

*Almost one hundred deeply concerned leaders and representatives of secular and faith-based organizations serving prison family members, united to form the **Advocacy in Action Coalition** under the auspices of the annual **InterNational Prisoner's Family Conference** in pursuit of criminal justice and prison reform to end to mass incarceration in the U.S.*

**FACTS ABOUT MASS INCARCERATION IN THE UNITED STATES  
THE PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX & ITS IMPACT ON CHILDREN & FAMILIES**

- The United States is the world's largest jailer. With only 5% of the world's population, the country incarcerates 25% of the entire world's prisoners.
- 2.6 Million individuals are in prisons in the U.S.
- 5.8 Million are incarcerated, on probation or parole.
- Half of the incarcerated are parents who lived with & provided for their children before incarceration.
- 3 Million+ children; countless family members & friends are left behind, traumatized & grieving when a loved one is incarcerated.
- 70% of children of prisoners are at risk for becoming prisoners themselves.
- Minorities and the poor are disproportionately incarcerated.
- While Blacks make up only 13% of the U.S. population, on average they make up 65% of the nation's prison population.
- The female prison population has been the fastest growing of all incarcerated populations since the mid 1970's.
- Over half of prisoners are incarcerated for non-violent drug related offenses.
- Prison is a fast growing lucrative industry in the U.S. with prisoners as the inventory.
- Private corporations operate over half of the nation's jails & prisons & post release facilities for profit.
- To assure profitability, private operators demand 20 year contracts with assurance of 90% capacity paid by local, state, and federal governments, whether prison beds are filled or not.
- The two largest private prison operators, CCA & GEO made \$3.3 Billion in 2014; all private operators profited \$5 billion.
- Private prisons are listed on the New York Stock Exchange and invest some \$25 Million annually in lobbying politicians.
- To profit, private prisons must cut corners, which severely compromises prisoner medical & mental health care & food services.
- U.S. prisons have become warehouses for the mentally ill.
- Solitary confinement is used excessively, especially for the mentally ill.
- 3500+ deaths in jails & prisons from suicide, violence and medical causes (neglected & treated) are reported annually.
- Plea bargains are used in as many as 95% of all court cases to speed the court process.
- The Innocence Project estimates that between 2.5 and 5% of today's prisoners are innocent. Only 1% would be 25,000 incarcerated innocents.
- Over 1600 innocents have been exonerated by DNA evidence in the U.S. since 1989.
  - Innocents have been executed
  - Many offenses have no DNA to prove innocence
- Some critical concerns related to mass incarceration include:
  - Lack of independent oversight of entire criminal justice system
  - Rush to judgment resulting in false convictions
  - Excessive & inequitable sentencing
  - Repeated unjustified & unsubstantiated parole denials
  - Failure of prisons to instate &/or apply good time incentives
  - Failure to provide rehabilitation; mental health treatment & parole preparation.
  - Inadequate training of officers resulting in brutality & inhumane treatment, etc.

Data from: Bureau of Justice; Sentencing Project; National Registry of Exonerations; Innocence Project; American Bar Assoc. and other resources.

**A CALL TO ACTION: JOIN THE MOVEMENT TO END MASS INCARCERATION**

FOR INFORMATION ON THE INTERNATIONAL PRISONER'S FAMILY CONFERENCE & ADVOCACY IN ACTION COALITION  
PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [www.prisonersfamilyconference.org](http://www.prisonersfamilyconference.org)

Or

E-MAIL: [info@prisonersfamilyconference.org](mailto:info@prisonersfamilyconference.org) OR CALL: 915-861-7733