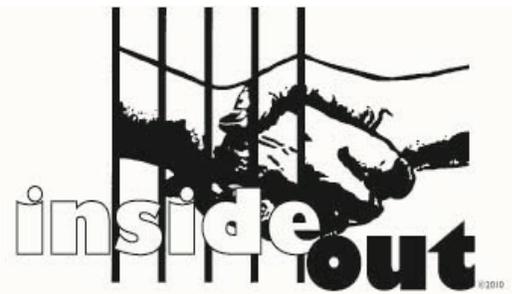


highlights

- Page 1-2: New Parole Board**
Page 3: Report from the NCIA Conference
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Page 5: More states Ban the Box



Directors Corner

From May 2 to May 5 I attended the International CURE Board Meeting in Washington. This was very much a business meeting as we considered the work of the Bylaws Committee and after some editing, approved new bylaws for International CURE. It may be time for state chapters to look at their bylaws next. We also heard interesting panels and speakers. Especially interesting was the panel that spoke about new technical tools for getting our message out. Reports from other state chapters indicated focuses on: Civil Commitment (OH), working with a coalition to reduce prison population by ½, (WI), working with the Bureau of Justice to achieve compliance with the Americans with disabilities Act regulations (NC), dealing with reduction of state funding for lawyers for indigents (NH), use of tasers in prisons (MI), prisoners as slaves (MA), publishing prisoner newsletters on web site (OR), fans for indigent prisoners (TX), and alternatives for incarcerating the mentally ill, (Fed CURE), Carla

Virginia CURE Meets with New Administration to Discuss Parole Issues

Virginia CURE met several times with officials of the McAuliffe administration in the last few months. We met with a member of the transition team in the fall where we discussed parole in Virginia and were pleased to see that the administration was aware of the difficulties. This meeting was followed in January by meetings with Secretary of Public Safety, Brian Moran and Del. Charniele Herring. We met again with Secretary Moran in April. We came away from these meetings encouraged that the new administration would be changing some of the policies and procedures of the Parole Board. Secretary Moran indicated that the Parole Board would be meeting in person more often in the future and evidenced concern that the board did not do so, especially those who were full time members (3 of the 5). He also questioned why there were so few geriatric paroles, leaving us wondering if there would finally be some geriatric releases. We were assured that there were new Parole Board manuals coming out soon. We also presented Secretary Moran with names for a new Parole Board who we thought would be objective and compassionate and who fulfilled the requirements for Parole Board membership.

We still have some hope that there will be positive change in the practices of the board though we were disappointed when the new board was announced including two members from the McDonnell Board who have been reappointed! Furthermore, Karen Brown, one of the two, will be the new Chairman. Parole grant rates did go up considerably in March though they declined in April (see p 3).

Parole Board Appointments 2014

Karen Brown* of Hampton, Chairman

Ms. Brown graduated from Hampton University in 1977 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology. She later attended George Mason University School of Law where she received her Juris Doctorate in 1991 and was admitted to the bar that same year. Ms. Brown began her legal career as a judicial law clerk at the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. As a prosecutor for sixteen years, she served in the Newport News and Chesapeake Offices of the Commonwealth's Attorney. In that capacity, she prosecuted cases in the Juvenile and Domestic Relations, General District and Circuit Courts with a concentration on child abuse and sexual assault

New Parole Board Continued

cases. Ms. Brown is also a victim of crime as her brother was murdered in the city of Newport News in October 1993.

The Reverend Dr. A. Lincoln James of Richmond, Senior Pastor, Trinity Church

The Reverend Dr. A. Lincoln James has served as Senior Pastor at Trinity Baptist Church in Richmond since 1980. Dr. James earned a bachelor's degree from North Park College and Seminary; he later earned a master of divinity degree from Virginia Union University's Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology and received two honorary doctorates. Dr. James began his career as a youth minister at Greater Bethesda Baptist Church in Chicago, Illinois, before relocating to Virginia, where he served as pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Kilmarnock, Tabernacle Baptist Church in Petersburg, and Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Prince George County. Dr. James has served as third vice president of the National Baptist Congress of Christian Education, member of the board of trustees at the University of Lynchburg, adjunct professor at Virginia Union University's Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology, and immediate past president of the Virginia Baptist State Convention.

Sherman P. Lea, Sr. of Roanoke, Founder, President, S. P. Lea and Associates, LLC

Mr. Lea has served in the Virginia Department of Corrections for 35 years before retiring in January of 2012. He began his corrections career as an institutional parole officer in Richmond. He has served as an adult probation and parole officer in Danville, and was selected as the first African -American chief probation and parole officer in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Upon his retirement from the department, Mr. Lea had achieved the position of Regional Administrator for the Western Region of Community Corrections. Currently he is the founder and president of S.P. Lea and Associates, LLC. Mr. Lea is serving his 10th year (3rd term) on Roanoke City Council and was elected Vice Mayor 2008 through 2010. Prior to being elected to council, he served as chairman of the Roanoke City School Board. He is the recipient of the 2010 Judge William L. Hastie Leadership Award given by the National Association of Blacks on Criminal Justice (NABCJ). Mr. Lea received his BA degree in Sociology from Virginia Union University. He attended Old Dominion University graduate school of Urban Studies and an Honorary Doctor Degree in Humane Letters for his humanitarian work in the community, by the Bethlehem Bible College in Roanoke, Virginia.

Minor F. Stone* of Norfolk

Mr. Stone served 29 years in sworn law enforcement as a Police Officer and Supervisor specializing in firearms and training. Mr. Stone holds a Masters Document from the U. S. Coast Guard. Mr. Stone held positions tied to Homeland Security and served with a Hampton Roads anti-terrorism task force along with other various law enforcement agencies, being deputized as a Deputy Federal Agent with Immigration and Customs Enforcement and U.S. Fish and Wildlife. Mr. Stone was appointed to the Parole Board by the McDonnell administration in 2011. Along with general Parole Board Duties, Mr. Stone works closely with counterparts in the Department of Corrections concerning Geriatric Inmate Release issues. Mr. Stone resides in Norfolk with his wife and two children.

**Denotes reappointment*

A fifth member has not been announced at the time of publication of this newsletter.

By the Way: At the National CURE Board Meeting we were taken by the Oregon CURE chapter's idea of scanning prisoner newsletters and putting them on the web site. So we are requesting that if your facility has a newsletter composed by prisoners, please mail us a copy and we can scan it for our web site and probably also on the Nation Inside platform. If it is possible to scan it and email it to us that is even better! We have received a few copies of prisoner composed newsletters and would love to see more!

Virginia Parole Grant Rates

Parole Grant Rates Jan- Apr 2013 and Jan- Apr 2014

2013	2014
Jan-5 grants	Jan -13 grants
Feb -3 grants	Feb -10 grants -
Mar 10 grants	Mar - 21 grants
Apr 9 grants	Apr - 6 grants

There were 2 geriatric paroles granted during these 4 months in 2014 and 74 geriatric parole denials. So we still await change in geriatric release. We were heartened by the increase in March but back to only 6 grants in April. We hope this is a blip and will see another increase in May.

Report from the NCIA Conference

VACURE's Hope for Full Employment

Once a year, the National Correctional Industries Association (NCIA) holds a conference that is hosted by one of its 50 state members to encourage workforce development in corrections agencies. This year's conference was held in New Orleans, Louisiana in April. Attendees worked hard to better understand how to offer more job opportunities for people on the inside.

This year, VACURE sent a representative to the NCIA conference reflecting our growing concern that there are not enough paying jobs on the inside for Virginia prisoners. Holding a full-time job allows a prisoner the opportunity to cover medical and commissary expenses without having to rely so heavily on family. Many prisoners would be willing to work and relieve the burden on their families if the jobs were there. Additionally, outside employers are more willing to take a chance on hiring someone if they have been fully employed for extended periods of time on the inside. There are few who can argue with the importance of spending the better part of one's time working at jobs that build workforce skills.

VACURE's conference representative came away from this conference with a greater admiration for many state's energetic efforts to find ways to offer inmates jobs. States like Colorado, Vermont, California, Kansas and Utah were awarded for setting out to develop new correctional industries such as fish farms, distribution centers and manufacturing partnerships with private businesses.

Since returning from the NCIA conference, representatives of VACURE have been able to meet with both VADOC's Correctional Enterprise Director John Garman and the Virginia Secretary of Public Safety Brian Moran to continue to find ways that allow Virginia's inmates to work while they are serving time and when they return to the community. It is VACURE's hope that in the future, VADOC will be one of NCIA's award winners and leaders in correctional enterprises, and that returning citizens will have fewer obstacles to reentry.

Christa Pierpont

Reports:

Justice Policy Institute Releases New Report:

Billion Dollar Divide points to racial disparities, skewed fiscal priorities, and missed opportunities for improvements through proposed legislation, and calls for reforms to the commonwealth's sentencing, corrections and criminal justice system. While other states are successfully reforming their sentencing laws, parole policies and drug laws, Virginia is lagging behind and spending significant funds that could be used more effectively to benefit public safety in the commonwealth.

We are informed that by 2015, Virginia will be spending over a billion dollars on corrections! Data now indicates that incarceration in Virginia is on the rise, especially for drug offenders.

The report states that: "In 2012, ...Bureau of Justice Statistics reported that Virginia had the nation's 15th highest state imprisonment rate, with 451 per 100,000 state residents behind bars, with a prison population that is larger than prison populations of 38 out of 50 states."

The report concurs with Virginia CURE's research indicating that the crime rate does not statistically correlate with the length of a sentence. States such as New York, Texas and Maryland saw a *decline* in the crime rate as they released more prisoners!

Recommendations of this report include:

Reconsider sentencing laws, practices and policies through a cost benefit lens, especially mandatory minimum sentences and new criminal statutes. Mechanisms for early release should be created and expanded including reinstatement of parole.

Reduce the collateral consequences associated with criminal convictions and prison. "The Commonwealth needs to build on its focus on reentry, and address the barriers facing individuals who have come in contact with the criminal justice system

Embrace more effective public safety and drug policies. The state should not rely so much on the criminal justice system to address public health problems, especially drugs. It should refocus on helping localities prevent crime.

The report also considers the "problem of **good time**". The National Conference of State Legislatures defines "good time" as something given to individuals for following prisoner's rules and required participation in activities, and defines earned time as a credit against an individual's sentence or period of incarceration that he or she earned for participation or in completion of productive activities,

The report states that "Prior to 1995, depending on one's security level, a sentence could be reduced by 30 days for every 30 days of compliance while incarcerated a maximum of 50 percent. After 1995, and currently, the most an incarcerated individual could reduce their sentence is 4.5 days for every 30, or 15 percent.

According to a National Conference of State Legislatures survey done in 2011 on good time and earned time, Virginia had among the fewest opportunities for a person to earn their release from prison for participation in programs, services and treatment as a matter of law among the Southern states. This needs to change!

Copies of this report and the previous JPI Report "**Virginia's Justice System: Expensive, Ineffective and Unfair**" have been made available to Secretary Moran and other key people in Virginia's Criminal Justice System

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. The longer and more detailed the longer it will take to receive a reply! **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**

National News

Ban the Box

Nebraska is First Red State to Ban the Box

This spring Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman signed a significant criminal justice reform bill that includes a “ban the box” fair-hiring provision. This makes Nebraska the 11th* state to ban the box. Recently Georgia’s governor pledged to become the 12th state when he issues an executive order to ban the box and ensure job applicants with records have a fair chance to be judged on their merits, not just their records.

Cities that have recently banned the box include Louisville Kentucky where the Louisville Metro Council voted 26-0 in favor of a new law removing the conviction question from job applications for the city and many of its 26,000 vendors.

Also jumping on the band wagon was a Virginia city, Alexandria where, encouraged by a state bill, Alexandria’s City Manager Rashad Young instructed city agencies to stop requesting conviction information on job applications. Young says the move “just makes good public policy.” Besides Alexandria, Virginia now has Richmond, Petersburg, Norfolk, Newport News and Portsmouth on board. More campaigns in other cities are underway.

This year the Virginia legislature considered two Ban the Box bills, HB 892, and SB 250 patronned by Del. Krupicka (D- Alexandria) and Sen. McEachin (D- Richmond). Both eventually died in House subcommittees. We will see more such bills next year, however, as the time has come! At least 12 states and many cities have passed Ban the Box ordinances as the map below from the National Employment Law Project indicates. Dark states have either banned the box for state employment or have cities and counties that have banned the box.

*Note: As of this writing there are now 12 and possibly will be 13 states that have banned the box!



National Employment Law Project (NELP) Ban the Box Resource Guide April 2014

Excerpts From A Letter to CEO Thompson of McDonalds

Mr. Thompson,

This is a simple request for you..., to take about a minute of your time towards making ours a better, kinder, and safer country. I'm asking you to ...get your company to look into removing "the box" from the applications for work from your restaurants, those of your franchisees, and, hopefully, your affiliates as well. To paraphrase: the "box" says "Have you been ever been convicted of a crime other than a minor traffic offense– To check the "Yes" box means immediately: NO chance of an interview; NO chance at getting an entry level job.

Four states have outlawed that box for all private employers (Hawaii, Massachusetts, Minnesota, and Rhode Island). In those states, Macdonald's Restaurants already omit the box on their applications. The legislators of those states know that ex-offenders desperately need jobs.... So legislators removed this barrier ...There is no security problem with banning the box, since the interviewer can simply ask the applicant the question during the job interview. If the applicant is an ex-offender, they can then explain their history and present circumstance and ambitions.

The CEO of Target Corporation, Gregg Steinhafel, has also recently seen the benefit to American society of banning the box. In October, of 2013, he approved removing the box from all applications for work at Target.

I'm making a personal request for [you] to take the one minute it takes to make an internal phone call or email to look into banning the box. It will make the country better for all of us.

Thank you for your time.

Dr. Allan Tubbs
Virginia CURE

Prisoners in Many States Signing Up for Medicaid

Jails and prisons around the country are signing up inmates for health insurance under the Affordable Care law. State and counties are enrolling inmates for two reasons: although Medicaid does not cover health care in prison, it can pay for hospital stays beyond 24 hours and more importantly ensure prisoners can have coverage after they get out. Opponents of the Affordable Care Act say that expanding Medicaid has burdened an already overburdened program, and that allowing enrollment of inmates only worsens the problem. They contend that while shifting inmate health care costs to the federal government may help states' budgets, it will deepen the federal deficit. Hopefully, Medicaid expansion will be a boon to those states that accept it and Virginia will realize what they have turned down.

Corizon Health Care Backs Out of Contract

Corizon, currently a defendant in a class action lawsuit by prisoners at Fluvanna Correctional Center, gave notice June 2 that it plans to back out of its contract with the VADOC, and has filed a motion in U.S. District Court in Charlottesville to halt the suit. The office of the Secretary of Public Safety stated that "How and by whom health care is provided will be discussed as a new Request for Proposal is developed."

Several Virginia Facilities Pass PREA Standards

The Virginia Department of Corrections says several of its facilities have obtained full compliance under the Prison Rape Elimination Act which was passed by Congress in 2003 with standards going into effect in 2012.

The law is designed to ensure correctional facilities establish policies and practices to protect those who are incarcerated from sexual violence by staff and other offenders.

State officials say Deerfield Correctional Center in Capron received full compliance in April, followed by Lunenburg, Nottoway and Deep Meadow Correctional Centers. Units of Rustburg Correctional Center and Caroline Correctional Center also have obtained full compliance.

CURE Chapters

Northern Virginia CURE
Carla Peterson
Carla4vacure@gmail.com
3rd Thursday, 7:30 PM
Walter Reed Community Center
2909 16th Street S
Arlington, VA 22204

Richmond CURE
Al Simmons
Al22s@hotmail.com
4th Sunday, 1:00 PM
Friends Meeting House
4500 Kensington Ave
Richmond VA 23221

Hampton Roads CURE
James Bailey
Jbailey383@aol.com
3rd Tuesday, 7:00 PM
Norview Baptist Church
1127 Norview Ave.
Norfolk VA 23513

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Gina Hudson
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WE NEED YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS!

If you have an email address and are not receiving updates from Virginia CURE, please send a message to vacure1@cox.net.

**Have You Renewed
Your Membership?**

Please see the membership form on back page.

We can't do this without you.

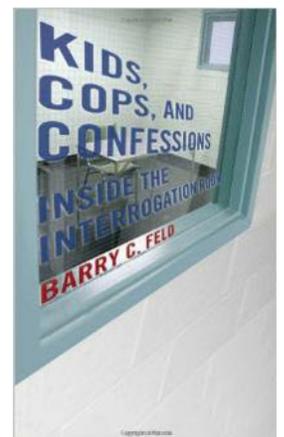
Book Reviews:

Kids, Cops and Confessions

Barry Feld

In **Kids, Cops, and Confessions**, Barry Feld offers the first report of what actually happens when police question juveniles. Drawing on remarkable data, Feld analyzes interrogation tapes and transcripts, police reports, juvenile court filings and sentences, and probation and sentencing reports, describing in rich detail what actually happens in the interrogation room. Contrasting routine interrogation and false confessions enables police, lawyers, and judges to identify interrogations that require enhanced scrutiny, to adopt policies to protect citizens, and to assure reliability and integrity of the justice system.

NYU Press 2012



Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants– Virginia, Inc.
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Use form for new memberships or to renew your membership for

Membership in Virginia CURE

Join Virginia CURE today and become a part of the effort to work for criminal justice reform and safety in our communities. Send dues payment to:

Virginia CURE, P.O. Box 2310, Vienna, Virginia 22183

Dues are payable January 1 on a yearly, non-prorated basis for current year. Prisoner members need to include state number on all communications to CURE.

Remember to send address changes.

Check type of membership

- Prisoner* \$ 2.00
- Individual \$ 15.00
- Family \$ 25.00
- Sustaining \$ 50.00
- Organization \$100.00
- Life \$100.00
- Renewal

Please make checks payable to **Virginia CURE**. Contributions are tax deductible under the provisions of 501(c)(3), Internal Revenue Code.

*Prisoners may send five stamps.

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_____ city state zip

e-mail _____ prisoner birthday _____

phone day () evening ()

fax () _____

Involvement: prisoner family friend professional volunteer

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please specify

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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