

# OREGON CURE

Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants

A Newsletter for Families and Friends of Incarcerated Individuals

P.O. Box 80193 – Portland, OR 97280 (503) 977-9979



Summer 2019, Volume 58

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE BILLS FROM THE 2019 OREGON LEGISLATURE

BILLS THAT PASSED AND BECAME LAW ON JANUARY 1, 2020

### **SB 1008 - Juvenile Justice Reform**

(The combining of the original SB1008 with SB 969, SB 966, and SB 968) This bill is a historic reform of Oregon's extreme Measure 11 mandatory minimum adult sentences imposed on youth ages 15, 16, and 17.

- Makes the juvenile system the default placement for youth
- Establishes a "second look" process where a judge can determine whether youth can safely serve the remainder of a sentence under community supervision
- Requires an additional review before a youth would be transferred to an adult prison, and
- Eliminates life without parole sentences for youth

### **HB 3064 - The Accountability and Equity Act**

Measures Justice Reinvestment outcomes with particular attention to historically underserved groups so that we can continue reducing our reliance on prisons while also more effectively reaching communities across Oregon to increase both safety and justice.

### **HB 3255 - Parole Board Hearings Officer**

In committee upon adjournment.

### **HB 3258 - Right To Parole Counsel**

In committee upon adjournment.

### **SB 3321 - DNA Access**

This bill improves access to post-conviction DNA testing for people trying to prove they have been wrongfully convicted. The current PC-DNA law makes it very difficult to access testing, risking innocent people remaining behind bars.

### **HB 2631 - Legal Services**

This bill funds civil legal services for women incarcerated at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility. We've been developing this work for five years, but this funding will allow us to expand our services in exciting new ways through a pilot program. Helping women address issues such as debt, evictions, and child support before they leave prison increases their chances of success when they come back to the community.

### **SB 1013 - Death Penalty**

While not eliminating capital punishment completely, the new law decreases the list of crimes that receive death sentences, significantly limiting the death penalty.

### **SB 608 - Affordable Housing**

Increases Oregonians' access to homes with more housing options and renters' protections.

Affordable housing is critical to public safety. Affordable housing is critical to public safety for both formerly incarcerated people and crime survivors. This bill was a victory, but to adequately meet victims' urgent housing needs, we will continue to advocate for funding with our allies in the housing and survivor communities.

### **SB 5506 - Justice Reinvestment Funding**

Originally passed in 2013, Justice Reinvestment reduces Oregon's prison use and invests in local solutions, crime prevention, and survivor services. It has already saved \$200M and prevented two prisons from opening. All 36 counties will soon apply for dollars to meet each local community's unique needs while striving to achieve four goals: holding people accountable for harm, reducing recidivism, decreasing prison use, and maintaining public safety.

**SB 973 - Behavioral Health Reinvestment**

Without adequate behavioral health services, people who need treatment can land in jails and prisons. SB 973 establishes a grant program to distribute over \$10M to community-based supports and services aimed at preventing this cycle.

**SB 420 - Expunging Marijuana Convictions**

Will erase marijuana records with a simpler process that includes waiving court filing fees and eliminating of the need for a criminal background check.

**YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE BY**

**contacting your legislators about issues that are important to you.**

Find your legislators at [www.oregonlegislature.gov/FindYourLegislator/](http://www.oregonlegislature.gov/FindYourLegislator/)

It's never too late, your legislators will be back in session again before you know it.

## RANDY GEER UPDATE— INMATES REPAY PRISON OFFICER'S COMPASSION IN HIS HOUR OF NEED

A Go Fund Me started for Randy in February of this year has thus **far raised almost nine thousand dollars!**

After our Spring Newsletter this year with our article about Randy, The Statesman Journal did an in-depth article about Randy on June 19, 2019 titled INMATES REPAY PRISON OFFICER RANDY GEER'S COMPASSION IN HIS HOUR OF NEED.

### HELP SUPPORT OREGON CURE WHEN YOU SHOP

**Amazon:** Help us earn .05% for all of your Amazon purchases by selecting Oregon CURE on Amazon Smile. Visit [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and search for Oregon CURE. Select Oregon CURE and start shopping using the [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) URL every time!

**Fred Meyer:** Link your Fred Meyer rewards card with Oregon CURE and Fred Meyer's will send us a quarterly donation. It's easy! Visit [FredMeyer.com/community](http://FredMeyer.com/community) rewards then Link Your Rewards Card Now. Login to your account or sign up and then search for Oregon CURE (Org # BN477).

### Member donation form:

**Please note:** We have now added your membership renewal date on the address label of this newsletter. If your renewal date is in the past we ask that you please renew today to continue to receive this newsletter and to continue to support our organization.

Send your membership renewal or donation to: **Oregon CURE, PO Box 80193, Portland, OR 97280.** We also accept donations through mail or through our website [www.oregoncure.org](http://www.oregoncure.org)!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

(Optional):

Name of incarcerated loved one/ SID & facility: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to volunteer my services! My skills are: \_\_\_\_\_

Randy is retired, although his health problems surfaced before his retirement. He was diagnosed with diabetes and lost part of his right leg about 10 years ago. Complications from diabetes and an infection led to more problems this year, and he lost most of his left leg.

"Oddly enough, maybe it's been a positive thing emotionally and psychologically," Geer said. "Although my chances of winning a marathon are slim." He does plan to walk again. After losing both legs to diabetes, he finds himself on the receiving end of unexpected compassion. He's been fitted with new prosthetics, choosing a vibrantly-colored design he thought would appeal to children, including his granddaughter.

The article mentioned that both current and former inmates reciprocated Randy's kindness by reaching out to him earlier this year when he was hospitalized and spent several weeks in a rehabilitation center after having his left leg amputated above the knee. Those who could visit did. Some wrote letters. In some ways, they returned the favor and helped save his life. "I was so low in my spirits I was a bit worried about myself, about whether I could recover and wanted to recover," said Geer, who 10 years ago lost part of his right leg. The letters were just as uplifting as the visits.

A couple of former inmates helped get his room ready before he came home. Geer lives with his son and daughter-in-law in the South Salem house where he grew up.

Reflecting back on when he retired in 2013, then worked as a temp employee through March 2014, Randy said, "I walked out of there after 30 years with at least 100 friends," he said. "These are people I don't feel any discomfort with them knowing anything about me". He said, "I've never turned down a Facebook request from an ex-inmate, ever. If they want to share their good news or struggle, I'm always willing to listen to them." Randy has been active with Oregonians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty, a nonprofit raising public awareness about the effectiveness of the death penalty.

"The more I saw people trying to deal with terrible things they had done, the more I understood forgiveness had to have a place in our justice system," he said. "I refuse to let hate dominate my life," he said. "The person that benefits most from forgiveness is you yourself. You don't have to carry it all the time."

There has been a lot in the news of late regarding just how much Norway is known to have low incarceration, recidivism and crime rates. Its prisons are known for being some of the best and most humane in the world. We even had a delegation of Oregon lawmakers and department of corrections officials visited the Scandinavian country and officers participated in a professional exchange program and worked alongside their Norwegian counterparts.

With that in mind and motivated by former co-workers and inmates, Geer is thinking of approaching prison administrators and offering to work as an unpaid consultant on Oregon's efforts to incorporate elements of Norway's acclaimed prison system into its own.

"Everyone benefits if we can make prisons better," Geer said.

## OREGON D.O.C. AUTOMATED CRIMINAL RISK SCORE (ACRS)

NOTES CAPTURED DURING EUGENE CURE MEETING ON 7.11.2019

Prepared by Tricia H. and approved by Lisa Hall.

1. There are three types of counselors on staff in the DOC (outside the Behavioral Health Division which addresses mental health needs): Intake, Institution Counselors (on-going correctional case management in the institution), and Release. Release counselors are assigned the last six months of an adult in custody (AIC's) sentence. Ms. Hall talked with us about Institution Counselors.
2. Historically, Institution Counselors have functioned as case managers, making program and other referrals for services as well as assisting AICs in his/her affairs. As there are approximately 14,700 AICs in custody and only 86 Institution Counselors, the caseloads are very high, resulting in counselors occasionally meeting with AICs. So the DOC is making a significant shift in the role of the Institution Counselor – to become a direct service provider. This means Institution Counselors will be required to provide cognitive interventions to AICs who are identified as having the highest risk to reoffend. An ask to the State legislature this past session for funding for additional counselors was not approved.
3. ACRS is a risk assessment tool DOC used to determine the risk level (risk of recidivism) for each DOC AIC. Although the Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI) is also a risk/needs assessment tool, DOC uses the LS/CMI as a needs assessment to determine the AICs criminogenic needs. All adult male AICs are assessed at Intake and then again every two years if the AIC is assigned to a high/medium caseload. The women receive the Women's Risk Needs Assessment (WRNA) and not the LS/CMI. Some low ACRS AICs may be overridden to a high/medium caseload if they are engaged in misconduct or become a management issue, such as being in a "security threat group" (aka gang). DOC is in the process of recalibrating ACRS, making it gender specific - one for adult males and another for women. At this time, sex offense convictions do not raise the AIC risk level, except having multiple theft convictions does raise the risk level. If an AIC is eligible for earned time, it is also part of the ACRS calculation.
4. Each Institution Counselor will carry two caseloads 1) a high/medium caseload and 2) a low ACRS caseload. The high/medium caseloads will have a maximum capacity of 60 AICs per caseload. This was accomplished by adjusting the current ACRS cut-offs (not rescoring). In other words, the AICs supervision levels were changed, not their ACRS. Only those AIC's in the high and medium risk levels will receive direct counseling services from their Institutional Counselor. The low risk level AIC's will be "case banked" and will only meet with the counselor if there is a particular problem (like a disciplinary issue or special need.) There is one Institution Counselor assigned to the OSP Mental Health Unit specifically.
5. All the Institution Counselors and their managers are undergoing training in cognitive behavioral therapy, based upon a program out of the University of Cincinnati. The training is called Evidenced Based Practices in Community Corrections (EPICS). The training should be completed by January 2020. EPICS is being delivered to AICs who are assigned to a high/medium caseload. The DOC expects a counselor to be at full expertise in providing this training in 3-5 years. Following the cognitive behavioral therapy training, the counselors will then undergo Motivational Interview training. In addition to receiving direct cognitive interventions from their Institution Counselor, AICs may also be referred to attend group cognitive classes taught by contractors. The men's program is called "Free Your Mind." The women have a different gender-based program called "Moving On".
6. The Institution Counselors are required to meet regularly with each of the 60 AICs on their high/medium caseloads. If the AIC is participating in EPICS, the AIC will meet with their counselor monthly, for approximately an hour, depending upon the intervention. The AIC will be given "homework" to do between sessions. Counselors are being trained on how to engage the AIC and help them identify their criminogenic needs, address thinking errors, risky thoughts and behaviors, learn pro-social skills, etc. Ms. Hall reports that the counselors appear eager to provide the cognitive interventions.
7. None of the current programs in the prisons, such as Getting Out By Going In, Parenting Inside Out, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, and Alcohol & Drug treatment are being cut. The counseling by the Institution Counselors is in addition to the already existing programs (different ones are offered at various institutions).
8. After meeting with the Institution Counselor, the high/medium AIC's will receive a document called an "Action Plan" which lists the homework the AIC needs to complete before they meet again with their Institution Counselor. Each AIC has a "Behavior Change Plan" that outlines the AICs goals they want to accomplish in their cognitive

restructuring as identified by their top criminogenic needs. Family members can ask their AIC to share a copy if the AIC wishes to do so.

9. Ms. Hall said that the notes from the sessions will not be placed in the AIC's general DOC file. What is discussed with the prison counselor does not usually come under the HIPAA requirements of confidentiality but there could be exceptions, depending on the situation. Again, please ask your AIC if they would like to share with you what they are working on with their counselor.

10. The AICs Behavior Change Plan follows the AIC upon release and is provided to the Community Corrections supervising officer. In the community, the "Public Safety Checklist" is used to determine level of supervision. The Public Safety Checklist is the community's risk tool, just as ACRS is for DOC. (Those convicted of sex offenses have a separate classification process for level of supervision.)

11. The University of Cincinnati is providing the EPICS curriculum in which the counselors are being trained. If you wish to and have access to explore more of their website, the link is: <http://www.uc.edu/corrections/services>.

## IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN READING MORE LITERATURE

**by incarcerated individuals in Oregon**

**we've listed some book recommendations of curated work from "inside the Pen".**

### QUOTE OF NOTE

**"Proximity has taught me some basic and humbling truths, including this vital lesson: Each of us is more than the worst thing we've ever done. My work with the poor and the incarcerated has persuaded me that the opposite of poverty is not wealth; the opposite of poverty is justice."** -Bryan Stevenson, American lawyer, social justice activist, founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative

### DID YOU KNOW THAT CURE IS AN ALL VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION?

Your membership donations pay for the printing and mailing of our newsletters, our website fees, our phone line fees and our post office box fees. **Your funds go directly to pursue our mission, we do not have any paid employees, we are strictly a 501(c)3 organization.**

**Would you like to see something added to our newsletter?**

Just let us know! We are always open to suggestions. Please email us at [oregoncure@gmail.com](mailto:oregoncure@gmail.com) with your suggestions.



## MEN STILL IN EXILE

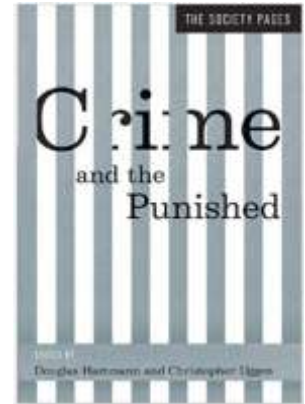
An anthology of poetry and prose by members of the Oregon State Penitentiary writing group, Penned Thoughts. Edited by Michele Dishong-McCormack, group facilitator. The collection explores themes of gratitude and faith, hopes and dreams, life, love, family, and regret.

\$18.00 on Amazon here: <https://amzn.to/2TYUoGo>

## CRIME AND THE PUNISHED

The chapters are organized into three main sections: “Core Contributions” exemplifies how sociologists and other social scientists think about otherwise familiar phenomena like crime, incarceration, and suicide. Chapters in the “Cultural Contexts” section engage crime in cultural realms—from politics to families to international crime and justice—that are often ignored or taken for granted. Finally, the “Critical Takes” chapters provide sociological commentary, perspective, and reflections on crime and its control.

\$15.50 on Amazon here: <https://amzn.to/2UC4j8Z>



## WISDOM WITHIN THE PEN

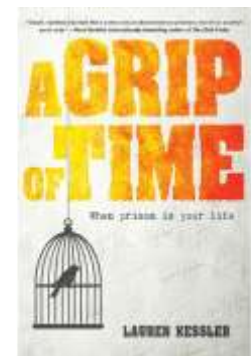
The writing in Wisdom Within The Pen encompasses poetry, short story, and other forms of creative expression that are often autobiographical in nature. There are also many interesting, historical facts relating to the Oregon State Penitentiary and the inner workings of life behind bars.

\$8.50 on Lulu here: <https://bit.ly/2WU0sBB>

## A GRIP OF TIME: WHEN PRISON IS YOUR LIFE

This book opens a door into the lives of several men serving life sentences inside a maximum security prison. The book is an anthology of their stories and perspectives compiled over three years from their writing group.

\$25.00 here: <https://bit.ly/2yIjL77>



\*\*Prices may change at the discretion of the vendor over time, Oregon CURE receives no profit from the sale of these books.

## RELEASE ORIENTATIONS

Release Orientations are co-facilitated by Community Corrections and Oregon CURE. Find out how you can help your recently or soon to be released loved one successfully re-enter our communities. Before attending, please phone one of the county coordinators / department listed below to confirm the date, time and location.

### Washington County Dates

Contact: Marcus Ford (503) 846-3494

Held Quarterly: 1st Wednesday of February, May, August, November

Time: 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Location: Call to Confirm (503) 977-9979

### Multnomah County Dates

Contact: (503) 988-3081 press “0” for TSU

This orientation is for family and friends of prisoners who will be released within 6 months to Multnomah County.

Time: 3rd Thursdays, 3:30 – 5:00PM

Location: Mead Building

First Floor Conference Room

421 SW 5th Avenue, Portland

### Clackamas County

Contact: Gayle Terjeson (503)655-8790

Not being held at this time

### Marion County

Contact: Kayla Thompson (503) 540-8017

Marion County Probation and Parole

Location: Marion County Work Release Center

3950 Aumsville Hwy SE, Salem, OR 97317

## INTAKE ORIENTATIONS

Intake Orientations are co-facilitated by Oregon Department of Corrections and Oregon CURE. Find out about Oregon’s prison system, the intake process, phones, mail, and visiting requirements. You will receive a packet of informational brochures. There will be opportunities to ask questions and learn how you can get through your loved one’s incarceration. Maintaining family contact is vital to your loved one’s time in prison and upon release.

### Portland Metro Dates

Held Quarterly: 1st Wednesdays of March, June, September, and December

Time: 5:30pm to 7:00pm

Location: Varies, please call Oregon CURE to confirm: (503) 977-9979

### Salem Dates

Held Quarterly: 3rd Thursdays of February, May, August, and November

Time: 6:30pm to 8:30pm

Location:

First Christian Church

685 Marion Street NE

Salem, OR 97301

Parlor Room

Corner of Marion and Church streets, on the north side of downtown. There is parking on the street or in the Dept. of Energy parking lot next door. The entrance is on the west side of the building, in the parking lot.

## Support Groups

Oregon CURE support groups are intended for adult family members and friends only. Some topics of discussion may not be suitable for small children or pre-teens. Attend a support group and network with family members who have “been there”.

### Beaverton Support Group

1st Wednesdays: 7:00-8:30pm

Please call to confirm the location.

(503) 977-9979

### Salem Support Group

1st Saturdays: 9:30-11:30am

The Keizer Senior Center

930 Plymouth Drive NE

Keizer, OR 97303

(503) 409-3329 (Wayne)

### Portland East Side Support Group

Abundant Life Church

17241 SE Hemrich Rd

Damascus, OR 97089

(503) 757-7762 Will and Corinne

### Eugene Support Group

1st Thursdays and 3rd Tuesdays: 7:00-9:00pm

Please call to confirm location.

(541) 344-7612 (Dave) (541) 342-6817 (Don)



Oregon CURE  
7805 SW 40<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
PO Box 80193  
Portland, OR 97280

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passed. Renew today  
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The opinion and statements contained in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of Oregon CURE.

Contributions of articles, letters to the editor, notices, etc. are welcome, but may be edited or rejected for space. Articles may be copied in their entirety with credit to the author or to the publication.

Oregon CURE is an all-volunteer organization that is not a service organization. Do not send us any legal documents, we are not a legal service. We are not qualified to assist you with legal matters.

Renew your membership to Oregon CURE today!

Send your member donation to: Oregon CURE, PO Box 80193, Portland, OR 97280

Website: [www.oregoncure.org](http://www.oregoncure.org) Email: [oregoncure@gmail.com](mailto:oregoncure@gmail.com)

Please fill out the membership donation form in this newsletter.

Type of donation: Adult in custody: \$3/ Individual: \$15/ Family: \$25/ Sustaining: \$50-\$100/

Sponsor: \$100-\$250/ Benefactor: \$250+