

Summer-Fall 2018

highlights

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Finally! Here is the summer-fall edition of insideout! Thank you for your patience!

January is the month when we renew our membership, Many forget, so we ask **“When was the last time you renewed your membership?”** Fill in the membership form on the back of this newsletter and send us your contribution. Help VACURE. advocate for our prisoners! Thanks to all who have renewed. We appreciate your help!

Virginia CURE 2018 Annual Meeting : Women Behind Bars

The Annual Meeting in Richmond focused on the experience of incarcerated women. Speakers included Heidi Christiansen and Helania Bragg, former residents of Guest House, a women’s transitional home, Chaplain Rita Willett of Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women, Nicole Tortoriello of the ACLU and Kari Galloway, Executive Director of Guest House. We learned that most women in prison are the sole parent to a young child or children, a victim of violence, including domestic violence, sexual violence, and/or abuse and often facing mental health issues and/or addiction recovery. The road to incarceration often involves a male partner. 82% of women’s crimes are non violent. Kari Galloway spoke of programs that make up the Guest House environment that are based upon the “5 Pillars of Livability”; Healthcare, Employment, Education, Housing and Reconnection. They cannot provide for all the applicants on the long waiting list for places in the program. Chaplain Willett spoke about the women’s need for spiritual comfort and growth. There is more interest in these issues in women’s prisons than in men’s and friendships are more important.

Nicole Tortoriello spoke on the recent report from the ACLU entitled “Women in the Criminal Justice System, Pathways to Incarceration In Virginia” The report discloses that women often become engaged with the criminal justice system “as a result of attempts to cope with challenging aspects of their lives, such as poverty, unemployment, and physical or mental health struggles – especially those arising from drug addiction and past instances of trauma.” . Once in the correctional facility they find themselves in an environment designed for men. The report recommends that the Governor create a task force of stakeholders in the criminal justice system to study the following issues and make recommendations.

- Education and training of those involved in the criminal justice, mental health, and drug treatment arenas about the unique needs and characteristics of women and mothers
- Increased investment of public dollars in treatment and services to address the underlying causes of women’s involvement with crime in a community setting, not a correctional setting;
- Improved collection and tracking of data on women in the criminal justice system – at the state and local levels – that will inform future policymaking legislative, administrative, and/or local policy reforms;
- Identification and revision of educational policies that drive girls into the juvenile justice system, and creation of programs for educators and child welfare professionals to identify the signs of sexual victimization and support girls who have been traumatized by violence;
- Identification of ways to increase women’s eligibility for participation in and successful completion of diversion and drug court programs;
- Revision of the Virginia Sentencing Guidelines to include policies that reflect an understanding of women’s levels of culpability and control with respect to drug crimes...

The VDOC was unable to be at the meeting due to an ongoing lawsuit against the department by the ACLU. They did, however, attend our meeting with the DOC on November 5 to inform us about their own plans for addressing the needs of women incarcerated in Virginia’s correctional facilities.

Chesterfield's newly elected Commonwealth's Attorney supports criminal justice reform

CA Scott Miles was roundly applauded on a recent visit to Chesterfield's jail. He is very much appreciated by the people housed there. A month after the election, the Chesterfield Commonwealth's Attorney's office is already transforming into the operation Miles described in his campaign: one in which cash bail requests are a thing of the past, and a simple marijuana possession charge won't land a person in jail. In the coming months he plans to roll out additional policy directives on felony drug prosecutions and suspended driver's licenses. Noting that felony convictions have "a huge ripple effect" on addicts and their families, making it difficult for convicts who served their time to re-enter society, find gainful employment and stay clean, Miles has committed to prosecuting nonviolent drug offenses as misdemeanors and increasing treatment options to break the cycle of recidivism that sees so many of the same addicts churn through the local criminal justice system. Not everyone sees these policy shifts as common sense, though; some worry they could lead to a slippery slope and increased crime. Miles acknowledges the criticism but believes that he is on the right track. "We're at an important time in Chesterfield's development right now," he says. "I've got a year to make the case. I hope we make the most of it."

Chesapeake Opens New Facility Designed With Rehabilitation In Mind.

It took two years but Chesapeake recently opened a 47,282-square-foot expansion of the city's jail. The new building will house 320 inmates and the jail's community and re-entry programs. Sheriff Jim O'Sullivan stated that the new space was designed with rehabilitation in mind, aimed at preparing incarcerated men and women for life after jail and ultimately reducing recidivism. "It's not just about corrections, it's about re-entry," O'Sullivan said at a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new facility. The new building includes four housing units arranged in what is described as a "beehive" — with a room in the middle from which jail staff can watch. Because the new building is separated from the general jail population, it reduces the risk of contraband and will allow the jail to expand its programming. Those going through re-entry will get help finding housing and jobs and obtaining ID cards and driver's licenses. The jail also will offer a small-engine repair program, in which

inmates can earn certifications. Plans for a greenhouse and horticulture program are in the works.

Western Virginia Regional Jail Aids Inmates Suffering From Addictions

Addiction experts and those who work in corrections say the first few weeks after being released are among the most challenging for people with addictions, and without treatment, they are at a higher risk of relapsing and overdosing. With this understanding, the jail in western Roanoke County offers an injection that will stave off opioid and alcohol cravings for a month, allowing newly released prisoners an opportunity to get into treatment to continue their recovery. The drug is known as Vivitrol. A shot costs about \$1,100. The Western Virginia Regional Jail is paying for the program through a \$200,000 grant from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, as well as a match of \$67,000 from the jail's own budget. How or if the program will continue once that grant money runs out is unclear.

Across Virginia Interest in Bail Reform Grows

Earlier this year, Virginia Attorney General Herring ended the practice of imposing bail, announcing in April that prosecutors in his office would no longer seek cash bail for defendants. The change made him the first of a small but growing number of prosecutors and judges in Virginia to publicly eschew the system even as it remains enshrined in state law. According to Herring, he was never convinced that bail was responsible for keeping people from running away. Also he said, he was never sure how much to assign to the accused. His new approach? "If we think you're dangerous, you stay in," he says. "If we think you're not dangerous, you get out. But we don't make a money recommendation because there's no way to assign a monetary value to risk." Arlington County Commonwealth Attorney Theo Stamos announced that her office will no longer request that judges set cash bail for people accused of low-level misdemeanors. Judges as well share the same concerns. Fairfax County Circuit Court Judge David Bernhard told The Washington Post that for about a year he had stopped setting cash bail in cases where defendants weren't deemed dangerous or a flight risk. If the defendant shows signs of mental illness, he is assigned to a "pre trial services program; which is something like a pre trial probation, and is increasingly seen as an alternative to cash bail. The state Crime Commission is currently studying this program. They are looking at hundreds of cases to see how well the program works. Herring has proposed a package of bail reform measures, calling the current system an undue burden on the poor that wastes state resources by unnecessarily jailing people who aren't dangerous. Republican legislators were skeptical about the effectiveness of these programs and will wait to see the results of the studies before addressing Herring's reform package.

Meanwhile: In Charlottesville, a federal judge has granted an injunction to prevent the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles from enforcing a state law that requires automatic suspension of driver's licenses for failure to pay court fines and costs. The ruling in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Virginia came three days after Gov. Ralph Northam publicly denounced the agency policy and provided money in his proposed budget to compensate for the loss of money from the reinstatement fee that is used to fund trauma centers. "Today's ruling is a victory for the Constitution and for common sense. The court stated unequivocally that Virginia's driver's license suspension statute likely violates procedural due process rights," said Angela Ciolfi, executive director of the Legal Aid Justice Center, which joined with the McGuireWoods law firm in contesting the law's constitutionality

Virginia Addresses Mental Health in It's Criminal Justice System

In the last five years, the number of people in Virginia's jails with mental illnesses increased 18 percent, according to a 2017 report by the Virginia Compensation Board on mental illness in jail, while the proportion of people in state prisons who have a mental health condition increased from 20.8 percent to 28 percent over eight years. VDOC Director Harold Clarke said recidivism can be twice as likely for people with mental illness. In August, a **Virginian-Pilot** investigation tracked 404 deaths since 2010. The investigation found dozens of instances in which incarceration exacerbated the symptoms of people with mental health issues, sometimes leading them to harm or kill themselves. The Hampton Roads Regional Jail, which has seen 2 deaths in the last 2 years, has received a grant of nearly \$1 million to help with staffing for mental health care workers. The state has added clinicians, psychiatrists and behavioral health specialists in its jails; increased crisis intervention sites; giving prosecutors and judges training on mental illnesses; and created diversion programs for inmates with mental illnesses. The state also launched STEP-VA, a program to expand the type of services that are provided in Virginia's 40 community services boards, such as same-day access to a clinical assessment as well as outpatient services. Mental Health dockets are being established in courts. In Roanoke, a therapeutic docket for defendants suffering from mental illness has been established. Norfolk began its mental health docket in 2004 and courts around the state have followed suit. But, as a Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services report found in 2016, courts have had to cut back on other programs or seek federal grants to cover the costs of mental health dockets. The General Assembly has historically not looked favorably on the creation of specialty dockets, and as a result no state funding has been allocated for this purpose to date," the report said. Sandra Brandt, member of the Virginia CURE Board and owner of Step Up Inc, a nonprofit in Hampton Roads that provides inmates with re-entry services, said that while more clinicians are being placed in local and regional jails, it's not enough. She stated that she'd like to see more jails release inmates with a 30 or 45-day supply of any medication they've been taking while incarcerated. She's also asked the General Assembly in the past to have the state Department of Corrections give inmates a "personal health report" as they're released. It would list any diagnoses and medications they're taking, making it easier for service providers like Brandt's to help them. She's been told that would be a violation of privacy laws, but she said an inmate could sign a form authorizing that health information to be released. That could also be addressed through better data sharing between agencies like hers, and jails and public health centers, she said.

First Step Act Passes Senate

After years of efforts and a failure of a stronger bill last year, the senate has finally passed a compromise bill aptly called the first Step Act. The bill will affect federal prisoners who fit into certain categories of criminal behavior, leaving most of the over 2 million prisoners in the country out. However, it sets an example for states to follow. Major provisions of the act will include

- make retroactive the reforms enacted by the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010, which reduced the disparity between crack and powder cocaine sentences at the federal level.
- take several steps to ease mandatory minimum sentences under federal law that would expand the "safety valve" that judges can use to avoid handing down mandatory minimum sentences.
- ease a "three strikes" rule so people with three or more convictions, including for drug offenses, automatically get 25 years instead of life.
- restrict the current practice of stacking gun charges against drug offenders to add possibly decades to prison sentences.
- increase "good time credits" that inmates can earn, allowing well-behaved inmates to cut their prison sentence by an additional week for each year they're incarcerated.
- Allow inmates to get earned time credits for participation in vocational and rehabilitative programs

Study Shows How Health Care Costs in Virginia's prisons Can Be Lowered

A recent study by the Virginia Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) reveals that Virginia spends about \$6,500 on health care per inmate per year. That's about the national average for -inmate health costs, but in Virginia the cost of caring for prisoners is rising especially rapidly at about 7.6% per year, double the national average. Last year, the DOC spent about \$201 million to provide health care to about 30,000 inmates at 41 facilities. The Report offers several recommendations on how this spending can be reduced, such as: Investigate ways to pay lower rates of reimbursement to providers; Work more closely with state health systems at Virginia Commonwealth University and the University of Virginia, especially with reference to negotiating prescription drug prices; Hold fewer people who need health care in the state's prisons;.Modify the state's policy on compassionate early release for inmates with terminal illnesses; Take a more compassionate approach to non-violent people with mental-health and drug-addiction problems.

A Note About Letters to Virginia CURE

While Virginia CURE cares about your concerns and appreciates being kept informed, we don't have a volunteer staff large enough to reply promptly to all letters received .Please, keep it short and to the point. **Do not send legal papers.** We do not have the capacity to deal with legal issues. Send mail to **P.O. Box 2310, Vienna, VA 22183**

Highlights of DOC-CURE Meeting Nov. 5

Present: DOC Marie Vargo, Wendy Goodma, Scott Richeson, VACURE: Mary Anne Stone, Eric Peterson, Carla Peterson

This meeting focused on a new interest of the DOC, which was not expressed at the Annual Meeting. The DOC is currently exploring ways to make the women’s facilities more gender appropriate. It is developing principles based upon the work of Stephanie Covington, an expert in women’s issues, The goal is to make Virginia prisons, designed for men, more friendly to women prisoners. The new environment will be system wide. It will involve assessing the needs of female prisoners, and creating programs dealing with issues relevant to women prisoners including drug addiction, mental health issues specific to women, job skills and parenting classes. In addition, there will be training of staff to educate them on gender issues. Recognizing the importance of relationships to most women, there will be peer support groups, encouragement of mentors and the creation of a family like environment. Even placement of furniture that can allow women to congregate in small groups of friends will be considered. At some time in the future it is envisioned that a nursery for newborns and very young children could be a possibility. Currently only a handful of prisons allow babies to remain with their mothers for a specific time.. The DOC is also looking at how they handle older prisoners. The ban on prisoners saving their legal documents to library computers was discussed. Prisoners complain that this means they will have to recreate edited documents from scratch. The DOC held firm on this . “All law libraries have typewriters now in response to removing word processing and other software from computers in law libraries. Many still had typewriters and the others purchased them as a result. The offenders were given well over a month of notice before all documents were removed from computers. Computers are to be used for legal research only.” It was noted that not all facilities had word processing and never could save documents.. As for AC, there are plans to continue installing AC but this is dependent on the budget.

Parole Board Members Meet With Inmates at Buckingham

On November 7th, 50 members of the Peer Parole Support Group at Buckingham Correctional Center met with 2 members of the Virginia parole Board. Parole Board Chair Adrienne Bennett and member Linda Bryant fielded questions from the group. A brief summary of some of the statements made by Board members in response to questions. “The Board’s first consideration is public safety”. “The Board gives the benefit of the doubt to small infractions and long ago crimes.’ ‘Each case has it’s own unique circumstances (you can’t compare your case to others).” Out of state parole plans can be acceptable.. They will contact the person on your plan and they must have the “right” answers. If you have a violent crime, it is better to have a release plan outside the community where the crime was committed”. “If you waited a long time and then received a turndown, it is either “technical difficulty” or the Board spent a long time looking at it and that doesn’t mean you wont get it next time.” “The Board recognizes the value of paroling folks to family while they are living.” “Serious nature of the offense” can mean many things The Board is aware that this is vague. It is often used when they don’t have an option explaining exactly why you are denied. It may be a risk to the community or a line has been crossed.” “The offender must develop his case for a pardon, not just “allege a fishback “ violation”. Deferrals: “There is no path in 3 years for you to get out. It would take a super majority for you to get a 3 year hit”. Reconsideration must recognize a mistake by the Board. “ The Board has a small budget and skeleton staff so don’t file a reconsideration unless the Board commits a major error.”

Virginia Parole Grant Rates 2018

Month	Grant	Total	%	Geriatric	Total	%
Jan	19	293	6	4	49	8
Feb	13	335	4	1	58	2
Mar	39	511	7	5	81	6
Apr	39	272	14	9	63	6
May	30	137	21	6	44	14
Jun	28	171	16	6	71	8
Jul	13	160	5	9	64	14
Aug	20	139	14	4	75	5
Sept	10	129	8	2	44	4
Oct	31	152	20	3	71	4
Nov	18	195	9	3	82	3
Dec	17	84	20	2	19	10

Recidivism Down 23 Percent in Recent Years, Pew Says

According to a Pew Charitable Trusts study, the percent of people who return to state prison three years after release has dropped by nearly a quarter in recent years. The three-year recidivism rate for prisoners released in 2005 was 48% while 2012 saw 37 %, a 23 percent drop from 2005. Five-year recidivism rates also fell, Pew said. Pew calculated the rates from publicly available data from the 23 states that consistently reported prison admission and release data to the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics from 2005 through 2015. The decrease in recidivism occurred alongside a reduction in reported serious crime. FBI crime data show that the combined national violent and property crime rate dropped 26 percent from 2005 to 2015.

*Violation hearings and Board Reviews not counted

Legislation of Interest 2019

This data is from the beginning of the session. The updates will be posted on the web site, vacure.org.

This year is a short session running from January 9 to February 23.

✿**HB1642 Solitary confinement; data collection and reporting, Department of Corrections to submit report.** Introduced by: **Patrick A. Hope** Requires the Department of Corrections to submit an annual report to the General Assembly and the Governor containing specified statistical information regarding the Department's use of solitary confinement, as defined in the bill. **11/26/18 House: Referred to Committee on Militia, Police and Public Safety (Also SB 1140 Favola0**

HB 1651 Grand larceny; increases threshold amount. Introduced by: **C.E. Cliff Hayes, Jr.** [Grand larceny; threshold. Increases from \$500 to \$750 the threshold amount of money taken or value of goods or chattel taken at which the crime rises from petit larceny to grand larceny. The bill increases the threshold by the same amount for the classification of certain property crimes. **11/28/18 House: Referred to Committee on Rules**

✿**HB 1689 Parole; exception to limitation on the application of parole statutes.** Introduced by: **Joseph C. Lindsey** Provides that a person is entitled to parole if (i) such person was sentenced by a jury prior to the date of the Supreme Court of Virginia decision in *Fishback v. Commonwealth*, 260 Va. 104 (June 9, 2000), in which the Court held that a jury should be instructed on the fact that parole has been abolished, for a noncapital felony committed on or after the abolition of parole going into effect (on January 1, 1995) and (ii) the jury was not instructed on the abolition of parole **12/07/18 House: Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice**

HB 1745 Juvenile offenders; parole. Introduced by: **Joseph C. Lindsey** Provides that any person sentenced to a term of life imprisonment for a single felony offense or multiple felony offenses committed while that person was a juvenile and who has served at least 25 years of such sentence, and any person who has active sentences that total more than 25 years for a single felony offense or multiple felony offenses committed while that person was a juvenile and who has served at least 25 years of such sentences, shall be eligible for parole. **12/20/18 House: Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice (Also SB1053 Marsden)**

HB 1782 Court-established community service programs; community service work in lieu of payment of fine, etc. Introduced by: **Jerrauld C. "Jay" Jones** Requires courts to provide an option to any person upon whom a fine and costs have been imposed to discharge all or part of the fine or costs by earning credits for the performance of community service work before or after imprisonment. Under current law, providing this option is discretionary. **12/27/18 House: Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice**

HB 1797 Juveniles; places of confinement, separation of juveniles from adult offenders. Introduced by: **C.E. Cliff Hayes, Jr.** Provides that when juveniles who are determined by the court to be a threat to the security or safety of other juveniles detained in a juvenile secure facility are transferred to or confined to a jail or other facility for the detention of adults, such adult-detention facility must have the capacity and availability to detain juveniles in accordance with applicable federal and state law. The bill removes an existing provision that such adult-detention facility must be approved by the State Board of Corrections for the detention of juveniles. **12/28/18 House: Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice**

HB 1799 Criminal cases and traffic infractions; eliminates accrual of interest on fines and costs. Introduced by: **Steve E. Heretick** Eliminates the accrual of interest on any fine or costs imposed in a criminal case or in a case involving a traffic infraction. The bill provides that any such fine or costs that have accrued interest prior to July 1, 2019, shall cease to accrue interest on July 1, 2019, and such accrued interest may be waived by any court. A person who owes fines and costs on which interest has accrued may move any court in which he owes fines and costs to waive the interest that accrued on such fines and costs and shall have such interest waived for any period of incarceration. **12/28/18 House: Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice**

HB 1800 Correctional facilities, local; voting information for persons incarcerated Introduced by: **Steve E. Heretick** Provides that the Board of Corrections shall make, adopt, and promulgate rules and regulations regarding the provision of information on absentee voting to all persons confined in a local correctional facility who may be eligible to vote and information on the process of applying for a restoration of civil rights and of voting rights for those persons who have been convicted of a felony. **12/28/18 House: Referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections**

HB 1852 Civil commitment of sexually violent predators; petition for release, procedures. Introduced by: **Patrick A. Hope** . Provides that when a petition for release of a sexually violent predator who has been civilly committed has been made by the Commissioner of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, no further evaluation of the committed respondent shall be required unless otherwise deemed necessary by the court. Under current law, if the Commissioner's recommendation is to release the committed respondent, such respondent's condition and need for secure inpatient treatment shall be evaluated by a second person with certain credentials to make such evaluations. **01/02/19 House: Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice**

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HB 1918 Corrections, Board of; minimum standards for health care services in local correctional facilities. Introduced by: **Christopher P. Stolle**. Authorizes the Board of Corrections (Board) to establish minimum standards for health care services in local, regional, and community correctional facilities and procedures for enforcing such minimum standards, with the advice of and guidance from the Commissioner of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services and State Health Commissioner. The bill provides that (i) such standards shall require that each local, regional, and community correctional facility submit a standardized quarterly continuous improvement report documenting the delivery of health care services, along with any improvements made to those services, to the Board and (ii) such reports shall be available to the public on the Board's website. The bill also authorizes the Board to determine that a local, regional, or community correctional facility accredited by the American Correctional Association or National Commission on Correctional Health Care meets such minimum standards solely on the basis of such accreditation; however, without exception, the requirement to submit standardized quarterly continuous quality improvement reports shall be a mandatory minimum standard. This bill is a recommendation of the Joint Commission on Health Care.**1/04/19 House: Referred to Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions**

HJ 578 Constitutional amendment; right to vote (first reference). Introduced by: **Mark L. Keam** Provides that there is a right to vote and that no law shall be enacted or enforced that burdens or denies any voter of his right to vote. The amendment also requires the Commonwealth and its political subdivisions to provide all resources necessary to assist qualified voters in the exercise of their right to vote. **07/23/18 House: Referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections**

HJ 644 Study; JLARC; reinstatement of discretionary parole; report. Introduced by: **Vivian E. Watts** | Directs the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) to study the reinstatement of discretionary parole, which was abolished in 1995.**01/07/19 House: Committee Referral Pending**

SB 997 Marijuana; decriminalization of simple possession, penalty. Introduced by: **Adam P. Ebbin** Decriminalizes simple marijuana possession and provides a civil penalty of no more than \$50 for a first violation, \$100 for a second violation, and \$250 for a third or subsequent violation. Current law imposes a maximum fine of \$500 and a maximum 30-day jail sentence for a first offense, and subsequent offenses are a Class 1 misdemeanor. The bill provides that the suspended sentence/substance abuse screening provisions and driver's license suspension provisions apply only to criminal violations or to civil violations by a juvenile. **07/16/18 Senate: Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice**

SB 1066 Post-conviction relief; previously admitted scientific evidence. Introduced by: **William M. Stanley, Jr.** Provides that a person who was convicted of certain offenses, upon a plea of not guilty or an Alford plea, or who was adjudicated delinquent, upon a plea of not guilty or an Alford plea, by a circuit court of an offense that would be a covered offense if committed by an adult may petition the Court of Appeals to have his conviction vacated. The petition shall allege (i) that the petitioner did not commit the covered offense for which the petitioner was convicted or adjudicated delinquent, nor engage in conduct that would support a conviction for a lesser offense or any other crime arising from, or reasonably connected to, the facts supporting the indictment or information upon which he was convicted or adjudicated delinquent; (ii) an exact description of the forensic scientific evidence and its relevance in demonstrating that the petitioner did not commit the covered offense; (iii) specific facts indicating that relevant forensic scientific evidence was not available at the time of the petitioner's conviction or adjudication of delinquency through the exercise of reasonable due diligence by the petitioner or that discredited forensic scientific evidence was presented at the petitioner's conviction or adjudication of delinquency; and (iv) that had the forensic scientific evidence been presented at conviction or adjudication of delinquency, the petitioner would not have been convicted or adjudicated delinquent. The bill provides that if the court finds by clear and convincing evidence that the petitioner has proven all of the required allegations contained in the petition, the court may grant the petition and vacate the petitioner's conviction, subject to retrial in the discretion of the Commonwealth. The bill has a delayed effective date of July 1, 2020, and an expiration date of July 1, 2024.**12/10/18 Senate: Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice**

SB 1081 Juvenile offenders; sentencing, geriatric parole. Introduced by: **David W. Marsden** | Provides that for any juvenile felony a circuit court may consider a juvenile's diminished culpability and heightened capacity for change in determining the particular sentence to be imposed. The bill allows the Parole Board to consider a petitioner's demonstrated maturity and rehabilitation and the lesser culpability of juvenile offenders in reviewing a petition for geriatric release when submitted by a person serving a sentence imposed on a juvenile for an offense that would be a crime if committed by an adult.**12/14/18 Senate: Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice**

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Disconnected/Reconnected

"Disconnected/Reconnected" is a collection of writing from prisoners at Lancaster State Prison in Los Angeles County exploring how pain and trauma lead to incarceration, and how love and meaningful reflection lead to healing. The program at Lancaster was implemented by Words Uncaged, a non-profit organization providing creative platforms to inmates in California prisons to create a dialogue between prisoners and the outside world. The book includes writings from the incarcerated, their families and victims as well.

The writings demonstrate that "individual and collective healing is possible when the burden of pain is shared, and when we are (re)connected to our common humanity."

Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants– Virginia, Inc.
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Virginia CURE invites prisoners to submit original articles, poetry and artwork for consideration for publication. Virginia CURE reserves the right to edit submissions accepted for publication.

Virginia CURE will not return submissions unless prior arrangements are made. Send submissions to: Newsletter Editor, Virginia CURE, P.O. Box 2310, Vienna, Virginia 22183

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