

Incarceration Prevention & Reduction Task Force
December 12, 2016
Notes

12/12/2016
Task Force
Irene Morgan

I'm sharing this so you might better understand my statements.

I AM the Citizens Representative

At RCC we've talked w/hundreds of people – police, judges, probation, DOC, victims, perpetrators, non profits, clerks, staff, - all said 'The system is broken' – no one had solutions – Today we do and we haven't been heard. Haven't yet been allowed to present our range of solutions to the Task Force. In our view the impact on the citizens must be considered and heard in this process.

I've sent a letter to Vera Institute stating this. We request that Vera Institute perform a mapping of our justice system from our clients and members viewpoint and experiences – the 'customers' of the system. We will show its effects on humanity, the economic factors and the lack of return on investment for the tax payers.

Vera Inst is charged with mapping our Justice System – for the taxpayers – not just for the various bureaucratic departments. They are all paid by the taxpayers.

- 1) Mapping of Criminals:
Taxpayers cost and families cost
- 2) Mapping of companies/corporations profiting from arrests:
Cash flow thru the system
Consequences on inmates, families and taxpayers
- 3) Mapping of cost to Taxpayers
Salaries, programs, facilities,
- 4) where is the Return On Investment (ROI) for the taxpayer?

We request this mapping in February or at the next visit by the Vera Institute team.

We have worked w/ dozens of people to get them out of the system successfully.

I believe there are less than a handful of us on the Task Force of 24 that are not employed inside the bureaucracy.

College educated, same verbiage – same training – same conditioning.

For years I watched, listened, observed – I judged at first - Now I have discernment. Before I understood – I was angry w/ YOU not realizing it was your training. You are doing a great job – working very hard inside your world. You've learned your craft well, you implement it very well. I appreciate that.

I don't speak the same language, I haven't been trained in the same way, I am self-taught and field experienced.

Now it's clear, as I listen to the discussion in these meetings I see where we differ because we are looking thru a different lens. My viewpoint is from helping the users of the system. I have worked w/ dozens of people to overcome the barriers to successfully break the chain of recidivism. Who represents these people in this room other than me? I am the only person on this Task Force who works with the citizens in this way. I am the voice of these folks.

I realized several years ago while in Olympia when talking to someone working for DOC:

She was angry w/ me because I didn't understand 'her system' – it made no sense to me
Later driving home I got it - - - The system works - - - for the system! It's a template – the same template over and over. It doesn't work for the users of the system. It works for the administrators.

I have been encouraged to speak about what I see and how I see it – I'm told 'we need your viewpoint'. I have always been the voice for the underdog, the voiceless. I have many names – Pollyanna, Bleeding Heart, Dreamer among others – I wear them all proudly.

They say it takes at least 3 times stating a comment before it is truly heard. Let me say again – I understand there are some bad folks out there who need to be jailed or imprisoned – I'm not talking about that population. I'm talking about the non-violent folks, the traumatized ones, the impoverished, the mentally ill, the forced users, – caught up in the churn – going thru time after time after time – allowing the system to collect all the monies that are generated by one person cycling thru – once again.

For 20 years owning/working in family business.

A small business could not be run like this! I wouldn't be able to charge my customers' exorbitant fees or abuse them – I'd be out of business.

We have many members who have been thru the system. We work w/ their friends & family who are as a result unwittingly also caught in the system – never to be free, They pay debilitating fines and fees with a criminal history that never goes away in our world of technology. Some examples:

- ~ Mentally ill –suicide 3 times, released form hospital – homeless – sitting on the curb in Pajamas, drunk – homeless, no programs or apartment available
- ~ No room at the inn at triage center - crisis respite and detox.
- ~ 3 women – all bullied by law enforcement, city, county and state.
 - One was a victim of assault and crashed her car
 - One a landowner – bullied by police
 - One needing treatment but now in the churn of the courts

I've heard many here describe the wonderful programs we have in our community – we DO have these programs. When we tally the numbers of citizens that require these services, we probably need 20 times what we have of the continuing services for successful reentry from jail, prison or homelessness. In short – they have become token programs while serving only a few.

We spent \$1 mil on our 4th courtroom -- to prosecute more of our citizens -- I wonder how far that money would have gone for treatment, housing or extending programs for our citizens on the streets.

We all heard Undersheriff Pugel last January state that most of what he learned in his training for law enforcement was wrong! As I said earlier, the system is broken, but it works – for the system – but NOT for the ones going THRU it – our system is punitive – retributive – predatory.

Thank you for your time and understanding. I am eager to speak with anyone who is interested in a dialog regarding my research. I stand ready to work with the Vera Institute to map what happens to people who go thru this system.

Respectfully,

Irene R. Morgan
IPRTF - Citizen Representative



Restorative Community Coalition

P. O. Box 31026, Bellingham, WA 98228

www.whatcomrec.org and www.restorativecommunity.com

Our Mission: RCC is in the business of ReClaiming lives. We are an action oriented coalition advocating for restorative, economic, systemic and social change.

December 10, 2016

Vera Institute of Justice
Center on Sentencing and Corrections
Liz Swavola, Senior Program Associate
Vedan Anthony-North, Program Associate
Kristi Riley, Program Associate
233 Broadway, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10279

Hello Ladies,

First I'd like to thank you for your remarkable work that I witnessed you put into motion last month. I am very impressed by your diligent and methodic mode of gathering the intricate, myriad pieces of info to fill the spaces. There was very little that was new to me in this process. I have heard it a least twice before though I've never seen it diagrammed as such. It would be valuable to the Task Force and Vera Institute to be able to see this process from another point of view. How incredibly complicated, convoluted and set up for failure our current system is. No wonder our 'criminals' fail!

This brings me to the reason for approaching you once again. It is my expectation as Citizens Representative member on this Task Force to have the same process of diagramming 'the system' from the experience of our members and their families.

I am the Founder of the Restorative Community Coalition and have experience with the homeless, non-profits and those who deal with the after effects and fallout of this system. My intent is to help the public and those enforcing (working within) the system, understand the predatory aspects and demise of our society if we continue this downward spiral.

Our work over the years includes hundreds of trauma-filled experiences from people caught in the recidivism churn with no way out. The experiences of these citizens are riveting, yet mostly go unheard – dismissed by the public because of mainstream media conditioning. Once in the churn, one is caught and mostly destined for failure and poverty. This churn is extremely complex and needs to be diagrammed so we can understand the implications to our community and the tax payers.

Our research shows this is deliberate and intentional, and the impact compounds over time. This has been lobbied for and orchestrated by those who benefit from it the most – the corporations that make up the Jail and Prison Industrial Complex (PIC) and their billionaire stockholders.

In diagramming this for ourselves we see the situation is SO horrific that most of the American public does not believe the facts. Most Americans want to believe we are a humane and peaceful nation. We have been conditioned to believe we are the best, most powerful nation on the planet, so – how could the above ‘story’ be true? How could our system be so convoluted? This is exactly how and why the PIC has gotten its’ foot hold. We cannot fathom that America is the villain – so we deny what is glaringly obvious when the shroud is pulled away.

For this reason we are requesting that two (2) mind maps be created:

- 1) User perspective – showing the impact on clients/ customers of the system
 - a. all fees, fines and penalties once arrested
 - b. how these fees accrue and where they go
 - c. how this impacts their jobs, reputations, future

- 2) Commercial perspective: show how the cash flow works with the corporations that are doing business inside the system
 - a. What these businesses are paid and how they charge their fees
 - b. Where do these funds intersect and flow inside the County Corporation
 - c. Which corporations pay a ‘kick back’ to the County and how much

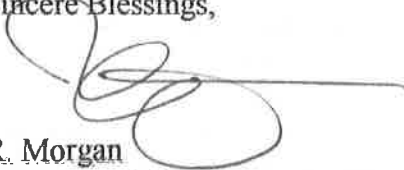
These maps require some work to develop. Our goal is to meet with you to present information and have it explained by some of our member, clients, and folks who have experienced our unjust, justice system. With a baseline of information, we can continue to expand our map to truly see how the system works for the taxpayers, the County government, and the people using the system.

We would like to schedule four (4) hours of your time during your next trip to Bellingham. I will, as a member of the Task Force, speak to Jill Bernstein and Jack Hovenier to inform them of my request and expectations.

Thank you for reading this letter of request and expectations.

Wishing you the Best of the Holiday Season and look forward to our meeting.

With Sincere Blessings,



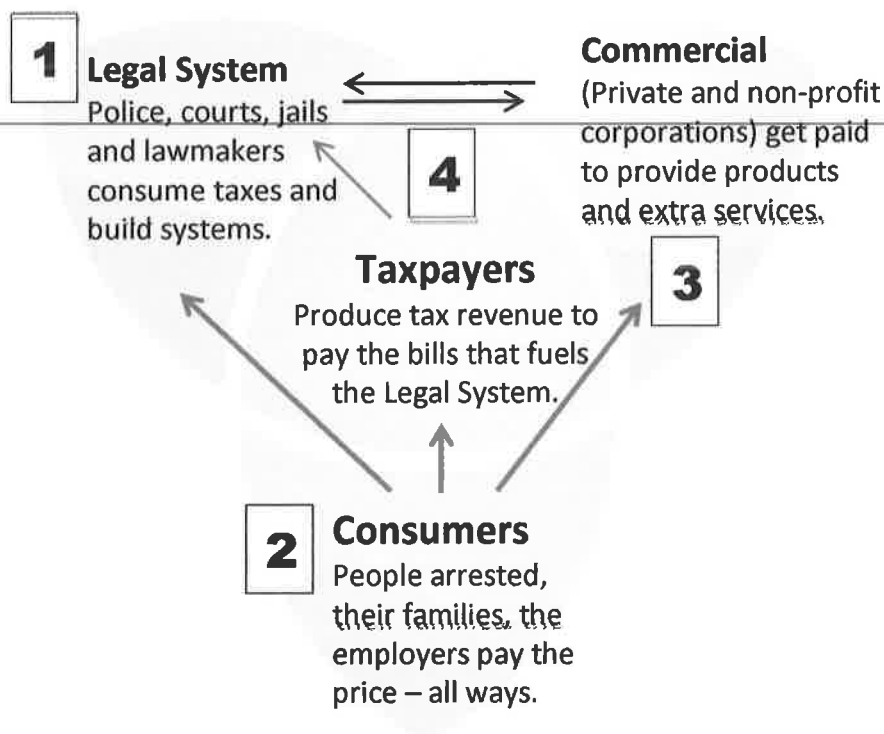
Irene R. Morgan
Citizen Representative – Incarceration Prevention & Reduction Task Force
Founder - Restorative CommUnity Coalition
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Cc: Restorative Community Coalition Board of Directors

# 5 DK	40	1st offense 2nd deg rape/wife violated comm corr	8.5-to life	7.5 2.75	self	30K 35K	225,000 96,253 321,253
102 (8.5 yrs) mo. to Life under the Indeterminate Sentencing Review Board (ISRB)							
Educated, career, skills-Marine Engine							
worked many jobs & programs - not needed							
Solitary - 1st, 90 da, when he started 2nd sentence - "Threat to population" - He developed TOP							
* All of these formerly incarcerated citizens are doing well with the support of family, friends and community.							
* Many are still going thru court from past issues.							
* Many are still incumbered with fines and records that keep them from moving forward with their lives.							
* One is labeled and under DOC scrutiny for life.							
						Grand Total	2,568,753
#1 - Teen in trouble with law, jail/juvi multiple times. She was never asked what she needed or what might help her. Dozens of arrests by age 21. Sentenced to prison at 21, served 3 1/2 years of 4 year sentence. When she met RCC we asked her 'how can we help'. She was overwhelmed, no one had asked before. We spent 5 months case management, \$1,500 to help her become a fully functional citizen.							
#2 - His mother was shot while he was standing beside her at 4 years old. He was taken by CPS and then placed in an orphanage. He was 10 before he knew she was not dead. He was placed in many foster homes. abused and moved again. He ran away at 15 and with only street skills he found his way to jail and then prison multiple times. Since finding help and caring friends, his habits have changed. He has attained many goals that seemed insurmountable before							
#3 - Born to a drug addicted mother, he was left w/o proper care and was placed in dozens of foster homes. At age 14 he and 3 other youth hijacked a car w/ the driver inside. Asked him to sign the car over to them. When he refused, they put him in the trunk and went for a joy ride. He escaped w/ no injuries. All 4 youth were imprisoned. He served 17 years of a 20 year sentence for attempted murder. He was 31 when released. Is still learning social skills.							
#4 - He is from a well to do family and was in trouble as a teen many times. When he was taken to juvenile detention and sentenced to camp at age 13 he was told it would be good for him by his family. He continued to get in trouble and has spent most of his life incarcerated. He states that no one asked him what he needed or offered to help him with school or training. He is now enrolled in community college and is making headway in his life. Still learning social skills							
#5 - 1st offense - Wife accused him of rape after he found her in a compromising situation. He is educated and developed TOP, a program to help former inmates reenter society when released from prison.							
All of these cases, especially the first 4, could have been alleviated by helping the child/teen with trauma therapy and meeting their needs in positive ways. With a holistic approach, the parents would have had intervention counseling with the possibility of two generations being free of addictive habits and trauma. All of these cases could have had Restorative Justice used as the key component for understanding and healing the community with a fraction of the cost to the tax payers.							

Four Viewpoints and Datasets of Incarceration Business Model

Goal: Collect data to provide basis for objective Cash Flow Analysis, Cost Benefit Analysis, Return on Investment and Internal Rates of Return to taxpayers from ripple effects of incarceration policies.



What do We Need to Know to Reverse Mass Incarceration?

“We don’t know what we don’t know, until we know. Once we know an injustice is being done, then we have a responsibility to learn why, to self-correct and change the situation.”

- 1) **Map the Legal System:** People know the system is broken. Results show that it does not work for taxpayers, inmates, families, or justice itself. Our legal and justice system is overburdened, complex, expensive, and produces negative results. Analyze how it works and track the long-term ripple effects.
- 2) **Map the Consumer costs:** People arrested are not yet guilty before they begin sustaining trauma and irrevocable debt and damage caused to their families, finances, job prospects. Identifying these costs can show the disproportionate early impact of an accusation or arrest on non-violent people and families.
- 3) **Identify Commercial Impacts:** Mapping the cash that flows through the system that is outside the legal system, shows what the hidden economic dynamics are that can be distorting the analysis of the legal system. Everything from provider companies, to the bonding costs, to the excess fees and commissary costs identify injustices and shows where hidden impacts and hemorrhaging occurs.
- 4) **Calculate Taxpayers Costs:** To correct the system requires objective analysis of real costs of goods, cash flow, return on investments to the taxpayer’s original taxes, and the larger view of the internal rate of return to the taxpayers for passing any given law. Then we can identify bottlenecks, injustices, ripple effects, failures and new opportunities in the whole system. It takes analyzing the whole business model to see why it breaks down, how it is malfunctioning, and to see how it doesn’t serve the taxpayers. Then we can revise and improve to get better results for the taxpayers, our citizens, our communities.

