

Say NO to proposed new jail for women who cannot make bail.

Rep. Kay Khan (Newton) has introduced **House Bill 1434** in the MA legislature
"An Act relative to the establishment of a women's pretrial facility in Middlesex County"

If passed a new jail will be built primarily to cage women who are "awaiting trial", that is, *women who have been convicted of nothing*. Women "awaiting trial" often are incarcerated for two or three months or more *only because they do not have the money*—often as little as \$500- to be released on bail.

All jails in the United States are packed with women and men who cannot make bail. Sheriffs, who run jails and lobby for new and bigger jails, use "overcrowding" as the reason to build more jails. If women and men "awaiting trial" were released, new and bigger jails would not be necessary.

Kay Khan's Bill calls for a jail to be built in Middlesex County, primarily for women awaiting trial. In some states and jurisdictions, bail is no longer used. Washington DC has not used bail for more than 20 years. 88% of everyone who is charged with a crime is immediately released back home. The other 12% are detained awaiting trial after a risk assessment for dangerousness is completed.

Access to money for bail should not be the reason someone is incarcerated.
Women and men locked up because they cannot make bail are 6 times more likely to serve jail time.
People often accept guilty pleas just to get out of jail...not because they are guilty.

In MA 85% of the women in jail are charged with non-violent offences. Almost 75% of women in jail are mothers.

Alternatives to incarceration are used in many other states.

What you can do now.

Call Rep. Kay Khan (617-722-2011) and Rep. Denise Andrews, the Bill's other sponsor (Greenfield)(617-722-2460) and demand:

1. No funding for a new jail for women. (H1434)
2. An end to money bail.
3. Divert women with histories of poverty, abuse and addiction from criminalization by police, courts and corrections to more effective and less-costly programs ---not jail.
4. Fund community-based programs run by people in those communities to address the real needs of women including quality education, childcare, housing and mental health/substance abuse programs.
5. Call your Representative and Senator. To find your legislator go to:
<https://malegislature.gov/people/search>

For more information contact info@realcostofprisons.org