#)

Thank all of you for your tireless efforts and support for all of our legislation. For more information, contact Policy Fellow Katie Dixon: katie@prisonerswithchildren.org / 415.255.7036

Starting January 1, 2020: Californians with felony convictions are eligible for Jury Service!

Governor Newsom signed our co-sponsored bill SB 310 (Skinner) in October, opening jury service to all Californians with a felony conviction except for people on parole or on the sex offender registry. (The carve-out protects those on parole or the registry from being pressured by their parole officers or District Attorney to vote for a prosecution-friendly verdict.)

For more information, [check out this CalMatters article on SB 310 and Prof. James Binnall](#), a lawyer with a felony conviction, who has done the research and testified in State legislative hearings on the benefits of having formerly-incarcerated and convicted people on juries.

SB 310 Fair Jury Selection

SB 310 will make sure juries are truly representative of our communities.

This bill:

- ✓ Promotes diverse jury pools
- ✓ Allows people with felony convictions to serve on juries
- ✓ Advances racial justice

#SB310 **ACLU** California

Welcome Katie!

LSPC is honored and excited to introduce Katie Selcraig as our new Policy Manager! Originally from Austin, Texas, Katie has spent the past three years in San Francisco at the Mission SRO Collaborative at Dolores Street Community Services. Katie brings an extensive background in policy and community organizing focused on housing justice, domestic worker rights, supporting LGBTQ youth, ending domestic violence, and anti-deportation campaigns.



"I'm excited and grateful to be the new Policy Manager at LSPC. I look forward to working for justice and liberation alongside so many incredible people."

Ban the Box – Housing

As part of [the Fair Chance Housing Ordinance coalition](#), LSPC and AOUON are currently advocating to Ban the Box on housing applications in Berkeley, Oakland, Emeryville, & unincorporated parts of Alameda County.

In Berkeley, we recently [participated in a public forum](#), sponsored by members of the Berkeley city council, to address community questions and opposition issues. “The forum went very well,” said 2019 Policy Fellow Katie Dixon. “It was good to have people and groups who have opposed the ordinance there so they have a chance to air their concerns and so we can address them. Somebody had been sending out scare-tactic emails and we were able to put the facts out there. Many people were also there to support the ordinance.”



*Policy Fellow Katie Dixon (second from right) adds her expertise to a public forum on banning the box on housing applications in Berkeley, Nov., 2019.
Photo: Natalie Orenstein, Berkeleyside.*

The Fair Chance Housing ordinance would Ban the Box and eliminate the “Have you been convicted of a felony?” question from housing applications, and defer any conviction history check to the end of the application process, after a conditional offer is made.

The Berkeley City Council will hear the Fair Chance Ordinance in early 2020.

We’re also beginning the process to get the ordinance adopted by the Oakland City Council. We have the support of several Oakland City Council members and the City Attorney, and will be introducing the ordinance into the appropriate committees soon.

Want to support the Fair Chance Housing Ordinance? Check out our coalition website at:

www.fairchancealamedaco.com/home

For more information contact Katie Dixon at:

katie@prisonerswithchildren.org / 415.255.7036



A Tale of Two L.A. Lawsuits

L.A. County Department of Probation Overcharges People on Probation

Earlier this year in September, LSPC, A New Way of Life Reentry Project, and the Social Justice Law Project filed a lawsuit on behalf of All of Us or None - Los Angeles against the Los Angeles County Department of Probation for systemically overcharging people on probation who cannot afford

imposed fees.

Check out more info in [this Capital & Main article](#).

L.A. County Unlawfully Removed Voters with Felony Convictions

Over a year and a half ago, LSPC, A New Way of Life, the Social Justice Law Project, and Demos filed a lawsuit against L.A. County for removing over 1000 eligible voters from electoral roles.

On Nov. 21, our lawsuit was granted class certification, meaning we can proceed in a class action suit. As [ANWOL stated](#), "It means that the courts understand that there is a legitimate systematic harm that can be addressed via systematic relief to the class."

Felony disenfranchisement and voter suppression continue to be a vital issue as we move towards the 2020 election. Stay tuned for updates on the progress of lawsuit.

Clean Slate Clinic

On Saturday, November 16, LSPC / All of Us or None joined Root & Rebound to provide a Clean Slate clinic for the Central Valley community of Huron, CA.

The clinic helped people with conviction histories to either get LiveScanned and request their RAP sheet, or, if they already possessed them, consult with an attorney to submit requests for resentencing or expungement. About 50 people participated in the clinic.

Ray Leon, the mayor of Huron (top photo, in far right in Cal hat), observed the clinic and encouraged AOUON Organizer Ken Oliver to return in the new year to host a symposium on criminal justice issues and to assist organizing directly-impacted community members in the Central Valley.

For more info, contact Ken Oliver at:
ken@prisonerswithchildren.org
/ 415.625.7059



AOUON Community Engagement

First Friday (Oakland)

AOUON continues our participation at [Oakland First Friday](#). With all the art and food vendors and musical performances along a pedestrian-only section of Telegraph Ave (between W. Grand and 27th), First Friday is an awesome way to start the weekend—having fun and building community! Stop by the AOUON table to talk with organizers and pick up some swag!



FreeHer Conference Interviews

2019 Elder Freeman Policy Fellow London Croudy took advantage of meeting so many amazing organizers at the FreeHer Conference by filming a series of video interviews. We've published several on our AOUON Facebook page, as well as discussing them during the weekly AOUON #FridayForum on FB Live. Check out all three interviews with [Andrea James](#), [Sisters Unchained](#), and [Nkechi Taifa](#), respectively.

2019 AOUON National Retreat

Organizers from All of Us or None chapters across the country came to the Freedom & Movement Center on November 2-3 for our first National Retreat. During the weekend over 50 organizers and LSPC staff members deep-dived into sharing campaign strategies and building movement together. Workshop topics included Opportunities & Strategies, Development & Funding Strategies, and Working with Coalitions.



Some of the organizers have been campaigning as AOUON for years, such as Undreya "Muffin" Hudson and other comrades in Durham, NC. Other chapters, such as Northern New Jersey and Eastern Washington, just recently organized, though they have already made quite a local impact.



[page here](#), and feature policy and legislative updates, upcoming events, and discussions about current social justice topics. Feel free to send in questions in the comments section and we'll try to address them right then and there!



Past editions of the Friday Forum are also available on the [AOUON Facebook video page](#).

See you Friday!

AOUON National – Oakland Meeting

When: 6:30 P.M. - December 19, 2019 (3rd Thursday of every month)

Where: Freedom & Movement Center –
4400 Market St., Oakland, CA 94608

All people and family members directly impacted by the criminal justice system are invited to join [All of Us or None](#) at our monthly meeting the 3rd Thursday of each month in Oakland, CA. We discuss local and state legislation, plan community events, and strategize how to advocate for our community in our own voices.



For more information contact Policy Fellow Katie Dixon:
katie@prisonerswithchildren.org

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