



Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants



Federal Prison Chapter

*A National Effort to Reduce Crime
Through Federal Criminal Justice Reform*

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16 May 2007

FedCURE Message--

Federal Inmate Judith Giglio:

Writes Rep. Louie Gohmert -- "Calls Him Out on The Second Chance Act."

FedCURE pleads with all you, in the strongest terms, to get behind Judith's heartfelt message (below) and contact your Congressperson NOW! Urging him or her to support The Second Chance Act, especially the Republican leadership – Minority Leader John Boehner (R-OH) and Minority Whip Roy Blunt (R-MO) expressing disappointment with the delay and urging them to strongly support the Second Chance Act.

Link to Contact Congress and Tips on Writing Congress:

<http://www.fedcure.org/ContactCongressREP-SEN.shtml> and

<http://www.fedcure.org/documents/TipsonWritingtoCongress.pdf>.

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[Quote]

----- Original Message -----

From: GIGLIO, JUDITH

To: FedCURE@FedCURE.org

Sent: Wednesday, May 16, 2007 1:35 PM

Subject: copy

This is a copy of a letter that I had my daughter send to Rep. Gohmert and Gene Guerro.
Thanks
Judie Giglio

-----GIGLIO, JUDITH on 05/16/2007 12:32 PM wrote:

Hon. Louie Gohmert
Ashley H. Callen
Legislative Director/Counsel
Office of Rep. Louie Gohmert (TX-01)
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The Honorable Louie Gohmert

Dear Congressman Gohmert:

I am one of the incarcerated Federal prisoners that you seem to feel are not entitled to any "Perks" upon release from prison.

I feel put upon to reply to the letter from Ashley H. Callen, Legislative Director/Counsel in your office.

I am one of many thousand federal prisoners. I am also one of many thousand federal prisoners who is truly innocent of the charges levied against me. I was tried and convicted on a charge of "Conspiracy to Money Launder". The conspiracy part is what caused me to receive a very heavy sentence. I was one of about 15 people indicted in a "front money scam".. The fact that I did not do what I was accused and convicted of is irrelevant at this time. I am almost 6 years into a 9 year sentence. I am 62+ years old. I spent the majority of my life as a businesswoman with a reputation for fairness and integrity. I am now a number in the federal prison system.

As someone with business savvy, I have tried to help those in here who have not had the opportunities that I have had. I was instrumental in setting up a unit based education class program. This program allows women in the camp to take classes taught by other inmates. These classes range from the basics of tutoring for G.E.D. exams, to construction trades and CPR and Paralegal classes and everything in between. We have about 29 classes of all sorts available. The classes are 10 weeks long and in some cases longer. Women receive a certificate of completion at the end of the sessions. They are required to take a pre-class exam to help the teacher identify the basic knowledge of the students. There is also a post exam prior to receiving a certificate. Women here at camp Coleman are not idle.

Many of these women will require assistance when they are ready to leave prison. Many of these women are first time non-violent offenders. Many were caught up in the minimum mandatory drug laws and are here for 10, 20 & 30 years. A number of these women gave birth to their children in prison and have had to rely on others to raise their children. So many of these women are anxious to begin a new life and a better life for themselves and their children.

You and others like you, are trying to stop what could be a wonderful program in re-entry and family stabilization. Career education and training, drug counseling if required. From what I have read of the Second Chance Act, there are no provisions for cell phones or I-pods or Blackberry's. Nor is there any pork in the bill for people to go out and not work and not support themselves. All of this would require a great deal of effort on the part of the person re-entering society.

Sir, are you aware of the cost of incarceration? At my age (62+), having been hospitalized three times in six years, the cost for maintaining out elderly in prison is in the range of \$70,000, per person per year. For younger people the cost is approximately \$29,000. multiply that cost by the an average of 200,000 federal prisoners. Astronomical isn't it?

On the other hand the cost of 1 year of community college is \$1,500. Which would make more sense. Teaching our inmates to become better people or keeping them in prisons? The cost of keeping an elderly person in home confinement would be somewhere around \$2,000 yearly vs \$70,000. Which would make more sense?

The cost of incarceration is not only the dollars, but the family ties and community ties that are in some cases irreparable. I lost my husband of 28 years shortly after I was

indicted. The stress that we were put under with the advent of my upcoming trial and monetary concerns caused him to have a massive heart attack. He died in my arms. My life was shattered. Not only was I facing a trial, but I was facing financial ruin in my golden years. I have lost everything that I worked for my entire life. I lost my husband as a direct result of this unjust charge, I lost my Mom shortly after I was incarcerated and my son no longer speaks to me. I have nothing to fall back on. I have no savings and no health care and no home to go back to. Yet you want me to leave prison with no financial or educational resources. Why? Do you think that it will be easy at this age to face a new beginning? Do you think that somewhere I have hidden resources to regain a life, any kind of life? My family, what there is left of them, is unable to care for me financially. They can help me with a place to live but then I am on my own. I will not be able to go back into the business that I know. I have to start from scratch. Can you tell me how to do that if I cannot access any government aid. As a convicted felon, I have no chance of renting an apartment, getting food stamps, or even getting any federal aid for education. As a convicted felon, I will be unable to get any sort of a job except maybe entry level. I have a number of things against me. My age, and worst of all a felony conviction.

With the help of the Second Chance Act, I had a Second Chance available. You seem to feel that it is okay to throw me away. What you fail to realize is that I am you and you sir are me. You and most people do not realize that they are but a pen stroke away from a federal indictment. The proverbial ham sandwich being indicted.

Isn't it less expensive and easier to retrain people and offer them a means to support themselves than to force them to return to illegal means as a way of life? Isn't it less expensive to allow these former felons to develop self esteem and to hold their heads up and become a productive member of society? Wouldn't there be more money available for Veteran's programs if there were fewer incarcerated? Why are you and some of your respected colleagues trying to hold us down?

I have never been involved in drugs, but drugs can be self perpetuating and cause a ripple effect for years to come. The felons in prison for drug offenses, need to be able to leave here and feel gain self worth and feel that they made a mistake and paid their debt and that it will not be held against them the rest of their lives. If you do not feel that this is an issue to be reckoned with, I and many like me will disagree as strongly as possible.

I firmly believe that these programs outlined in the Second Chance should be administered by people who are best able to utilize the funds to the max. If the answer lies in Faith based programs, let it be so. I have no problem with that. I truly believe that these programs will help people for many years to come. This is not a stop gap measure. This is a long range plan to help people help themselves stay out of prison. Recidivism is highest among the unemployed and the unemployable. You can put an end to this.

The recidivism rate among the over 50 group is about 2%. So why are the elderly being forced to stay in prison settings where the medical care is virtually non-existent. There are no provisions for the elderly in prison. We are given very little, if any preventive care. Heart attacks, strokes and in my case bleeding ulcers are rampant. 15 months ago, I was hospitalized with bleeding ulcers. I almost died here at the camp because of the incompetent care that I received. I was told that there was nothing wrong with me except for high blood sugar. This is not now and never has been a problem in my life. I was bleeding internally, but no one here recognized the symptoms. There is no managed care. There is no real food. The allotted cost for feeding inmates is somewhere around \$1.62 per day per person, below the poverty level. Poor food, poor housing conditions, unclean housing units and little medical care add up to a very expensive cost of incarceration. Hospital stays for people like me are expensive. I have been hospitalized three times, the last time just this past week. I have undergone surgery that could have been prevented.

I respectfully ask that you reconsider your opposition to this bill. Allow me to go home and become a productive member of the senior society. I have much to offer and would

like to see my family again outside of the confines of prison. I do not want to die in here, and that is a very real fear. I am not alone in that fear.

We have many women here who are older than I and in worse physical health. We are Social Security eligible and Medicare eligible, some of us are even able to work outside of the home. Allow the prison system to save the thousands of dollars a year that they spend on me and the other elderly. Take that money and put it to programs for the Vets. We are not asking for I-pods or Blackberry's or cell phones. We are asking for a chance. Certainly if you or someone that you care about were in this position, you would be pushing for this bill to pass. Our families feel the same way. I may not be able to vote now, but at some point I will again be able to vote and I would like to think that the candidate of choice is a person who is fair minded and caring.

I believe that with your support and the support of other Republicans this bill, which is advocated by the Justice Department and the Bureau of Prisons and American Bar Association, the Public Defenders Association to name a few, would be passed.

Sincerely,

Judie Giglio
Reg.No. 11197-017
Federal Correction Complex Camp
P.O. Box 1027
Coleman, Fl. 33521-1027

P.S. This letter is being forwarded to your office by my daughter, as copy is being forwarded to Gene Guerro, Open Society Institute and FedCURE.

[End Quote].

*Serving Federal Prisoners and Their Families
Working to Reinstate Parole and to Increase Good Time Allowances*

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