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Prison
Reform
2019

**AMERICA'S PRISON
SYSTEM: HUMAN RIGHTS
CRISIS**

We need prison reform & we need it now!

America currently has over 2.3 million people under the correctional system.

Incarcerated people are faced with physical mistreatment, horrid living conditions and inadequate health care inmates.

REACH OUT TO YOUR U.S SENATOR TODAY

Be the change you want to see in the world!

How would you feel if your rights were being neglected?
How would you feel if you lived in constant fear of being
abused?

Fearing that everywhere you turn, you see and live
inhumane treatment.

This is how inmates in the prison systems feel.
Human rights is something that is fought for everyday
and everywhere, yet the battle for the rights of prisoners is
extremely overlooked in America, which can allow for
psychological distress in inmates.



Many claim that people incarcerated are given
reasonable treatment given the fact that they are
criminals. However, whether they have
committed crimes or not these inmates are
people; they are human beings with rights that
deserve to be upheld.

Physical Mistreatment

FOR CENTURIES PRISONERS HAVE BEEN FACED WITH PHYSICAL MISTREATMENT WHILE IN PRISON FROM BOTH FELLOW INMATES AND GUARDS ALIKE. IN A PRISON IN THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS, GUARDS WERE ALLOWING INMATES TO BE BOUGHT AND SOLD FOR SEX TO PRISON GANGS.



Corrections officers allowed prisoners to be sexually violated in these sex rings, exposing them to newfound traumas and depriving them of their rights.

*Read more on the topic
at New York Times.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/08/world/struggle-for-iraq-prisoners-mistreatment-prisoners-called-routine-us.html>*



Read more @

<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/articles/2017-07-26/understaffed-and-overcrowded-state-prisons-crippled-by-budget-constraints-bad-leadership>

At York Correctional Institution, in Niantic, Connecticut, women are being deprived of getting their daily menstrual pads. Each cell, which holds two women, were given a total of 10 pads for the week. This forced them to only change their pads once a day, some keep on the same pad for days, all in order to save on supplies. The guards limiting the amount of pads the female inmates gain is a way for them to boast their dominance while degrading the prisoners. Many have filed that their civil rights are being violated however, this issue is still present in so many female prisons.

In Delaware's biggest prison, James T. Vaughn Correctional Center, because of understaffing and over crowdedness, inmates were able to take control of a building and “held four correctional officers hostage during a standoff that lasted more than 18 hours. Inmates killed Lt. Steven Floyd, the floor’s highest-ranking officer, and injured others before emergency police eventually stormed the prison.” If the issue of overcrowdedness is not addressed, more people will die and prison violence will increase. I don't know about you but I think that calls for reform, don't you think?



Read more at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/jun/12/prisons-menstrual-pads-humiliate-women-violate-rights>

Inadequate Healthcare



A vast issue in the prison system is health care. All people should be given health-care even while in prison, yet many are given the minimum standard health care, if any at all. Many prisoners face higher rates of infection such as HIV and AIDS from needles, unprotected sex and piercings to name a few. According to Penal Reform International Prison Health Facts, these infections spread due to the lack of proper hygiene and health benefits given to prisoners.

The Intercept article, *“Malnourished Prisoner’s Death Reveals Horrific Conditions In A Texas Prison,”* revealed a number of prisoners who feared they had the contagious disease of Tuberculosis, but were refused testing by prison officials. Kevin “Rashid” Johnson, a prisoner, at William P. Clements Unit in Amarillo, claimed that the medical officials at the prison refused to test him for TB but later on officials falsified paperwork stating that Johnson refused testing when it was offered. The lack of care for inmates well beings is petrifying -- guards lying so inmates won't get the medical attention they need -- that's petrifying. Normally if people aren't given the medications and treatment necessary for infectious diseases their conditions worsen and they are more likely to pass it on to others.

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT DESTROYS THE MENTAL HEALTH OF INMATES



Shira E. Gordon's 2014 article, "Solitary confinement, public safety and recidivism," discusses the inhumane practice that is solitary confinement in Supermax prisons. In these prisons inmates are completely isolated; the walls are cement so no one can hear them and even the doors are remotely controlled to enhance the feeling of isolation and to make sure the inmates have no contact with anyone. The effects these supermax prisons have on the mental health of prisoners is severely damaged through this method of imprisonment and many become more violent, fall into depression and lose their sense of self.



In Pelican Bay Prison, prisoners had little to no contact, they could only talk to each other through the ventilations. To fight against the oppressive practice of solitary confinement, the Pelican Bay inmates went on a hunger strike and with the help of civil rights activist they got the department of corrections to change the criteria of holding prisoners in isolation. Regardless, many inmates still resided in isolation and corrections take long to navigate prisoners out of confinement.

The mental health of many inmates disintegrate as they become paranoid, severely depressed and suicidal while in solitary confinement.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/04/health/solitary-confinement-mental-illness.html>

We need Prison Refom



Image from
: <https://www.lexisnexis.com/legalnewsroom/criminal/b/criminal-law-blog/posts/prison-reform-boosted-by-alliances-of-conservatives-and-liberals>

Many people may argue that prison reform is not necessary because prisoners are being rehabilitated in prison and are serving their punishment for disrupting society. However, these criminal offenders, whether they committed a crime or not, are human beings. Not only is it morally wrong to ignore the degrading situations they undergo but it is also statistically proven that most prisoners do not become rehabilitated in prison.

PRISON REFORM NOW



Join the fight

The fight for prison reform continues and it is important to remember the rights of prisoners. When prisons were implemented they were not used as an act of punishment, but as a means of keeping the suspect detain till actual punishment was due. Yet in modern society, prisons are used to house people past its capacity limit leading to overcrowdedness, violence and physical mistreatment