

OPEN LETTER TO THE COMMISSIONER OF CORRECTION  
AND  
PUBLIC SAFETY & HOMELAND SECURITY

FROM: Luis D. Perez #W33937  
NCCI - GARDNER  
P.O. 466  
Gardner, Ma. 01440  
[www.betweenthebars.org/350](http://www.betweenthebars.org/350)

RE: STG Programs for Medium & Maximum Security

Dt: July 11, 2011

I am hoping that someone will read this open letter and support our efforts to create programs for Prison Associations aka Security Threat Groups (STG) for Medium & Maximum Security Facilities.

At this present time the Deputy Commissioner for the Department of Correction has the proposal on her desk for final review. Any interested party can also address this important matter by writing letters of support to the Commissioner's Office or The Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security who are very much aware of this endeavor.

I owe this to the thousands of students who have come to visit programs inside the prison, and in gratitude to the many dedicated state workers that have allowed me to do this for decades, in particular the former Deputy Commissioner that trust me in doing this work in good faith.

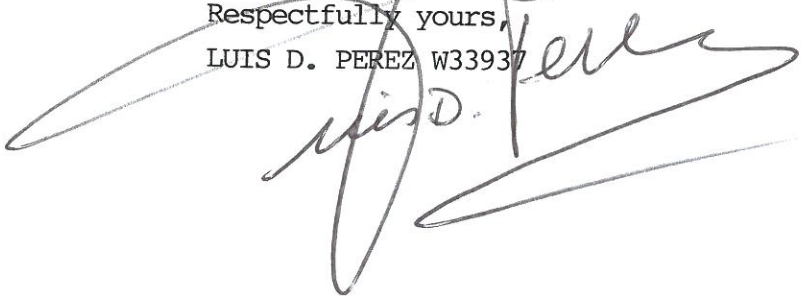
By doing this we will help to reduce the recidivism rate and improve our living conditions. For many years the Criminal Justice System has dedicated themselves to prosecuting individuals and marking gang members for ever, instead of applying accurate programs that will curb (STG) activities inside the prison and urban areas. - After all here in Massachusetts violent incidents such as drive-by shooting, killing innocent people in a cross fire, or killing a Police Officer, generate a public outcry with the media feeding the fire for months. Subsequently the Legislative Branch revamp the legal system and everyone jumps on the bandwagon beating a dead horse to a point that affects our living conditions across the board, even discrediting existing viable programs inside the prison.

At the end of this dynamic the major issues of concern with Public Safety, personal accountability and development are not being addressed properly. - **We need to move from a purely reactionary stance to one that is responsive in a balanced positive way to the real issues.**

I remain with great respect to victim's of crime.

Respectfully yours,

LUIS D. PEREZ W33937

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luis D. Perez', is written over the typed name and extends across the bottom of the page.

# THE VOICE

University of Massachusetts at Amherst

## THE PRISON SUBCULTURE AND CRIME IN AMERICA

by Luis D. Perez #W-33937, MCI - Shirley Medium

The prison subculture involves every sector of American society: Irish, Italian, Afro-American, Asian, Hispanic, etc., and is very difficult to understand, because its roots have not been properly studied by professional analysts. For the most part, criminologists and sociologists present popular theories, based on their own perceptions, blaming different sectors of the community in the cause of promoting a book or rationalizing a complicated subject. The prison subculture involves every level of society and a cross section beyond culture boundaries.

To shed some light, I want to present another perspective. It may be considered a "taboo subject" and it may offend some people, but the public has the legitimate right to know the facts, and we should uncover the real complex of problems that is affecting the entire Criminal Justice System, the prison/subculture and the juvenile gangs in urban areas.

The prison subculture is the mix of cultures in a closed prison environment that creates a diversity of conduct meriting the immediate attention of the public, and State and Federal agencies. For one thing, correctional facilities across the country have strong roots in playing a role to promote the crime industry upon the release of their prisoners into the community. On the other hand, another related dynamic is taking place with regard to our youth, who are indeed creating gangs, looking-up to the wrong role models, and having adverse motivation leading them toward crime, against the moral principles and values that are healthy to our country.

### THE CONCEPT AND ELEMENTS OF PRISON SUBCULTURE

The confinement of ethnic groups and the mix of cultures from every sector of society in one place leads to separation of individuals, either by racial attitude or division by religious belief in prison. This in fact sets the foundation and structure that creates many avenues of conflict, the center stage that produces the diversity of prison/subculture.

The prison subculture is being transferred to the youth in urban areas affecting them in major proportions. The older persons are either connected with organized crime, or individual efforts to make fast money by the sale of drugs, or committing violent crimes. Only 35% of the individuals who have been released from prison re-adjust themselves and become a productive member of society.

It is important to mention that most of the gangs that are affecting our youth in America have their roots in prison. The following is an accurate representation of the Federal Prison System and State Correctional Facilities in the mid-west: some Mexican-Americans in California and Texas are dividing themselves by the FAMILIA & FARMERS, these activities have their roots in the prison system. The ARYAN BROTHERHOOD was also created in the California Prison System and its members are a mix of white Americans, including members of motorcycle gangs. The Islamic Church with prisoners from Washington D.C. has created another influential power among the Afro-American youth, and that is not the only issue of concern. You also have ethnic group movements which are divided between Italian, Irish, and Asian underground communities competing for power, that eventually leaks back into the communities in an organized manner when the members are returned to the cities and towns from which they came.

If we move to the east coast, we have to add additional ingredients that play within the prison/subculture; the Hispanic Posse, with religious roots from Jamaica and Haiti and the direct influence of Latinos from Puerto Rico, Cuba, Colombia and the Dominican Republic, etc.

I do not expect that the public will totally understand the context of this information, because crime itself has been perceived as a business industry and not as a problem that is affecting this

country. In fact, it represents an annual multi-billion dollar budget. The amount of money being spent is questionable, it is like dumping money into a whirl pool that never ends. There is no question that the present prison system across the nation is a breeding ground for rapists, homosexuality, drug addicts, gangs, murders, etc., factories of crime that eventually represent more money that secure jobs for the court system, district attorneys, judges, police, and police staff.

The upper-class does not inherit or feel the impact of prison subculture. Corporate and upper-middle class America is attentive to other types of crime such as bank fraud, money laundering, embezzlement, kick backs, government corruption and many other charges in connection with this form of white collar crime. For the most part, those individuals never reach the hard core of prison subculture, and if they do in exceptional cases, then those are the individuals who in most cases become sophisticated in dealing with organized crime or in positions to influence corruption among individuals working in different branches of state and federal government.

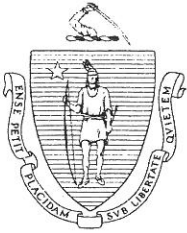
New England prison system does not escape from this social phenomenon of prison subculture. Instead, here in Massachusetts in the past 10 years, juvenile gangs have been organized and becoming increasingly more powerful and more violent as time goes by. This dynamic plays with local authorities, politicians and the media. While the violent crime rates increase, juvenile gangs are taking up strong positions in urban areas surrounding the City of Boston and spreading throughout the entire Commonwealth by identifying themselves with color and turf, and moving into the school systems.

In conclusion it is important that the public be aware of the negative reactions that we have within the political structure of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, that they are so out of touch that they don't understand the problem. Politicians from both political parties are constantly playing on the public fear, revamping the legal system without a clear definition of role to pursue, re-introducing legislation as the media makes the events. This is without counting the influence of multiple victim's groups that are going around in a vicious hate circle that complicates the internal operations of correctional facilities. The entire Commonwealth of Massachusetts is caught between the public pressures, the Governor's personal philosophy, the media, and what happens with juvenile gangs in the area surrounding Boston.

Prison/subculture and its many negative aspects are like an open wound bleeding into our mainstream. This seeping wound must be cured, not with a bandaid approach, but rather by taking a serious look into the National Correctional System and its objectives, making evaluations based on facts and what is important as a matter of priority, and recommending solutions aimed at this complex problem without excluding any aspects of the American society. If you don't study the prisons, you will never know the problems that we have in our country. Public safety is best served by guiding the system of government toward a correctional policy balanced between punishment and treatment. It is counterproductive to look at crime in America as a business.

My best advice for the leaders of our communities is that we should not turn our backs on our youth. You cannot ignore our youngsters in the urban areas, because as a matter of survival, they have to enroll in the juvenile gangs. He/she really has no choice, as soon as he/she comes out of their houses, they must make a decision, either turn left or right. In either direction, they face gangs, he/she can't cross the street because then he/she has two potential enemies and could become the next victim.

Massachusetts has become very cynical, on the one hand saying "tough on crime", "three strikes you're out", "bring back the death penalty" -- while on the other hand the State Supreme Court is saying that the court system is guilty of racism. The dirt can't be swept under the rug anymore, and sooner or later, someone must recognize the mistake.



**Deval L. Patrick**  
Governor

**Timothy P. Murray**  
Lieutenant Governor

**Kevin M. Burke**  
Secretary

*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Public Safety and Security*

Department of Correction  
50 Maple Street, Suite 3

Milford, Massachusetts 01757

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[www.mass.gov/doc](http://www.mass.gov/doc)



**Harold W. Clarke**  
Commissioner

**James R. Bender**  
**Ronald T. Duval**  
**Veronica M. Madden**  
Deputy Commissioners

September 22, 2008

Luis Perez W33937  
North Central Correctional Institution  
P.O. Box 466  
Gardner, MA 01440

Dear Mr. Perez:

I am writing in response to your September 11, 2008 letter concerning your proposal for Security Threat Groups cultural programs.

Please be advised that I am forwarding your letter and proposal to Veronica Madden, Deputy Commissioner of Classification, Programs and Reentry for her review and for her files.

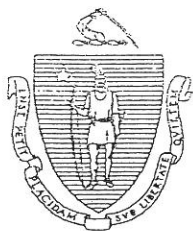
Sincerely,

Deputy Commissioner  
Prison Division

JRB/mar

cc: Veronica Madden, Deputy Commissioner  
Gary Roden, Superintendent, NCCI  
Inmate folder

*Luis  
Deputy Commissioner  
is in charge of all  
programs with the DOC  
Sincerely  
JRB*



Deval L. Patrick  
Governor

Timothy P. Murray  
Lieutenant Governor

Kevin M. Burke  
Secretary

*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Public Safety and Security*  
*Department of Correction*  
*50 Maple Street, Suite 3*  
*Milford, Massachusetts 01757-3698*  
*Telephone (508) 422-3301*  
*Fax (508) 422-3386*  
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James R. Bender  
Acting Commissioner

Timothy Hall  
Acting Deputy  
Commissioner

October 3, 2007

Mr. Luis Perez, W33937  
North Central Correctional Institution  
P. O. Box 466  
Gardner, MA 01466

Dear Mr. Perez:

In response to your letter of September 16, 2007, I would like to thank you for sharing your comments with me.

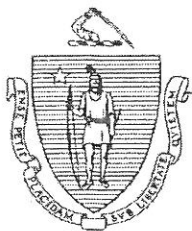
While your comments and reflections are appreciated, please do not misconstrue my response as an endorsement of your ideas. I do, however, encourage you to submit your proposal for the curtailment of Security Threat Group activity to the Superintendent at North Central Correctional Institution.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have future questions or comments.

✓ Acting Commissioner

cc: Timothy Hall, Assistant Deputy Commissioner  
Gary Roden, Superintendent - North Central Correctional Institution  
Inmate File





*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Public Safety*  
*Department of Correction*  
*Program Services Division*



**Mitt Romney**

*Governor*

**Kerry Healey**

*Lieutenant Governor*

**Edward A. Flynn**

*Secretary*

*P. O. Box 351*

*Framingham, MA 01704*

*(508) 620-6437, Fax (508) 620-7099*

**Kathleen M. Dennehy**

*Commissioner*

**James R. Bender**

*Deputy Commissioner*

EXHIBIT

EXHIBIT

B

September 6, 2005

Luis Perez, W33937  
Bay State Correctional Center  
PO Box 73  
Norfolk, MA 02056

Dear Mr. Perez,

This is in response to your later dated August 1, 2005.

Thank you for submitting your ideas for the content and structure of a Security Threat Group Program. Please be advised it is the intent of the Department to issue an open Request for Response (RFR) for programming, a component of which will be a request for a Security Threat Group program designed to provide offenders with the opportunity to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to reduce the likelihood of future STG activity. In doing so, the Department will be seeking and actively pursuing "Best Practices" and "Evidence- Based" programs in fulfilling this vital need area.

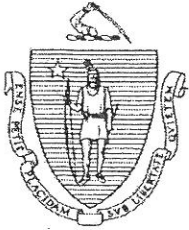
It is clear that you have put a lot of thought into your ideas and I want to again thank you for the input. I would also like to ask that you have patience while we undertake a comprehensive search of proven programming and begin to implement change.

I trust this response addresses your concerns.

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Allison Hallett, Director  
Program Services Division

cc: Kathleen Dennehy, Commissioner  
Michael Corsini, Superintendent, Bay State Correctional Center  
Al Dove, Director of Treatment/Classification, Bay State Correctional Center  
File



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Public Safety*  
*Department of Correction*  
*Program Services Division*



**Mitt Romney**  
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**Kathleen M. Dennehy**  
Commissioner

**James R. Bender**  
Deputy Commissioner

June 7, 2005

Luis Perez, W33937  
Bay State Correctional Center  
PO Box 73  
Norfolk, MA 02056

EXHIBIT

EXHIBIT

B

Dear Mr. Perez,

Your correspondence to Commissioner Kathleen M. Dennehy, dated April 22, 2005, regarding the transferring of STG members to BSCC for participation in the CRA program, and follow up letter dated May 16, 2005, urging the establishment of a pilot CRA program for STG members at BSCC, have been referred to me for reply.

Please be advised that the Massachusetts Department of Correction follows a system by which the security and program needs of each individual in the Department's custody is determined. These needs are regularly assessed and monitored. This system is governed by 103 CMR 420, Classification. In addition, as per 103 DOC 514, Security Threat Group Management, the classification of all inmates identified as members of a STG is determined pursuant to 103 CMR 420, Classification.

As you know, the Department has recently established a permanent CRA program at Bay State Correctional Center, with the first group of admissions occurring in May 2005. The eligibility criteria for the CRA program is a medium or high score on the Risk to Recidivate Assessment combined with a moderate or high score on the Needs Assessment. Therefore, any inmate that meets the eligibility criteria for the CRA program that transfers into Bay State Correctional Center is entitled to apply and enroll. Of course, enrollment into the CRA program is voluntary.

I trust this response addresses your concerns.

Program Services Division

cc: Kathleen Dennehy, Commissioner  
Michael Corsini, Superintendent, Bay State Correctional Center  
Al Dove, Director of Treatment/Classification, Bay State Correctional Center  
File

# Certificate of Participation

**Luis Perez, Founder**

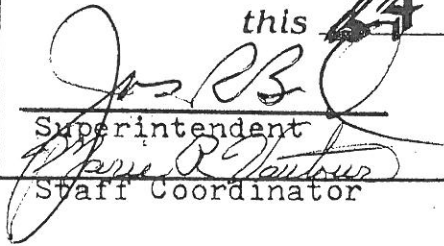
has participated with distinction in

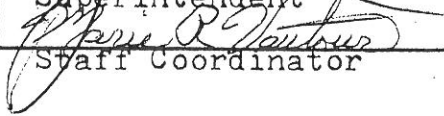
**Project Wake-Up**

In recognition of your contributions

this award is presented

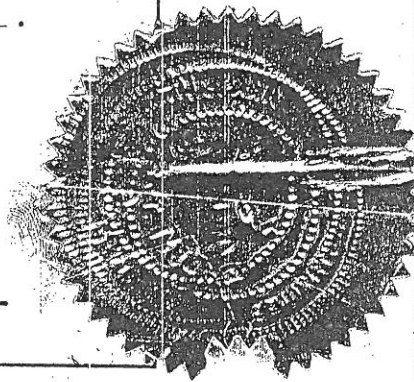
this **24** day of **March** 19**87**

  
Superintendent

  
Staff Coordinator

  
Director of Treatment

  
Inmate Director



**Boston Police**  
DEPARTMENT

and



# *Certificate of Appreciation*

Awarded to

*Luis D. Perez*

NOVEMBER 8th 2000

For your outstanding participation in  
"The Prison Empowerment Project."





# *Certificate of Achievement*

Presented to

LUIS D. PEREZ

BAY STATE CORRECTIONAL CENTER

For your exceptional work and enthusiastic efforts as participating member of The Prison Voices Youth Consequences Awareness Program at Bay State Correctional Center. Your volunteer work and open willingness to share your experiences to encourage others not to make the same mistakes you did is commendable.

The success of the The Prison Voices Program to reach out to help youth in Massachusetts has been in no small part due to your sincere and dedicated contribution.

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

**Prison Voices Coordinators - Bay State Correctional Center  
October 28, 1998**

