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<td>In the fall of 2020, LSPC/AOUON helped form a California coalition to address the ways mass incarceration have impacted families. Now, the state legislature will consider the coalition’s bill to make visitation a right. Page 8</td>
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**Enough is Enough**

Law enforcement has a white supremacy problem. Our feature story discusses some of the reasons why and how we can root out systemic racism among police, prison officials, and parole/probation officers. Page 6
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.

Wayland “X” Coleman sought comfort in art as a child and has been drawing for as long as he can remember. At the age of eleven, he received a scholarship to the Worcester Art Museum and attended for a year.

Wayland is serving a life without parole sentence in Massachusetts state prison. During his incarceration, he has designed a comic book called “The Prisoner” to educate society about the issues and conditions inside prison walls. Wayland is also a prisoner rights activist. He works with several activist groups and creates political art in order to bring awareness to important issues within our society.

Coleman drew this month’s cover image, “The Policeman’s Scope,” as part of the virtual Fall 2020 art exhibition by the Freedom Through Art Collective. He wrote this about the piece:

“It’s important that we not forget police violence against Black men. We still have a long way to go to bridge the trust gap between white police officers and black males, especially young black males. Blacks and police have never really mixed. When a Black man is placed in the scope of a policeman’s gun, he is only seen as an object. Something not real, not worthy of life, liberty, justice, fairness, equality, or mercy. We’re all faceless objects. A policeman can empty a clip into a mannequin without consequence, for, it is just a target. Sadly, society – through its juries -- have shown us that the same rule applies to Black men. Only through dialogue regarding cops’ trained perception of blacks, can we hope to one day change their objective lens.

Johnny Taylor, incarcerated at California Men’s Colony State Prison, pays homage to his ancestors in a powerful letter to All of Us or None entitled “The Descendant.” Page 5

Men in Attica State Prison voice their demands during the Attica Prison Uprising on September 10, 1971. Photo credit: AP File

Mail Bag

Johnny Taylor, incarcerated at California Men’s Colony State Prison, pays homage to his ancestors in a powerful letter to All of Us or None entitled “The Descendant.” Page 5

There’s much work to be done, and we will need the support of our community to perseveres. We invite you to join our campaign to end involuntary servitude, either here in California or elsewhere through the Abolish Slavery National Network. This is the next stage of the march for our civil rights, and we still march shoulder to shoulder.

(An excerpt from the February 2021 E-Newsletter from Legal Services for Prisoners with Children)
Tia Ryans has been looking for a place to call home most of her life. As a child growing up in rural Howell, New Jersey, she tried to be at the family home as little as possible, hoping to escape the clutches of a sexually abusive stepfather. At first, this meant enrolling in every after-school extracurricular -- cheerleading, swim team, girl scouts, etc. -- but, eventually, she sought a more permanent solution and began running away.

"I was tired of my life," she said. "I thought that was my answer. What people saw as an act of defiance, I saw as an act of survival."

Each time she would run off, Tia would get arrested. No one would ask her why she was running. She dealt with police officers instead of social workers. She ended up in Family Court and was put on juvenile probation as a deterrent from running. The next time she ran, it became a criminal matter, having been in violation of that probation.

In prison, Tia couldn't escape into school like she'd done as a child: College classes weren't made available to her because of the length of her sentence. She didn't have kids, so parenting classes were out, and she wasn't addicted to alcohol, which ruled out AA. Those were the only programs the prison had to offer, so Tia decided she'd escape to the SHU.

"I spent a lot of time in solitary confinement, because it basically became where I ran away to," she said. "I'd think, 'I don't wanna be here today so I'd rebel in some way and get sent to solitary.'"

Finally, under the Obama administration's Pell Grant, the prison introduced an associate's degree program without restrictions. Classes were taught by professors from reputable schools like nearby Rutgers University, and Tia signed up for an associate's in liberal arts and eventually chose Political Science for a bachelors. She said she wanted to know the ins and outs of politics not to become a politician, but for "the same reason the Devil knows the Bible."

"He needs to know what he's up against," she said. "Just like I need to know the systems I'm up against as an advocate to navigate it successfully."

When she was released, Tia got a job waitressing to subsidize her tuition. She'd work tables seven days a week while taking classes at Rutgers University Newark. As part of an NJ-STEP class, she designed a reentry housing model for formerly incarcerated people. And while her peers saw a pipe dream, Tia was determined to see it come alive. She set up meetings with Senator Cory Booker's office and the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development. She created relationships with organizers, believing that when she actually had a residence with which to build the model, her potential backers would already be in the know about the general concept. She interned at FWD.us, a Zuckerberg-Gates-funded political advocacy program out of D.C., where she saw the importance of boots-on-the-ground organizing and converting a bird's-eye view of reform to real change on the local level.

Know a formerly incarcerated person with an inspiring story? Nominate them for our Spotlight feature by sending an email to the Editor:
paula@prisonerswithchildren.org

**HOME continues on Page 10**
Unrest and Criminal Justice Reform

By Lorenzo Fosselman Jr.

"Today it is perfectly legal to discriminate against criminals in nearly all the same ways that it was once legal to discriminate against African Americans." -- Michelle Alexander, The New Jim Crow (The New Press, 2010)

In the aftermath of the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and others at the hands of police, citizens around the world have taken to the streets, in mass rebellion, to demand change to policing policies in America. Calls for change include, but are not limited to:

1) Defunding police departments that do not consider reasonable changes to tactics and policy that is fair and equitable to all citizens;
2) Retraining of officers to the sensitivities of the communities that they are tasked with the duty to serve;
3) Severe legal punishment of officers who violate departmental policies, federal, state and local laws, including retraining, firing and criminal charges;
4) Community oversight committees established with equal input into police department policy and officer discipline.

In addition to the above list of policy changes, there is also a need for comprehensive change to the entire criminal justice system.

There are two types of "prisoners" today, those who are incarcerated within institutions/jails and those who feel they are prisoners within their occupied communities. For either prisoner, today’s unrest and civil disobedience is encouraging to the occupied communities. For either prisoner, today's unrest is not by coincidence or happenstance, rather by design. Blacks are five-times more likely to be imprisoned and three-times more likely to be killed by police. (National Academy of Science) In 2020, there were more African American adults under correctional control (in prison, jail, on probation, or parole) than were enslaved in 1850. (The New Jim Crow, 2010)

Section 1 of the 13th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution states, “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States...” Section II: “Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation...” Through this loophole, American jurisprudence has continued to operate as a biased, hypocritical tool of oppression, particularly towards communities of color and the poor who make up approximately 2.3 million people currently locked up in American prisons and jails. (Prison Policy Institute, 2017) History has proven the criminal justice system carries the legacy and vestiges of slavery and structural racism.

For decades, prisoners have protested their collective conditions of confinement, challenging overcrowding, extreme sentencing, excessive solitary confinement, excessive force and other such abuses while confined in prisons. In 2013, 30,000 prisoners in California went on hunger strike to support a class action lawsuit (Ashker v. Gov. of California, 2012) that challenged the decades-long use of solitary confinement for alleged gang affiliation. The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation had a policy that the only way a prisoner could be released from a Security Housing Unit (SHU) was to parole, debride, or die.

In 2016, during the 45th anniversary of the Attica Uprising, prisoners in 20 states took part in the largest strike ever recorded in the United States to challenge the use of prison labor, poor wages, and unsatisfactory living conditions. In addition, from August 21 to September 9, 2018, a group of prisoners in North Carolina organized a strike by not reporting to work, to stop eating, and to stop buying supplies from the prison commissary. Prisoners demanded increased pay for fair work, better living conditions, changes to sentencing laws, expanded access to rehabilitation and educational opportunities for all prisoners.

In spite of the constitutional rights prisoners maintain to address grievances and express freedom of speech, there is an invisible curtain that shields prisoner issues from the public. This problem is exacerbated by the power of officials to use punishment -- i.e. Rule Violation Reports and administrative segregation -- to discourage prisoners from participating in peaceful protest. Many prisoners find themselves in a catch-22 predicament, having to choose between exercising their legal right to file grievances and to protest -- protest fair wages, living conditions, “just” sentencing laws, inhumane treatment by
Johnny Taylor is an incarcerated author at California Men's Colony State Prison in San Luis Obispo.

Unfortunately, I’m the typical tale of a Black boy growing up a man in and on California’s plantational-prison land. Those who are not Descendants of the Euro-American slave trade would think that I, or other’s like me, had a choice of being labeled a criminal, when really the crime is the color of our skin, and the culture of the tribe we are from and live within.

From early on, we, the Descendants, were taught to mistrust and to hate our own kind. And like harvested soil, we’ve cultivated this poisonous seed for far too many centuries now. We, the Descendants, are still being subjected to the same hate that brought Euro-American families together to watch us be hung from trees; Rodney King being maliciously beaten; 15-year-old Travon Martin being targeted, followed, and shot on the street. They watch as Michael Brown pleads, “I can’t breathe,” and while George Floyd is being killed under a policeman’s knee.

So you see, we the Descendants are not the face of our crime, as TV, movies and media would like the masses to believe. We’re the Descendants of people who suffered inhumane treatment at the hands of Euro-Americans centuries ago. As well as the people who are still being enslaved by injustice passed as law.

We are the Descendants of a good people who were stolen and brought ... to a land in which we are still being treated like we don’t belong.

We are the Descendants of a good people who were stolen and brought far away from our homes, to a land in which we are still being treated like we don’t belong. Even when we’ve forgiven and have participated in every war; even when we couldn’t sit at your table and eat. We could only use the back entrance and could not drink from the same water fountain. Still, we forgave, and were always there to lend a hand, just as we still do today.

Let us not forget that the Descendants were not (and still aren’t) included in the Constitutional law; All men are created equal.

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Let us not forget that the Descendants were not (and still aren’t) included in the Constitutional law; All men are created equal.

For 35 years, I’ve been incarcerated and unjustly locked away, with only a thought, hope and prayer of being free beyond the tone of our skin.

All of Us or None, thank you for being a greatly appreciated and admired voice for those who trust to be heard. Freedom is the source of equality for All of Us or None.

--Johnny R. Taylor, “A Descendant”

American taxpayers foot a bill of $80 billion annually to operate the prison system (Institute for Advancing Justice Research and Innovation, 2016), and a body of evidence demonstrates that our criminal justice system can be better served by alternatives to incarceration or modeling systems that actually work, for example the system implemented in Norway.

The following is a beginning list of solutions to change the criminal justice system for the better:

1) Sentencing reform: Place a 21-year cap on all sentences retroactively.
2) Reallocate funding: With the funds saved by releasing prisoners no longer deemed to be threats to society, more money can be invested in education and rehabilitative services like mental health treatment, behavioral therapy, substance counseling, and community service as alternatives to incarceration programs.
3) Allow prisoners to create unions to advocate for fair pay of prison labor and to have a say in rehabilitative services and alternatives to sentences.
4) Redesign cells and housing units to reflect humane housing.
5) Make restorative justice programs available at all prisons.
6) Retrain guards and implement higher standards of hiring to reflect the population.
7) Restore voting rights of parolees and ex-felons across the nation.

Lorenzo Fosselman is an incarcerated writer at California State Prison, Solano.
I'd like you to consider the two photos to the right as a case study. The control is the District of Columbia, which served as the site for both images.

The photo on top shows the scene in DC on June 1, 2020, when Black Lives Matter demonstrators were “cleared” from Lafayette Square with the full force of the DC and Capitol police. As the demonstration was proceeding peacefully, then-President Donald Trump held a conference call with a number of state officials to discuss the civil unrest occurring throughout the country in response to police gunning down unarmed Black civilians. In the call, which was recorded, Trump says, “It’s a movement that if you don’t put it down it’ll get worse and worse.” To prove his point, Trump made an unscheduled trip to St. John’s church for a photo op and deployed the full force of DC law enforcement to clear the streets. The Park Police, Secret Service, the D.C. National Guard, the Federal Bureau of Prisons, Arlington County Police Department, U.S. Marshals, and agents from the FBI, DEA and ATF confronted peaceful protestors with riot gear and tear gas.

The photo on the bottom shows four men who scaled a wall and violently broke into a federal building being asked nicely to leave by capitol police.

When we talk about “defunding the police” and what it means, the immediate objection comes from the belief that the police keep communities safe. But people of color who have encountered law enforcement, and those who witnessed the disparities in the aforementioned DC protests, have come to terms with some seemingly impossible truths: that police do not increase public safety, and that racism in law enforcement doesn’t come from rogue officers but from an institutional foundation seeped in white supremacy.

That foundation was cemented before this nation was even a nation. In 1676, a disagreement between two Virginians paved the way for centuries of manipulation designed to ensure a wealthy and white power structure. One man, Nathaniel Bacon, sought the removal of all Native Americans so he could expand his property. The other, colonial governor William Berkeley, feared doing so would provoke a costly war between Britain and the native people. To rebuke the governor, Bacon formed a militia of white and Black indentured servants and Black slaves. Their united front brought the town of Jamestown to its knees, with the militia overtaking plantations and burning them to the ground.

The rebellion was so successful, Blacks and poor whites outside of Virginia started to band together, united by a common oppressor in the wealthy landowner. To secure their stations, landowners and politicians designed laws to criminalize Black life and formed slave patrols, groups of lower caste whites who were given the authority to enforce those new laws. Where unity between poor whites and Black slaves had been found by calling to attention their mutual oppression by wealthy landowners, legal language now called attention to their most obvious difference: their skin color.

"Many of the European-descended poor whites began to identify themselves, if not directly with the rich whites, certainly with being white,” historian Robin D. Kelley said in a California Newsreel interview. "And here you get the emergence of this idea of a white race as a way to distinguish themselves from those dark-skinned people who they associate with perpetual slavery.”
POLICE (continued from PAGE 4)

The first formal police force in the south was formed in the Carolinas in 1704. Its primary function was to chase and capture runaway slaves, provideorganized terror to prevent slave revolts, and to maintain discipline for slave-workers. After the civil war the police were used to target black people through the Black Codes, vagrancy laws, and convict leasing, all of which were used to entice post-slavery control over freed Black people. This discrimination continues today in often less overt ways, including through disparity in the enforcement of seemingly race-neutral laws.

But perhaps there is a silver lining. While white supremacy and the evolution of slavery into the modern system of mass incarceration have been subtle foes, the injustices bestowed upon marginalized communities has become impossible to deny or ignore. Examples of racism in law enforcement blares across our television sets, inundating our social media channels, and echoing in the streets where people march in refusal to accept.

The image you see in the background of this article is a photograph I took at All of Us or None's July 1, 2020, “Stop Killing Us Rally.” A month after police brutally violated the right to peaceful assembly in DC; chapters from up and down the state of California converged in Sacramento with 600, 20-by-24 inch posters, each representing a person killed by law enforcement. Their faces were placed at the foot of the capitol, the sheer magnitude of names and faces haunting anyone who came across the display.

“It’s more than just a few bad apples, and it’s been going on for more than just a few years,” All of Us or None cofounder Dorsey Nunn said. “Police are killing us on streets with guns and knees to our necks, but they’re also killing us slowly locked up in prisons for decades. Rarely do you see the breadth of the problem and the possibility of systemic change at the same time, and this is the moment that can happen.”

To rectify this fear-based system of discriminatory policing, a few things need to happen. First, systems of accountability and transparency around policing must be created. The gross and reckless failure of law enforcement has resulted in thousands of preventable deaths and has caused irreversible trauma to countless families and communities. Between 2005-2016 in California alone, more than 1200 people were killed by police, of which only two were deemed unjustified.

To ensure accountability, we need to throw out the “reasonable” deadly force standard and require mandatory de-escalation training and tactics during encounters with community members. Additionally, officers should not be able to avoid liability for their misconduct due to the unlawful shield of qualified immunity, so community members are able to bring claims against police officers who violate their constitutional rights under the law.

To find wrongdoing, independent, community-based oversight and disciplinary boards with subpoena power should be created to investigate and make findings related to police shootings and killings. Any law enforcement officials found by a community oversight commission to have used an unreasonable use of force against a community member that results in serious injury or death should be decertified: Officers shouldn’t be able to just join the precinct one town over if their last precinct removed them for disciplinary reasons.

Second, what do we mean by “defund the police?” Defunding the 4Ps — police, prison, probation and parole — is a strategy built on delegitimizing institutions of surveillance, policing and punishment, demilitarizing the police, and producing results that increase safety through divestment from policing as a practice, dismantling policing institutions, and building community-based responses to harm, need, and conflict that do not rely on policing and punishment.

When it comes to redistribution, the recent ballot measure in Oregon is a good example. Last year, Oregon voters passed Measure 110, the Drug Decriminalization and Addiction Treatment Initiative. In doing so, they made their state, the first in the United States to decriminalize the personal possession of illegal drugs, including cocaine, heroin, oxycodone and methamphetamine. In doing so, the state estimates it will save an estimated $24.5 million over a two-year period from reductions in arrests, incarceration, and official supervision. That money will now be used to establish a comprehensive drug addiction treatment program.

California spent roughly $50 billion annually on local and state police, prisons, probation and on prosecutions. Even a 50% reallocation of $25 billion into community-based organizations and programs would leave a substantial budget for security while providing essential funds to quality and affordable housing, universal quality healthcare, community-based mental health services, living wage employment, education, youth programming, and income support to stay safe during health pandemics.

“Defund the Police” is not just a rallying call directed at local elected officials,” George Galvis, Executive Director of Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice (CURYJ), said prior to the Stop Killing Us rally. “It applies to our state wide leaders and is inextricably linked to defunding prisons, probation, and prosecutors, and so far they have turned their back on us by their silence. We demand a revised budget that reflects community priorities and invests in the future of [California].”

Finally, these reforms may stem the bleeding, but to fully root out racial injustice, we must deconstruct all vestiges of structural racism. Race-based policing and criminal justice policies have historically and unjustifiably targeted black people since before the Reconstruction Era. State-sanctioned violence, policing practices, pretrial detention decisions, and sentencing processes disproportionately affect and disadvantage Black people and communities of color. We can’t begin to heal and move forward unless our nation severs its ties to a racist past and chooses to dismantle all remnants of its institutions and policies. That means removing the 13th Amendment’s exception to slavery and involuntary servitude, an alteration that may happen at the federal level this year. It also means ending all forms of disenfranchisement, including restoration of suffrage for those in prison who are counted for districting purposes but are not given the right to vote.

We have already made tremendous strides. In the past three years, directly impacted individuals and system-impacted families have propelled amendments in several state constitutions: People with conviction histories can now vote in Florida and California; slavery and involuntary servitude have been removed from the state constitutions of Utah, Nebraska and Colorado; and the federal government is expected to introduce a bill to remove the slavery exemption from the U.S. Constitution.

What propelled these movements was your stories, the focus on people instead of politics. It will take the same kind of honesty to bring about accountability and change in law enforcement.

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There is no excuse for police violence

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<tr>
<td><strong>Buffalo, NY</strong></td>
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<td>Population: 258,959</td>
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<td>Percent People of Color: 50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Violent Crime Rate: 12 per 1000</td>
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<tr>
<td>People killed by Buffalo police from 2013 - 2016: 0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Orlando, FL</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Population: 255,483</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent People of Color: 42%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Violent Crime Rate: 9 per 1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People killed by Orlando police from 2013 - 2016: 13</td>
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**There is no accountability**

- 98.3% of killings by police from 2013-2020 have not resulted in officers being charged with a crime.

- No Criminal Charges: 0%
- Officer(s) Charged: 2%
- Officer(s) Convicted: 98.3%
Visitation as a Right to be Introduced in California

By Rita Himes, LSPC Staff Attorney

In the fall of 2020, LSPC/AOUON helped form a coalition of directly and system impacted individuals and groups to address the ways mass criminalization and incarceration have impacted families. We decided to initially focus on visits with incarcerated people, with a goal of making visiting a right rather than a privilege.

For weeks, we shared our experiences and wrote laws to ensure that visits will be frequent, free or affordable, and family-friendly. We ended up with our 2021 Family Unity Bill, which makes visiting a right of incarcerated people and their family members; limits the reasons visits can be denied (only inadequate identifying information and serious abuses of visiting privileges); increases the frequency of visits and phone access, including video calls; establishes screening and supervision standards so visits are respectful and predictable; provides for visiting advocates and judicial review so visiting rights are enforceable; and requires transportation subsidies for family members of people who are incarcerated far from their loved ones.

Assemblymember Rob Bonta (D-Oakland) has agreed to author our bill, which will be introduced by mid-February. Our bill is sponsored by Coalition for Family Unity, Legal Services for Prisoners with Children, A New Way of Life, All of Us or None, the Bail Project, California Families Against Solitary Confinement, California Families Rise, California’s Impacted Families Project, Community Works, CURYJ, Drop LWOP, East Bay Family Defenders, Essie Justice, Fathers & Families of San Joaquin, FUEL, From the Inside Out, PlaceGrace, Pride in Truth, Root & Rebound, Silicon Valley DeBug, Starting Over, Inc., and Young Women’s Freedom Center, Felony Murder Elimination Project.

Meanwhile, the coalition and LSPC’s Family Unity Project are working on two other family-related bills. First, we are participating in an effort to make it easier for incarcerated parents to get in-person visits (rather than just phone or video calls) with their children who are in the child welfare system. Second, we are again working with Starting Over, Inc’s Family Reunification Equity and Empowerment (FREE) project to pass legislation that would make it easier for people with conviction histories to get relative children placed with them.

If you are interested in supporting any of these efforts, please contact Ivana Gonzales, Family Unity Coordinator, at ivana@prisonerswithchildren.org, or write to Legal Services for Prisoners with Children attn Family Unity Matters, 4400 Market Street, Oakland, CA 94608.

Yvonne & Geoioni

My 16-year-old, special-needs son was locked up for months during the COVID pandemic. I was only allowed two Zoom calls a week and they were usually cancelled because my son was in quarantine any time someone new was admitted. Talking by phone cost me anywhere from $150 to $200 a month.

When we spoke, I could hear the depression in my son’s voice. Before the pandemic, I could go see him face-to-face with no partitions, give him a kiss and a hug on the way in and out, bring in soda and potato chips, and spend 45 minutes hanging out with him and having a great time. His behavior inside was so much better after getting to see me. But finding transportation to visit him was a challenge, because I don’t have a car and I currently have two broken hips.

Only parents were allowed to visit. Siblings, aunts, step-parents, godparents -- there are so many immediate and extended family members that are close to my son who did not get to see him. Incarcerated children need their families, not just their parents, to be in their lives while they are in the inside. I don’t want my son to grow up and be another statistic of the prison system.

Yvonne & Geoioni

My husband has been in Pelican Bay State Prison for 19 years. My son’s been in High Desert for six years, and my sister has been incarcerated in Arizona for nine years. Visits are absolutely anxiety-ridden, especially in Pelican Bay. It’s like walking into a cold atmosphere. You can feel the tension. They have a sign on the wall saying you can only kiss and hug for five seconds. That’s it! And the guards sit there with a timer and watch.

Visits would be a lot better if there were more family-oriented activities. I don’t understand why they don’t have a basketball hoop, for example. There are so many fathers there who want to take their boys and start rough housing and throwing a ball around, but they’re not allowed. They can only walk in a circle.

When my son was in the juvenile facility they had a grill. My sister’s prison lets you bring in outside food. I’ll usually bring something for us to eat, some fruit, maybe a salad. You have to pack it a certain way in clear bags, but that’s fine. But here in California, visiting is like being in a cell with them all day.

Monica & Gabriel
BILL WATCH

CALIFORNIA

• Removal of Involuntary Servitude from the State Constitution (Kamlager) ACA 3 would remove the vestiges of slavery from California’s foundational legal document: its constitution. As a constitutional amendment, the bill requires approval from both legislative houses. Should it be approved by the legislature, it will be posed to voters in the 2022 midterm elections.

• CRISES ACT (Kamlager) AB2054 would establish the Community Response Initiative to Strengthen Emergency Systems (CRISES) Act pilot program, which will scale up community-based alternatives to police. To make CRISES ACT calls to the governor visit: https://allianceforbmoc.org/crisesact-call

• Parole Credits (McCarty) AB2342 Creates a program under which the length of a person’s parole period could be reduced through credits earned by successfully completing specified education, training, or treatment programs, or by participating in volunteer service.

IDAHO

• Clean Slate (Rubel and Lent) [number pending] would allow individuals with felony convictions for nonviolent and nonsexual crimes to petition the courts to seal their public records. Individuals applying for sealed records would need to have served their whole sentence and have not reoffended in the three years following their release.

ILLINOIS

• Right to Vote (Ford) HB4377/HJRCA33, a bill and constitutional amendment, would ensure incarcerated people would be able to vote in the state of Illinois.

• Electronic Monitoring (Madigan) HB 1115 would eliminate the use of electronic monitoring for people who have completed their state prison sentences and are not required by statute to be on a monitor, ending the practice of imposing electronic house arrest for people who have already done their prison time.

KENTUCKY

• Kentucky Voting Rights (Higdon) SB62 would amend the Constitution of Kentucky to grant persons convicted of a felony other than a sex offense, a violent offense, or an offense against a child, the right to vote five years after completion of sentence. This bill passed the Senate but was not voted on by the House before the end of the 2020 session.

• Successful Supervision (seeking sponsor) is a proposed bill being made by All of Us or None Louisville and ACLU Smart Justice Advocates of Kentucky. It will seek to target supervision to ensure successful outcomes for those that are dealing with the issues from being on probation parole, including the elimination of fines and fees. It will also establish a system of compliance credits, such as Work for Time credit, Education credit, and a mandatory time calculation.

MISSOURI

• Fresh Start Act (Koenig) SB 647 would require that no person shall be disqualified from pursuing, practicing, or engaging in any occupation for which a license is required solely or in part because of a prior conviction of a crime, unless the crime for which an applicant was convicted directly relates to the duties and responsibilities for the licensed occupation.

• Death Penalty With Mental Illness (Hannegan) HB 1756 would prohibit the execution of any person found to have suffered from a serious mental illness at the time of the offense for which they are accused.

NEW JERSEY

• Slavery Exemption (Rice and Cunningham) SRC 96 is a proposed amendment to the state constitution that would prohibit slavery or involuntary servitude in New Jersey prisons.

• Limiting Police Presence at Voting Locations (Reynolds-Jackson and Wimberly) A4655 would limit law enforcement presence at polling places and ballot drop boxes and prohibit electioneering within 100 feet of a ballot drop box.

• Public Health Emergency Credit (Mukherji and Sumter) A2325/S2519 would require credits to be awarded to certain incarcerated individuals and returning citizens during public health emergency. It would also prohibit the credit to have contact with victim upon release.

NEW YORK

• Mental Health Bail Reform (Kaplan) S7242 would establish a pretrial mental health and substance abuse services bail fund.

• Voting Rights (Parker) S 6821 would require the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, in collaboration with the state and county boards of election, to establish a program to facilitate voter registration and voting for incarcerated individuals.

NORTH CAROLINA

• The Second Chance Act (Britt, Daniel and McKissick) H 874 would set up automatic expungement for people who are found not guilty or have charges against them dismissed after July 1, 2020, and allow people to petition for the expungement of nonviolent misdemeanor and felony charges after a period of good behavior.

Pennsylvania

• Probation Reform (Williams) SB 14 would reform how long Pennsylvanians stay on probation and the time served in prison for probation violations. It also specifies that a court may not impose a sentence of probation consecutive to another sentence of probation.
Involuntary Servitude: An Update

In December, two members of the federal government introduced a joint resolution to remove the slavery exemption from the 13th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

“America was founded on beautiful principles of equality and justice and horrific realities of slavery and white supremacy, and if we are ever going to fully deliver on the principles we have to directly confront the realities,” said Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.), who co-authored the bill with Rep. Wm. Lacy Clay (D-Mo.). “The exception to the 13th Amendment’s ban on slavery corrupted criminal justice into a tool of racist control of Black Americans and other people of color, and we see that legacy every day in police encounters, courtrooms, and prisons throughout our country. Slavery is incompatible with justice. No slavery, no exceptions.”

“Our Abolition Amendment seeks to finish the job that President Lincoln started by ending the punishment clause in the 13th Amendment to eliminate the dehumanizing and discriminatory forced labor of prisoners for profit that has been used to drive the over-incarceration of African Americans since the end of the Civil War. No American should ever be subject to involuntary servitude, even if they are incarcerated,” added Clay.

Merkley and Clay were joined by 17 co-sponsors in introducing the legislation. The bill was propelled by the momentum of three state-level constitutional amendments that made similar changes.

With so many of our own comrades having spent time enslaved by the Prison Industrial Complex, All of Us or None has been fighting for this essential change. Last year, after announcing our fight to end involuntary servitude in California at our May Digital Quest for Democracy, we joined the Abolish Slavery National Network. At the time, Colorado had already succeeded in passing Amendment A and two other states represented by members of the coalition had amendments on the 2020 ballot. Those two states -- Utah and Nebraska -- also succeeded.

We are now fighting on two more fronts: This year, we intend to ensure the passage of ACA 3, the amendment to remove involuntary servitude from the California constitution, and SRC 96, which will do the same in New Jersey. As part of this effort, the AOUON Newspaper will be including information in each issue about the historical context of this exemption and the progress we are making toward removing all vestiges of slavery from our nation’s foundational legal documents.

To learn more about the Abolish Slavery National Network, visit AbolishSlavery.US. To join the fight in California, contact Legal Services for Prisoners with Children Policy Manager Joanna Theolene at joanna@prisonerswithchildren.org.

Check back every month for information, history, statistics and personal stories. If you have a story to share about being a slave of the state, please write the newspaper editor.
Resources & Events

Coronavirus Resources
Supporting directly and system-impacted people during crisis
https://www.beyond-prisons.com/covid19

Safety manuals for individuals in state, federal and California correctional facilities
prisonerswithchildren.org/Coronavirus

COVID-19 Mutual Aid (Newark, NJ)
https://www.allofusornone-northernnj.com/covid-19-newark-mutual-aid

Welcome Home Initiative
Since the Public Health Credit Bill was signed into law, our communities must prepare for the influx of need to make sure that our brothers and sisters have the mutual aid support they require during this critical time following their immediate release.

If you are able, please help us welcome our family back home.

Visit www.allofusornone-northernnj.com to donate.

Participatory Defense
Zoom Link: https://bit.ly/2zJe6tN
Password: Why2021

A community organizing model for people facing charges, and to help communities impact the outcomes of cases and transform the landscape of power in the courtroom.

Every Friday 6 PM - 7 PM

The Bail Project - Louisville is providing services to anyone released from jail during the COVID-19 pandemic

Services include court date information, transportation to and from court, updating contact information, agency referral, emergency housing, cell phones, supplies, etc.

Contact us via Facebook: #FBLOUISVILLE at any number below:
(502) 354-7462 (502) 745-5637
(502) 233-1526 (502) 483-9194
(502) 339-5472 (502) 299-2354

Yoga and Pilates Classes
As part of our Wellness Initiative, join us as we alternate yoga and pilates classes on Thursdays, 6:15pm-7:00pm via Zoom.

A donation for any amount is requested to attend. If you are unable to join us on Thursday evenings, we will provide you with access to session recordings.

www.allofusornone-northernnj.com/wellness-initiative

SJSU Human Rights Institute
2021 Human Rights Lecture Series
Event 3 - 2021 Keynote Lecture
Angela Davis + Convos with SV Debug
February 11, 2021
5:00 - 7:00 PM (PST)
Admission is free - Register here:
http://go.sjsu.edu/hr13

All of Us or None
Monthly Virtual Membership Meeting
Every Third Thursday
6:30pm to 8:30pm PT
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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:

County of Origin:

I can organize & facilitate group meetings
I can help with membership
I can distribute materials & resources
I can address & pass along feedback

Mail this form & any questions to:
Willard Birn/ AOUON
4400 Market Street
Oakland, CA 94608

Bertolt Brecht (1898–1956)