

KEEP HOPE ALIVE



HEARTS FOR INMATES QUARTLEY NEWS LETTER

Erica Fielder Founder

PO Box 1901 Laurens, SC 29360

Email: heartsforinmates@gmail.com

Website: www.heartsforinmates.org

What's happening with Sentencing Reform in South Carolina:

Session will start January 14,, 2020

House Bills

H3580- Filed by Rep. Terry Alexander, this is the original and first bill Hearts For Inmates had drafted and filed and has been advocating for since 2015 and it focus on no parole offense. This bill supports sentencing modification from 85-65% retroactive, good behavior and work credits.

H3322- This is the latest and must larger bill that is bipartisan (Republican and Democratic) with 38 Sponsors as of April, 2019)Originally, the bill proposed making changes for parole eligibility , sentence modification, good behavior, work credits and other statue changes within statues. March, 2019 the members of the House Judiciary recommended amendments shifting the bill towards changes for low level drug offenders, victimless crimes, removing the retroactive portion, and making violent offenders ineligible.

H3919-Youth Sentencing ACT 2019- this bill is retroactive and would prohibit life sentences for those under 18years of age who committed crimes as juveniles and were tried as adults.

Senate Bills

S0639-Filed by Sen. Gerald Malloy this bill is the senator version of as the H3322 prior to the amendments. 85-65% retroactive, sentence modification, parole eligibility good time and work credits, pardon and parole. This is an overhaul to reform from every aspect.

S0155-Filed by Sen. Karl Allen, the committee recommended changes to the bill including 85-77% prospectively; low level drug offenders .The retroactive portion was opposed by several of the committee members while prospective(future or those awaiting to be sentenced) legislation for violent offenders was discussed. This bill was scheduled for a debate and is carried over for the 2020 legislative session.

What's Happening With Federal Sentencing Reform?

The First Step Act was passed as of July, 2019, approximately 3,000 offenders were released from federal custody. This Act allows:

Offenders to receive 54days for good time and work credits annually, allows low and min. transfers to inmates to home confinement or halfway housing, Inmates must be within 500 miles of family All pregnant female inmates will no longer be shackled and all feminine hygiene items will be free and of no cost.

What's Going on with Agency?

Hearts For Inmates Founder Erica Fielder and Members Met with SCDC Director, Director Of Programs, Legislative Liaison, Director of Operations August 2019. The current classification system is being revised the goal of the agency is to have the new system implemented through the agency in 2020. The current classification system takes in to consideration length of sentence, length of time remaining, and the nature of the offense. The new system will look at the nature of the offense, prior criminal history, limit the length of time that infractions etc will weigh against the inmate's classification status. The new system will take into account the age, educational level, and allow advancement with thin the system for inmates regardless of the offense and allows the inmates behavior to be a contributing factor.

Covering of Windows- The process has started with the removing of the window covers and replaced with louvers that will allow natural light to enter the cells. This is expected to be a lengthy process.

Reentry- Manning, Kershaw, Camille Graham, and Lieber will have full reentry program at their institutions and will take at least 6months to complete. All other institutions will be assigned a reentry coordinator to provide services and assistance to inmates being released that did not get assigned to the 6month program. Families are now able to call with their concerns and report their issues to the Ombudsman Office (803-) 896-9409

What Are We Doing?

We have met with Victim Advocates/ Restorative Justice Organizations
Met with ACLU, Meeting with Various Legislators,
Constructing Coalition of all spiritual and religious groups for inmates and family
Hearts For Inmates has Partnered with St Luke AME Church in Eastover SC for a \$500.00 book stipend for a college student who is actively involved and has an incarcerated love one. This will be awarded in the Spring and Fall
Hearts For Inmates is actively working to help the Palmetto Unified School collect books for the men and women incarcerated across the state.
Hearts For Inmates is asking the community and families to assist the agency with the clothing closets at the various institution for those being released
Hearts For Inmates is asking families and the community for assistance with donations of 12.00 for indigent inmates who are Need ID cards

What Can You Do?

Do your part choose your attitude and your behavior. Remember there are going to be people who oppose giving offenders a second chance. We must prove them wrong and show them that as we do the work on the outside everyone is doing the right things on the inside. Those who are positive leaders step up and help in areas in which you live. Encourage and Support each other with Love and Affirmations. Encourage your family members to get involved by calling their South Carolina Senator and House Member and let them know that they support the legislation. The calls only take 13 seconds. They also can email or write to their specific legislator, and come join us at the various hearings. It's going to take us all to work together

*******NEVER LOSE HOPE*** REFORM IS TAKING PLACE ALL ACROSS THE NATION. We have to keep the hope alive and continue to do the work collectively. It's going to take us all. WE WON'T STOP WE WON'T QUIT WE NEED THESE LAWS TO BE FIXED"**