Why Illinois Needs a Parole System

Words by Joseph Dole
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Zine 1
ILLINOIS' ACCOUNTABILITY LAWS ENSNARE TOO MANY PEOPLE FOR CONDUCT NOT THEIR OWN

ILLINOIS COURTS ARE REFUSING TO PROVIDE FAIR AND CONSTITUTIONAL SENTENCING HEARINGS TO PEOPLE SENTENCED TO DIE FOR CRIMES COMMITTED AS JUVENILES OR YOUNG ADULTS
A SAFETY VALVE FOR THE SYSTEM IN WHICH IS SYSTEMATICALLY AND OVERBUDGETED HELP REVIVE A PRELIG MOUSE D'OEILS.

ILLINOIS NEEDS FOR THE INNOCENCE TO PROVE THEIR CONVICTED PEOPLE IN PRISON WHO LACK THE RESOURCES.
Since Illinois abolished parole in 1978, the Illinois Department of Corrections' budget has ballooned from $52 million to nearly $1.5 billion, draining state resources.

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Over 5,000 Illinoisans are currently sentenced to die in prison, and hundreds more receive such sentences every year.

The clemency process is completely ineffectual due to political calculations.
The Illinois prison system is one of the most over-capacity prison systems in the nation. Partially due to being over-capacity and underfunded, the Illinois Department of Corrections abandoned its mission of rehabilitation.
All criminal penalties "shall be determined both according to the seriousness of the offense and with the objective of restoring the offender to useful citizenship."

Article 1, Section 11 of the Illinois Constitution states that...
PAROLE COSTS ONLY ABOUT $2,000 PER PERSON ANNUALLY WHILE INCARCERATION COSTS $38,000.

ILLINOIS IS ONE OF THE FEW STATES WITHOUT ANY TYPE OF COMPASSIONATE RELEASE LAW.
Society now has the tools to create a fair and effective parole system.

It would help reduce some of the moral injury suffered by staff, people who watch people die in prison for no penological purpose.
People should be afforded an opportunity to prove they can be productive citizens.

Mass incarceration is inhumane and is the civil-rights issue of our era.
Because it’s the right thing to do
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joe is an award winning writer who has published two books and several essays. Some of his writing has been the basis for legislation in Illinois. He is currently serving a life without the possibility of parole sentence at Stateville Correctional Center and spent a decade of his life in isolation at the notorious Tamms Supermax Prison.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Noelle is a master's student at the University of Chicago studying to be a social worker. She is also a visual artist and is interested in the intersection of art, prison abolition, and community organizing. She comes from a background in literature, and is especially influenced by the queer, riot grrrl, and punk movements in poetry and zine-making.

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