



September 11, 2009

James Harmon, #492218
██████ Rd.
Eloy, AZ 85131

Dear James Harmon:

The news of prisoner populations decreasing is welcomed news in light of a swollen prison population across the nation. Hopefully, officials, decision makers, and practitioners in Alaska will use this opportunity to not only speculate about what factor(s) may be contributing to the declining prison population, but also study this trend, publish results, and share those results publicly.

The idea that more probation officers means lighter cases loads and more time to supervise makes intuitive sense. Under this reasoning, probation officers are overwhelmed beyond an ability to be effective at their job. With more probation officers on hand, greater attention can be devoted to individual clients and preventing people from falling through the proverbial "cracks" of the criminal justice system.

In the spirit of progress, it is hard to associate fault with any one actor, but perhaps, an alternative way to view any slip ups, would be to consider the process involved in effective re-entry and whether both the probation officer and parolee can *both* contribute (equally?) to a functional and productive relationship.

If the article is a reflection of the "anti-authoritarian attitude" as you suggested, then Alaska is moving in the right direction. (anarchy?)

Thanks for writing.

—The Sentencing Project