

# CURE-ARM, Inc.

Donna Barnoski  
President

P.O.Box 396, Billerica, MA 01821  
[susanmmortimer@hotmail.com](mailto:susanmmortimer@hotmail.com)

Susan Mortimer  
Treasurer

March 6, 2014



Blog 101  
Between The Bars  
PO Box 425103  
Cambridge, MA  
02142

Re: CURE-ARM SPRING 2014 NEWSLETTER

Dear Readers of my blog:

What follows is the Spring 2014 Newsletter put out by our organization CURE-ARM. My sincere hopes are that you will read with interest the facts we provide and that those facts will compel you to get involved in the struggle.

We need assistance with research, emails, copying services and other basic tasks that are easy to effectuate in the "free world" but are near impossible in prison.

If you feel that you can get involved in The Struggle in any way, no matter how minor, please contact me at my address below;

Timothy J. Muise, W66927  
MCI Shirley  
PO Box 1218  
Shirley, MA  
01464-1218  
[tmuise63@gmail.com](mailto:tmuise63@gmail.com)

Thank you so much for your time and interest. Please keep reading the blog and leave your comments about any of the work herein. I am,

In Struggle,

Timothy J. Muise  
Steering Committee Coordinator  
CURE-ARM

**CURE-ARM** (Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants with Adherence to the Rehabilitation Mandate)  
is a special interest group which is dedicated to the reduction of crime through the reform of the  
Massachusetts criminal justice system and holding the Department of Correction  
to their legal mandate to rehabilitate

"...Insane prison policies are actually impacting families...my most sincere gratitude to [CURE-ARM] for working on behalf of all prisoners and their families."

-The Lionheart Foundation

# CURE-ARM

Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants  
Adherence to the Rehabilitation Mandate

"PLS supports all of the reform efforts of CURE-ARM."  
Prison Legal Services

Volume 1, Issue 1

Spring  
2014

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

State of Parole Massachusetts	2
Education	2
Moving Forward	3
Aging Prison	3
"Pass the Pen Project"	4
Mission Statement	4
More on CURE	4

### Special points of interest:

- Support senate bill #1139 sponsored by Sen. Patricia Jehlen for medical release of prisoners
- Oppose House Bill HB #1434 sponsored by Rep. Kay Kahn to build a new female jail in Middlesex County.
- Support the passage of SB#1885, act relative to veterans allowances. Labor Outreach & recognition.
- Support Ben Swan & Gloria Fox, legislatures wanting prison reform
- To learn more about prison reform go to:

⇒ <http://betweenthebars.org/blogs/101/>

⇒ <http://www.realcostofprison.org/writing/>

⇒ <http://Solitarywatch.org>

⇒ [cure@curenational.org](mailto:cure@curenational.org)

⇒ [www.exprisoners.org](http://www.exprisoners.org)

⇒ [susan.huskins@bellaliant.net](mailto:susan.huskins@bellaliant.net)

## Commutation in MA. by Shawn Fisher

From 1972-1987 Massachusetts granted 37 commutations to inmates serving life without parole sentences. Through 2014, none returned for another murder. The commutation process is integral to the correctional system because it instills hope to the prisoner. Two out of nine prisoners (16%) are serving life sentences in Massachusetts. "Lifers" as they are called, are the cornerstone to the rehabilitative process in the prison system. By instilling hope to prisoners who do not have a release date, you instill hope to the prisoners who do. It permeates through the whole prison population, creating an atmosphere of enthusiasm toward rehabilitating oneself, from the prisoner serving 10, 20 or 30 years, to the prisoner serving only a few months. Thus in turn, returning an ex-con back to society better prepared and less likely to re-offend. As of 2010, state and federal prisons across the nation house more than 26,000 inmates 65+. The boom is the direct result of the "Get Tough on Crime" era's and have caused the nation's inmate prison population to jump from 330,000 in 1980, to over a million in 1995; a tripling of the population representing an increase of 235%.

As of June 2010, the MA. D.O.C. confirms the state will need three new specialized facilities to house an estimated 1,270

prisoners with medical needs. Despite reform recommendations from several committees correction's policy remains stagnant and highly publicized. With correction's under increasing scrutiny, some are starting to question whether offenders who have served 30+ yrs. must remain behind bars in every circumstance. Keeping thousands of men locked up may make sense to diehards seeking maximum retribution or politicians seeking political gain but it has little effect on public safety.

- ◆ In Michigan, 175 commutations were granted over a 24 yr. period. Not one returned for the commission of a murder.
- ◆ In Pennsylvania, of the 99 commutations granted to those over the age of 50, only one returned for a new crime. A recidivism rate of 1.01%
- ◆ In NY, of the 440 convicted murderers & attempted Murderers, not one returned for a new crime.
- ◆ From 1972-1987, Massachusetts granted 37 commutations, none returned for another murder.
- ◆ In a 3yr. Study of lifers released nation wide 79.4% were arrest free, compared to 32.5% of all other offenders.
- ◆ Data from NY state tracked 469 inmates over 13yrs. All were sentenced for violent crimes and released as senior citizens.

Continued on page 2

## \$ 2 Billion for Jobs—Not Jails by Ken Seguin

Let's review some current criminal justice policies...

- ⇒ Only one commutation of a life sentence in over 26 years
- ⇒ Current parole rate for 15yr to life sentences at an all time low
- ⇒ Career criminal sentencing recently implemented in MA

(After other states who had it for years stopped it and declared it a failed policy in reducing crime.)

- ⇒ No medical release bill passage for terminally ill or permanently infirmed prisoners.

The result from these bot-

tleneck policies that the fastest growing segment of the prison population is the elderly.

The only one who stands to gain by these policies is Corrections who cry overcrowding, a need to build more cells, and to increase

Continued on page 3

# State of Parole in Massachusetts

by Ken Seguin

Without changes in the system, Massachusetts parole will not be able to function consistently or effectively as a means of

improving public safety. Parole's intended purpose as a supervised transition from

incarceration into society is being thwarted by the Parole Board's overly restrictive practices, acting more like the judicial branch of government than the executive branch. Implementing a

Presumptive Parole system will help bring the Parole Board's procedures in line with best practices that are supported by research and proven effective through the experiences of other state governments. Presumptive parole would eliminate the parole board from focusing on a felon's crime. It would rather determine parole based on what the felon did during his/her incarceration and then put its primary concern in helping a parolee in his/her transition to society. Strengthening our parole system and making it available to more prisoners will reduce recidivism, increase public safety, and save tens of thousands in taxpayer dollars.

Since the new Parole Board members assumed their roles, only 26% of state prisoners eligible for parole are released on parole

"White Paper", Prison Legal Services Feb 2013

In N.Y., just 2.6% of 1,480 murderers paroled from 1986-2006, were returned to prison for committing new crimes.

"Locked up with nowhere to go", Jean Trounstein, 2013

BOSTONMAGAZINE.COM

Of 2,558 homicide parolees in Michigan, only 2.7% were returned for a new crime, and 0.5% were returned for another homicide.

Citizens Alliance on Prisons & Public Spending, 2009

## Commutation (continued from page one)

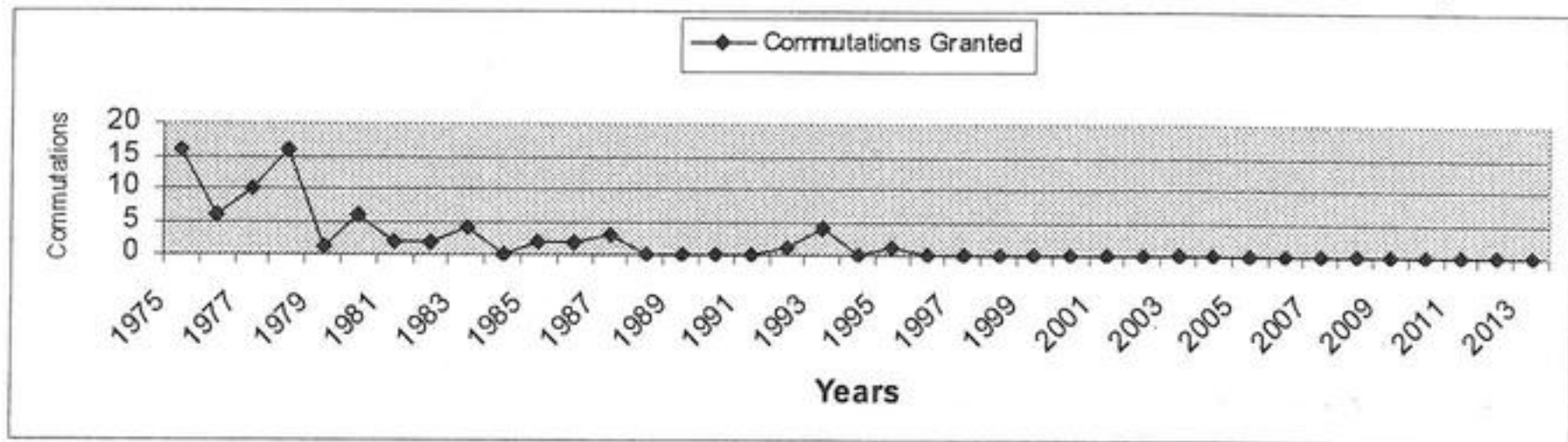
Just eight returned to prison and only one for a violent offense.

So why is nobody utilizing the commutation process? U.S. senator James Webb answered it best when he stated,

"the real question is about fear, and I believe it invades the political process."

Over the past 40yrs retribution has become a central feature of U.S. penal policy, supporting rehabilitation and even public safety as its chief aim. As

Hugo Adam Bedau aptly states, "Its not the task of penal reform... to present to the public whatever it will accept. The task, rather, is to argue for a punitive policy that is humane, feasible, and effective, whatever the crime and whoever the offender, and regardless of the current climate of public opinion."



## Education

One of the highest positive impacts on reducing recidivism was Vocational Education in prison.

MA, DOC 2012 Gordon Haas, March 2013  
www.realcostofprison.org

97% of all prisoners will be released back to society and living in your communities. Prisoners who reenter society need to be prepared emotionally,

educationally, and vocationally to participate as productive, law-abiding citizens. 68% of the DOC annual budget of \$517,569,158, is allocated toward salary, while only 2% (\$10,833,784) is spent on rehabilitation programming.

The state's fiscal challenges have placed enormous pressure on the budgets of agencies that deliver services with the potential to have a preventive effect on crime. Over the

past decade, public safety agencies have seen their budgets decline by 16%. With policies resulting in greater use of confinement, budget makers have had little choice but to provide the necessary funds to prisons.

A decade ago higher education surpassed spending on corrections by 25%. Today the higher education budget is 21% lower.

"Crime Cost & Consequence"  
MassINC at 6

# Aging Prison Population

by: Tim Muise

SB1139 is a Senate Bill filed by State Senator Patricia Jehlen (D), which details a workable and cost effective medical release plan. Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick, filed similar legislation. Compassionate Release (as it is known) is used in critical situations when a prisoner is very seriously or

making that care less of a burden upon the taxpayer and society as a whole. In Massachusetts, prisoners over the age of 50 represent 20% of the Massachusetts Prison population. It is the fastest growing population representing a 9% growth rate since 2009. As of June 2012 the

pressing need for the medical population is assisted daily living. The question is, why are non-ambulatory, chronically ill prisoners housed in prison?

Then there is the growing mentally ill population. Between 1998-2006, the number of mentally ill prisoners has quadrupled.

There are only ten states that do not have some type of medical release program in their prison system

ously or terminally ill and when a home-care, hospice, or hospital setting

would be more appropriate to meet a person's medical needs while

**Health Care represents 18.48% of the DOC Annual Offender Budget**

Mass. D.O.C. confirms that the state will need three new specialized facilities to house an estimated 1,270 prisoner's with medical issues.

In the asset management's strategic capital plan they state the most

**The medical cost per inmate is \$8,420, 58% of which is allocated to payroll.**

*2012 UMass contractual health budget matrix summary*

## MA. behind the 8-ball!

Republican conservative leaders like Newt Gingrich, Jeb Bush and Grover Norquist are advocating that we move away from policies heavy on incarceration toward a model focused on preparing offenders to reenter society successfully. States such as NY, NJ, TEX, S.CAR, ARK, KY & GEO have made significant changes to become leaders driven by a desire to eliminate inefficient government spending as well as leaders with faith-based motivations.

'Crime Cost & Consequence'

MassINC March 2013

## Jobs —not Jails continued from page 1

each years budget for more staff. The policies only serve to expand corrections while taxpayers foot the bill.

### Makes No Sense!

**What does make sense** is helping the disadvantaged find employment and succumbing to the life of crime.

**What does make sense** is not spending money to incarcerate the dying, the extremely elderly, those with dementia/Alzheimer's and the passage of SB#1139.

**What does make sense** is a presumptive parole system where the parole board focuses on successful transition to society.

To find out more about Jobs-Not Jails go to:

[www.JobsNotJails.org](http://www.JobsNotJails.org)

Twitter @JobsNotJails

Facebook Mass Campaign for Jobs Not Jails

## CURE-ARM Moving Forward

In 2013, CURE-ARM, through the selfless efforts of Karen Schulman, Donna and Holly Barnoski, organized a successful "Occupy Event" directly across the street from DOC headquarters. Over 700 letters were mailed out over a 10 month period and most of it funded by prisoners. CURE-ARM is a grassroots organization that is truly challenging the concept of change from the inside-out. State Representative Benjamin Swan, has been extremely helpful and supportive of our mission. Of course we would be remiss for not acknowledging the efforts of his legislative aide, Shayvonne Jackson: who

has been a beacon of light in guiding us through stormy seas.

Lots of people have given so much to this cause over the last year or so, that it would be impossible to list them all. But we want to extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Karen Schulman, Joe Lab, Professors Britta Gill-Austern & Jerry Levine, James Ridgeway, the whole Barnoski family and all those kindred souls...you know who you are.

In 2014, CURE-ARM's goals are to:

- \* Secure funding and resources for a documentary film.

- \* Work with EPOCA on Jobs-not jails.
- \* Gain momentum for passage of SB#1139.
- \* Support Lois Ahrens at Real Cost of Prisons Project in opposing the building of a new prison in Middlesex County.
- \* Support Rep. Ben Swan, in the passage of SB#1885.
- \* Above all, work toward the rehabilitation of errants and the reduction of recidivism.



# CURE-ARM

Send us your comments/feedback

Donna Barnoski

CURE-ARM

P.O. Box 396

Billerica, MA 01821

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Cure-Arm,Inc./>

[tmuise63@gmail.com](mailto:tmuise63@gmail.com)

## OUR BOARD

Donna Barnoski President

Lynette Reicks Vice President

Holly Barnoski Secretary

Shawn Fisher Director

Tim Muise Dir. Steering Com.

Ken Seguin Steering Com.

## Mission Statement

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has a very unique distinction in that General Laws of this state **MANDATE** that prisoners be rehabilitated as stated under the Powers and Duties of the Commissioner of Corrections, M.G.L. 124 § 1(e):

*In addition to exercising the powers and performing the duties which are otherwise given him by law, the commissioner of corrections, shall: ...*

*(e) establish, maintain, and administer programs of rehabilitation, including but not limited to education, training and employment, of persons committed to the custody of the department, designed as far as practicably to prepare and assist each such person to assume the responsibilities and exercise the rights of a citizen of the Commonwealth.*

It is apparent to our organization that the Department of Corrections has engaged in efforts to usurp the legal mandate to rehabilitate here in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Massachusetts special interest group of CURE-ARM will work toward the melioration of that failure in accordance with justice and the enhancement of public safety.

## Our Platform

- Re-establishment of a viable commutation system in Massachusetts
- Enacting a presumptive parole system focusing on managed successful reintegration to society as well as motivated and effective rehabilitation during incarceration.
- Working toward the implementation of compassionate medical releases dovetailing into viable commutations and effective parole with more cost effective management of the D.O.C. medical budget
- Effective use of the Massachusetts Department of Corrections medical budget which is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest portion of their budget. Cost effective preventative care is the goal.
- Work toward realization of the mandated duty that the D.O.C. focus on care and custody that promotes successful reentry and goes beyond a predominant focus of security-only.

## Pass the Pen Project

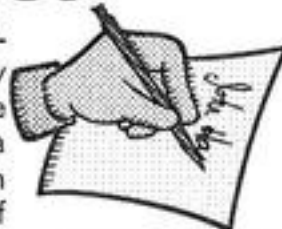
The Pass the Pen project is a CURE-ARM effort that was organized by Timothy Muise and Sarvenaz Asiedu. It involves the "telling of an unscripted story" one line at a time with each line being submitted by an individual; both inside and outside of prison.

The intent of the project is to bridge the gap that exists between the incarcerated and members of free society with the goal of building an understanding of how incarceration impacts all levels of society. The effort will tear down walls of ignorance and intolerance while fostering positive change and prompting the strengthening of the social fabric. The project will enter all Massachusetts prisons and some county jails as well as be exposed to the free world through a blog, website, Facebook page, and a public reading this summer. You can find out more about the "Pass the Pen" Project at:

⇒ [Worldbodymind.wordpress.com](http://Worldbodymind.wordpress.com)

⇒ <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pass-the-Pen/233552366818938>

⇒ <http://betweenthebars.org/blogs/101>



"Coalition members support the extremely important mission and efforts of MA CURE-ARM."

Coalition for Effective Public Safety

If Massachusetts could reduce the number of recidivists by just 5%, it would generate up to 150 million in annual savings.

"Crime Cost & Consequence"

MassINC at [massinc.org](http://massinc.org)

## MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CURE

### NATIONAL CURE

Executive Director Charlie Sullivan

P.O. Box 2310

Washington, DC 20013

[cure@curenational.org](mailto:cure@curenational.org)

### MASSACHUSETTS CURE

State Chapter Chair Louise Carcione

MA@GMCC

670 Washington St.

Dorchester, MA 02124

[Massachusetts@curenational.org](mailto:Massachusetts@curenational.org)



Contact CURE for state and national Criminal Justice reform issues

Reply ID: 2kdu

Dear corkaoo,

Thank you for leaving more supportive comments on the blog. We truly do need all the support we can get. There are two pressing needs we have at this time; the first is access to the making of copies and the next is a small amount of financial support for our postage costs in here. If you feel you could help in any way with either of those needs it would be very valuable to us.

If you could make 30-50 copies of one page, one sided CURE-ARM articles and communications each month that would be fantastic. Let me know if that is possible.

If it is possible to send a \$10.00 postal money order every once and a while to cover some postage costs that would also be fantastic. Let me know if that is possible as well.

Please direct any assistance to my "snail mail" address and messages can be directed to my email address;

Timothy J. Muise, W66927  
MCI Shirley  
PO Box 1218  
Shirley, MA  
01464-1218  
tmuise63@gmail.com

I hope to hear back from you soon Cory. Your support of our work enables us to be effective. We are doing the best we can with extremely limited resources, but we ARE making a difference! I am,

In Struggle,



Timothy J. Muise