

PUBLIC COMMENT

LAW AND JUSTICE INTERIM COMMITTEE, DEC. 15, 2011 - Agenda Item 17

Ms. Scurr,

I am writing in regards to several situations that have come to attention at the state prison in Deer Lodge Montana.

First off there is a letter attached explaining Justin Bouses present situation and event leading up to his incarceration at Montana State Prison.

One of the first issues that have come up is the impending threat of a building wide riot at the prison. Guards are in fact looking for other jobs and the warden requested a transfer to Shelby in order to get away from the possible attacks. The information was leaked to authorities there at the prison but instead of penalizing those who are organizing this event guards and officials are looking the other way. This puts many innocent lives in danger and questions the way things are being looked at.

Another incident that just happened with in the last two weeks pertains to the intimidation of guards towards prisoners. Mr. Bouse was written up and advised he was being taken in front of the hearing committee for "tattoo paraphernalia". He was informed that the penalty was thirty days in the hole or transfer to either high side or maximum security at Shelby. I personally called and spoke with a supervisor at the prison was informed this was not in fact the proper penalty but just a verbal or written warning should be issued. Mr. Bouse is currently waiting under the fear that he is being transferred any day now. This is thanks to an unnamed guard at the prison who is continually informing him this will occur. If these are not the correct responses to the write up he received then the issue should be dropped and the guard dealt with accordingly.

Justin was informed he was being issued his certificate of completion for the Sexual offenders class one that he took. Now since being at MSP he was told recently that the class does not count, the time he spent will not be credited and he is being forced to take this class again. His original sentencing does NOT include chemical dependency classes but he was forced to start the counseling after his "assessment" was deemed he was an addict. This is a gross miss justice and needs to be corrected as soon as possible.

Since Justin was transferred to the prison he was trying to get in touch with me but I was not near my phone. After several attempts to call my home and cell numbers Mr. Bouse called his grandmother Audrey Jackson. During this call to his relative Mrs. Jackson called me on my cell phone and I was available to answer it and she then put me on speaker phone. She was relaying a message that Justin was going to be calling me as soon as she hung up with him and to keep the phone by me. I acknowledged and we hung up, at no time during this call did I speak to or even hear Justin's voice. Approximately three weeks later Justin called and I was informed that his grandmothers line was blocked by the prison not allowing calls from him to go through. Mrs. Jackson called Tele-Mate and was informed there is a fifty dollar fee to pay in order for the line to be released from being blocked. She indeed paid the fine and was able to talk with her grandson again. Three weeks ago I ran across an incident where another party was on the phone

behind me in the same car while I was talking with Justin. Being aware of the previous situation I called Tele-Mate to find out ahead of time if I was blocked like Audrey was. I was informed that the company Tele-Mate does NOT charge this fee but it is in fact imposed by the prison itself within their discretion. This amount of fifty dollars is being charged per incident to all inmates they find they can slip this by. I have not myself been issued this ultimatum but after helping the family deal with this past incident found myself very upset the prison officials would do this. Mrs. Jackson is elderly and on a fixed income. This fee that was a ridiculous amount put a large financial burden on her. It brings up the questions of who in fact monitors these calls and makes the decision who gets blocked and fined. Where does this money go, why is it such a large amount per incident and is this money in fact being reported as income to proper channels.

Mr. Bouse has been attacked more than once and was even stabbed in the shoulder by a pencil and a pen since he was locked up in the block he is at now. Being a non violent person and not being a predator this makes this even harder on him. He is being assaulted for crimes that did not occur but in prison life they do not care what your claim is. If something is not done soon to help the inmates that are wrongfully convicted, sentenced to outrageous penalties and thrown behind bars for financial gain I am afraid many people are going to be hurt and possibly killed.

I am at the point the situation has become extremely critical and I begging for help from those that have authority to step in and assist the innocent. I urge you to please consider any and all avenues that can be taken in this matter. Thank you for your time and hope to hear from you soon.

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