

UPAN NEWS

Utah Prisoner Advocate Network -- Newsletter

Vol. I No.4 September 2014

“Advocating For A Better Tomorrow”

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Next FOCUS Meeting, Monday, October 6, 2014 6 PM

The quarterly FOCUS Meeting will be held at the Adult Probation & Parole Region 3 office in the conference room to the right of the main entrance. Address: 36 W Fremont Avenue, SLC. Fremont is 1100 South. 36 W is between Main and West Temple).

About FOCUS: Each quarter, the Utah Department of Corrections invites interested community members to attend a discussion forum. Topics are pre-determined to ensure the most knowledgeable presenters are on hand. October's topic is an update on Prison Relocation and Criminal Justice Reinvestment.

For our readers' convenience and for those who do not have Internet access, here is an announcement from the Utah Department of Corrections website:

In addition to FOCUS, the department has set up numerous ways for the public to interact with us on a daily, ongoing basis — rather than wait months for another quarterly meeting. These include phone calls, in-person meetings, e-mails, this website** (Ask A Question forum via home page) as well as social media. Please see the home page for social media links and a "Contact Us" link with useful telephone numbers. You may also contact Public Information Officer Brooke Adams by email at brookeadams@utah.gov or at 801-545-5536.

For more information: Contact Steve Turley, special projects director, at sturley@utah.gov or 801-545-5633

** <http://corrections.utah.gov/index.php/services/focus-group.html>

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Next UPAN Meeting, Monday, October 13, 2014

Our October meeting will be from 6:30 to 8:30 PM – Location, Ruth Vine Tyler library, 8041 South Wood Street (55 West) Midvale, UT 84047 (One block west of State Street and a half-block south of 8000 South). If you know other people who would benefit from attending UPAN meetings, please bring them.

Agenda for the October UPAN meeting: We will update on what was discussed at the FOCUS meeting on October 6th. We will have a family discussion meeting, hopefully some will want to discuss what they learned at the September lobbying training and if they have written letters or anything to their legislators, etc.

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Last Month's Meeting – Advocacy 101: How To Be An Effective Citizen Lobbyist

Becoming an Active Advocate was the subject of our September UPAN meeting. The headline above was the name of a 33-slide Power Point presentation by Anna Brower, Public Policy Advocate for the ACLU of Utah, and Jean Hill, Government Liaison for the Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake. The presentation was supplemented by a comprehensive question, answer, and discussion period by all attendees. Being an Active Advocate will be an ongoing subject for discussion and learning “what works and what doesn't” during our next several meetings.

ones as well as and keep current on the criminal justice system and needed reforms, the more likely we can effect change. Our voices and goals will be realized as we individually pursue those reforms.

On the last page of this newsletter is an easy to follow checklist extracted from the Advocacy 101 presentation. It cites steps to take, cautions to observe, and general protocol and behavior to be an effective lobbyist/Active Advocate. ALL persons interested in reforming the Utah Criminal Justice system will find the checklist a reliable reference as each of us individually takes steps toward reform. The last page can be detached and kept handy for continuous reference while you are being an Effective Citizen Lobbyist/Active Advocate.

There is power in numbers but as we become an IRS non-profit educational organization, UPAN itself cannot lobby as an organization. The more people we teach about how to support and help their incarcerated loved

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WE NEED YOUR HELP!

As most of you know UPAN is run by 3 of us in our spare time. We know this is an important cause and much needed, so we devote the time we have to it. We are doing as much as we can as fast as we can but cannot seem to stay caught up with: the inmate letters and requests, getting our 501(c)3 filed to become a non-profit, getting our website up and running and more.

We would love to have volunteers that are willing to help so we can continue moving forward, hopefully at a better pace.

We are looking for the following help: (next column)

1. Volunteers willing to send 5 newsletters to inmates every month. We will provide the addresses for the inmates but would ask that you print the newsletters, provide the envelopes, address them, and pay the postage.

2. A corporate or tax attorney that would be willing to donate time to help us get our 501(c)3 paperwork completed.

If you are willing to help please email me at: heather@utahprisoneradvocate.org.

Thank you! Heather

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NEWSLETTERS TO INMATES

We receive a lot of requests from inmates to be on our mailing list to receive our newsletters. If you have an inmate that would like the newsletter, we would appreciate if you can print and send your inmate the newsletter.

Your help would save us time and money so that we can only send newsletters to those inmates who do not

have family or friends that are able or willing to send a newsletter to them. If your inmate is on our mailing list and you can take over that mailing for us, please let us know at: contact@utahprisoneradvocate.org.

Thank you!

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Medical Handbooks Available on DOC Website

A message received recently from Brooke Adams, Public Information Officer at the Utah Department of Corrections: "The Medical Handbook is now posted on the DOC website. Find it under the Public Resources

tab." The handbooks have been available since mid-September and this announcement is to inform our readers in the event they have not noticed its presence or have looked and didn't know where to find it.

Sex Offenders – Myths, Reality, And The Big Gap Between The Two

By Warren Rosenbaum, UPAN NEWS Editor

An Opening Statement Of Truth

Paraphrasing the late President John F. Kennedy's statement in his American University speech on June 10, 1963, and inserting a different subject, let us agree on, and declare:

"Sex Offenses are a topic of which ignorance too often abounds and truth is too rarely perceived."

With that opening truth, let us continue pursuing truth – examining myths vs. reality – our goal: to close that monstrous gap (myth vs. reality) regarding sex offenses, sex offenders, incarceration, and treatment. In our pursuit, let us march to another JFK declaration, making it our motto and mantra:

"Those who hate ignorance strive to know; and those who perceive truth strive to make others see."

A Myth, A Fact (Truth) And A Conclusion

Myth: "Once a predator, always a predator" – This is a misconception – and multiple studies have proven this, but the public is unaware and legislators have ignored this fact. Truth: Of all parolees, sex offenders who have completed treatment for their offenses are the least likely to recidivate.

Gleaning some facts from a Salt Lake Tribune article published on September 3, 2013, we see that sex offenders in Utah state custody have more than doubled since 1996. That year was the last time there was an increase in funding for sex offender treatment. Conclusion: More than twice the inmates but no increase in treatment funding, yet treatment has proven overwhelmingly successful in preventing recidivism.

Let's Do The Numbers

The allocation for treatment is \$1 million per year to finance 200 treatment slots for sex offenders. The treatment is completed in 18 months. Therefore it takes one and a half years (18 months) of financing (\$1.5 million) to treat 200 inmates. $\$1.5 \text{ million} / 200 \text{ slots} = \$7,500$ per inmate. The current cost in Utah to incarcerate one prisoner for one year is about \$29,000.

The SL Trib article states that over the past five years, first-degree felony sex offenders released from prison had served an average of 7.5 years. Here is a working hypothesis: Fact: 2,200 sex offenders are in the Utah prison population. If 75% of them were deemed qualified for treatment and release, 1,650 would enter treatment for 18 months. Hypothetically, if their sentence was a 0 – 5 years that included 18 months before they saw the Board and another 18 months in treatment, they could be released after 36 months (3 years). That would reduce the average sentence of 7.5

years by 4.5 years. In other words, 1,650 inmates would not be serving 4.5 extra years at \$29,000 per year.

Conclusion: Huge Cost Reduction to Taxpayers

One year of cost reduction for 1,650 inmates at \$29,000 is \$47,850,000. Over four and a half years the savings would result in a staggering \$215,325,000. That's approaching a quarter of a billion dollars savings in four and a half or five years. This savings is before the \$7,500 cost for treatment? The treatment is court and board ordered as a requirement for release so it is a given expense. Therefore, we can deduct \$12,375,000 ($\$7,500 \times 1,650$ inmates) from the gross 4.5 year total savings = \$202,950,000 net savings.

The Added Bonus to Our Communities

Along with release comes an extra bonus for the State Treasury. Most of the released inmates will merge back into society, resuming employment and paying State taxes (sales, gasoline, income, etc.). It is reasonable to believe that after four and a half years had elapsed, the taxes they will have paid to the State will equal the \$7,500 cost of treatment. Anything beyond that is the result of having a contributing member of society as the ex-offender is now a full tax paying citizen. What a win-win situation?

Are Utah State Accountants Doing Their Job?

Hopefully some Utah state accountants or some legislative analysts have already done these figures and passed them on to the legislators. If they have, we have not seen them or heard about them. If they haven't, maybe the State of Utah will accept these numbers from a former USGAO Supervisory Mgmt. Auditor (me) and implement these ideas and suggestions and reap the harvest.

This area of reform is NOT just about dollars. It is about rehabilitating offenders and reconnecting families. It is about helping those who made poor choices and seriously stumbled while traveling life's path to rebuild their sense of self-respect and recover enough to become a pro-social member of society that contributes to the greater good.

This month I've addressed issues specific to the cost of sex offender incarceration and treatment. In the following months we can examine other serious issues that our incarcerated loved ones and our families who support them are affected by.

I encourage everyone to read the Salt Lake Tribune article in its entirety at:
<http://archive.sltrib.com/article.php?id=27922301&itype=storyID> Please print it and mail to your inmate.

Upcoming Meetings Related to Criminal Justice Reform

From Anna Brower, ACLU of Utah, Public Policy Advocate

Here is your most current update of exciting criminal justice reform-related meetings! This list is by no means exhaustive, I must say – there are some good gatherings related to specific issues within the system,

such as mental health and sex offenses, as well. You are always welcome to contact me directly to learn more about those meetings.

- September 30, 2:00 - 4:00 pm, Copper Room, **Sentencing Subcommittee**
- October 1, 8:00 - 10:00 am, Spruce Room, **Supervision and Treatment Subcommittee**
- October 1, 10:00 am - noon, Spruce Room, **Release Subcommittee**
- October 1, Noon, Senate Caucus Room, **Sentencing Commission**
- October 9, noon - 3:00 pm, Spruce Room, **Full CCJJ meeting** (final reports from subcommittees)
- October 15, all day, **Interim Legislative Session at Utah State Capitol Complex**
- October 22, 9:00 am - noon, Room 445 State Capitol, **Full Prison Relocation Commission**
- November 12, 9:00 a.m. - noon, Copper Room, **Full CCJJ meeting** (final Justice Reinvestment recommendations approved)

As always, please let me know if you have any questions, concerns or thoughts about the information in this update. I appreciate being kept up to date on all

the good work that is happening in Utah – and I also welcome corrections when I get things wrong, as I am definitely guilty of doing! [Rarely, I must add! Ed.]

Keep up your good work! Anna E. Brower, Public Policy Advocate, ACLU of Utah annabrower@acluutah.org

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PrisonEd Report Thru August 2014 From Don Wright, Received: Tue, Sep 2, 2014

Greetings PrisonEd Associates and Friends:
Involvement in PrisonEd continues to expand. Thank you for your involvement, support, and interest.
Don Wright <darnwright@comcast.net>

After reading the Dostoyevsky chapter of Freedom Behind Bars, one inmate wrote the following: (Passage inmate quoted from Dostoyevsky) "But that is the beginning of a new story – the story of the gradual renewal of a man, the story of his gradual regeneration, of his passing from one world to another, of his initiation into a new unknown life."

Summary Report – Continued Interest and Expansion
A running total of inmates enrolled in PrisonEd courses is as follows:

8	June 30
17	July 31
34	August 31

(Quote from inmate in response) "That is what I am hoping to achieve from prison; (and how beautiful to see it articulated by Dostoyevsky, who is by far my favorite author) a complete metamorphosis of who I am, into the person I have always known was inside of me."

The initial course, signed up for by 95% of inmates, is the Great Mentors course, Freedom Behind Bars.

In addition, some inmates have signed up for more than one course as follows:

5	Writing: Prep for College and Profession
2	Job Success
1	Job Success Phase 2 – What Color Is Your Parachute
1	Everyday Math for Life and Business
1	Great Mentors Phase 2 – books by Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Corrie ten Boom

Utah Prisoner Advocate Network

P.O. Box 464, Draper, UT 84020
801-680-4705
Website: UtahPrisonerAdvocate.org
Email: UtahPrisonerAdvocate@gmail.com

Registered students are from the following facilities:

11	Draper prison
8	Gunnison prison
15	Jails
34	Total

President: Molly Prince
Vice-president: Shauna Denos
Secretary/Treasurer: Heather Fabian
Website Design: Shane Severson
Graphic Designer: Holly Moore
Newsletter Editor: Warren Rosenbaum

Of the 34 total students, 3 are females from the Draper Timpanogos facility. We have received assignments back from approximately 25% of those registering.

Be An Active Advocate – A Checklist To Help

-- Become familiar with the Utah Legislature website and use the Utah Legislative tracking service to follow proposed legislation when subject progresses that far.

-- Utah legislature website: <http://le.utah.gov/> Utah legislative tracking service: <http://le.utah.gov>

-- Things to remember: Be respectful when making communication with your intended contact person. Shouting on the telephone and protest signs do not set well with anyone.

-- Know your issue. Learn about the specifics so you are not in error about the facts.

-- Know your audience. Address them with respect and according to their governmental position, i.e. department decision makers, legislators, executive branch (Governor) etc.

-- Know your message. Write out two or three versions, i.e. an elevator speech (15 to 30 seconds), a one-minute synopsis (about 120-150 words), and a two/three minute statement (about 250-400 words). Be direct, brief, cut excess words, and use a short example or story for clarity so your listener understands.

-- Memorize your elevator speech; practice your verbal presentation so you know it well enough to relate it without stumbling and repeating yourself. It helps to have a typed copy of your two/three minute statement so you can offer it to your listener for additional details.

-- Example: Elevator speech, "Thank you for your work on Criminal Justice reform. Please consider assigning paroled inmates to both a Parole Officer AND a Support Group to help the parolees reenter society and assist them to prevent recidivism." (Seventeen seconds – easy to memorize.)

From this example you can see the issue and where you can expand it with more details for your one-minute statement and your two/three minutes printed statement.

-- Find an organization that is working on an issue that you are interested in. Join their email list or action alert list.

-- Letters/emails. Both are effective – letters (paper copies) carry more weight than emails (electronic images).

-- Letters to newspapers. Effective, but follow the newspapers' guidelines for Letters to the Editor and Op Ed pieces.

-- Town Halls/Forums. Attend and follow through on activities and opportunities these meetings afford

-- Testify. Know your committee/subcommittee, be prepared, face-to-face meetings are most effective, and recruit others to do the same.

-- Practice, Practice: Find a partner to work with.
Pick Your Issue,
Pick Your Elected Official,
Craft a Brief Message,
Deliver the Message,
Switch, You and your partner swap jobs
After Both Have Delivered Messages – Evaluate:
What do think worked?
What would you change?
What responses would you anticipate?

-- Ways to work with your elected official –

- 1) Commenting on legislation
- 2) Mobilizing for/against legislation
- 3) Proposing legislative solutions
- 4) Influencing what goes into legislation
- 5) Seeking help in individual cases

Details For These Five Methods

1) & 2) Mobilizing for/against a specific bill (legislation)
-- You can speak out on a bill – or you can AMPLIFY your voice by mobilizing others

-- Flood committee members with calls to get a bill out of a committee and out to a vote.

-- Find out who is undecided, identify a constituent to talk to them

-- Pack a hearing room, organize public comment
-- Hold a public demonstration

3) Influencing what goes into a bill (legislation)

-- UPAN is doing a great job at this already by getting involved in Prison Relocation & Justice Reinvestment processes

-- Don't wait until the session to give input

-- Once the session begins you can end up mostly playing defense

-- Watch for amendments and tweaks that undermine otherwise good legislation

4) Proposing a specific solution

-- You can suggest ideas for improving the law based on your own experience

-- Some recent successes include:

Petitioning to get off of Sex Offender Registry

Restrictions on "no knock" warrants

-- Some possibilities for UPAN

A legislative audit of Board of Pardons & Parole

Increased money for medical treatment at the

Utah State Prison

5) Seeking help in individual cases

-- Educate your legislators

Be honest & tell your story so they understand it

- Focus on what the legislator can actually do
- Ask for appropriate assistance
 - Intervention with state agencies
 - Getting answers & information from public entities
- A legislator or elected official cannot intervene:
 - In judicial decisions
 - With victims, the media, or other public members

What to Watch for in 2015 – Five Major Topics

JRI – Justice Reinvestment: The big Criminal Justice reform package of legislation

PRC – Prison Relocation: Sites proposed for approval, money requested to purchase

GLPs – “Good Landlord Programs”: Could be changes that just favor landlords

MRAP – Police militarization: ACLU and Libertas Institute taking “next steps.”

HU – “Healthy Utah” Medicaid Expansion: Could have big benefits for criminal justice system

Details For These Five Major Topics

- JRI – Sentencing Reform (non-violent 3rd degree felonies)
- More funding for community-based treatment of substance abuse and mental illness

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- Better practices, based on research, used by Adult Probation and Parole
- Caps on parole revocation stays
- Guidelines for departing from sentencing matrix
- Reporting/data analysis by Board of Pardons and Parole (BP&P, aka BOPP)

JRI – What about Sex Offenders?

- CCJJ might try to totally ignore this political hot potato issue
- ACLU is interested in referring this subject for interim study, with money attached for research and reporting
- Continually talking about this portion of the prison population IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

PRC – Prison Relocation – 25 potential sites being evaluated

- PROXIMITY IS THE TOP CRITERIA
- This will be a multi-year process and there are good reasons to stay engaged:
 - Citizen input HAS had positive impact so far
 - It keeps prison issues in the spotlight

GLPs – Landlords & felon exclusion. A “Task Force” is looking into making changes to statutes that authorize GLPs

- The focus is on keeping fees under control and restraining government requirements for landlords
- The “Task Force” knows there is interest in reforming the felon exclusion part of these programs
- We are going to have to GRAB a seat at the table [Last point made by Anna Brower, ACLU of Utah]

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