

MJA Townhall Q&A March 4th 2021

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SPEAKERS

Jessica Siminski, Jack Wagner



Jack Wagner 02:20

Good evening, everyone. Thanks for joining us tonight. We're going to give it another five minutes just as a courtesy for those who might be checking in late. And I will be putting up a slide that lets us know where they're coming into here, the meeting, so bear with me.



Jack Wagner 03:21

Let me know if you can see the slides. Yes,



03:31

yes it's there.



Jack Wagner 03:34

Wonderful. Yes. And I will advise that, in fact, tonight we are going to try and record the meeting, so that others can listen at a later time. So, don't say anything during q&a that you don't want recorded.



Jack Wagner 05:13

All right, just a couple more minutes we'll give everyone some time to get in and get settled.



Jack Wagner 06:56

Alright folks, thanks for joining us this evening, we like to do these q&a sessions and give everyone an update. And there is some updates to give. I'll be presenting. Both background, and then history and some other information but we'll move into current status and talk about some exciting developments. So just some housekeeping to begin with I mentioned before that we're going to record this meeting. And that's true tonight we're going to try and record this and then we'll have it up on the website or the YouTube channel for folks to listen to at a later time. I'll try and keep the presentation to 15 minutes but as I say there, there is more information that keeps coming up. We keep adding to the presentation so during the presentation if you could just mute and either enter questions into the chat box or save them for the end when we can do live q&a, we'll unmute and let people ask questions. So in the meantime, if you would sit back, I would like to present to you our latest updates. So for those who don't know us. We just like to give the background. We are a 501 c four nonprofit, and that allows us to lobby directly to legislators and also to individual citizens of Michigan in a grassroots capacity, and what we are advocating for legislative change in the criminal justice area but more specifically we are advocating for a good time credit system to come back into law here in Michigan, so we're doing that by working with a number of other partners- coalition building. And we have a good number of followers, on the right you'll see a list of those that we have touched base with and are interacting with, namely at this phase of the campaign we are trying to work with legislators, so we have reached out to every one of those legislators offices. And as well. We are starting to expand that to the law, law enforcement, County Sheriff's, prosecutors and we're just growing and expanding our focus at this time. It's an introductory effort, so that people can say that they've met with us and we've met with them and no one would be able to say that well, you never talked to me. So we are trying to talk to everyone, the team is doing a great job of that. This is a rough agenda, I do want to go through the history and then talk about some of the financial impact of our criminal justice system specifically with regard to longer sentences. We'll talk a little bit more about those longer sentences. Some of the laws that are preventing the changes to that. And then what effect that's having and whether or not it's accomplishing the goals. We'll look at what other states are doing and what crime survivors are saying. Finally, we'll wrap up with where we're at and give some status at that time. So let's look at the history and I think it's important to look at the history, because it kind of shows us where we were before the era of mass incarceration. So this slide shows us that picture quite nicely. The slide on the left shows you the historical trends in the prisoner population here in Michigan dating all the way back to 1930s. And how relatively flat and stayed over decades of time

until the early 80s and then into the 90s when it climbed very steeply, and we feel this was a result not of some sudden change in criminal behaviour by the citizens of Michigan, or the rest of the country, but rather, this was a change in policies that started to look at crime differently, enforce laws differently, add new laws, such as the war on drugs, just a general tough on crime attitude. And that caused this sudden and large increase in the population and the corresponding increase in the number of prisons that we built here, to house all of those incarcerated citizens. And the important point we would like to make here is that since these were policy changes that created the large spike in population and the subsequent building of prisons. It's going to take policy changes to reverse this trend and bring us back into a position of balance.



Jack Wagner 11:39

So some of the financial impacts. First I think it's interesting to look at this slide on the left this shows us all 50 states. And it shows us the amount of spend, relative to the budgets for those states. It's three years worth of data for each state. And you can see in general as a percentage. Most states are at or under 10% of their general fund expenditures. Guess who is standing out here, head and shoulders above other states, Michigan is spending 20% of our general fund budget on corrections. So clearly, Michigan is an anomaly. In this case, over 25% of all 44,000 employees working for the state work in some capacity or another for the Department of Corrections. That's one in four over one in every four state employees. Looking at the right how that slice of \$2 billion in absolute dollars is spent on corrections most of it is going to prison operations, Then it's broken out into other aspects of prison healthcare, offender success programmes and so forth but you can see by and large the largest slice of this pie is going toward the operation of the prisons themselves. It costs on average, approximately now \$45,000 per year for incarcerated citizen. So, that's a big number. And that's \$2 billion in total. The COVID situation is only made matters worse. So, today we know that every facility has cases of COVID. When we look at the total numbers. It's now up over 80% of the total population has tested positive for COVID. So, mdoc has had very little success in containing, and preventing the spread of COVID, and that just stands to reason. When you think about the overcrowding situation, and the inability to maintain social distance. Unfortunately, as of today we are sad to report that there's been 138 deaths in the MDOC prison systems. If you also look at the ageing population due to longer sentence lengths. We know that as we age, our health deteriorates and therefore the cost of health care in general care for these older inmates increases proportionally.



Jack Wagner 14:50

Also, it makes sense that, as that prison population ages, some percentage is just going to

be larger and larger over the age of 40. So today, over 15,000 of the current total population is over the age of 40, and over 2900 are older than 60, years old. We also know that the rate of recidivism- repeat offending for crimes decreases as we age. And so the older, an inmate gets the less likely they would be once released to reoffend. Therefore, the idea of releasing older inmates is less and less of a concern from a public safety standpoint,



Jack Wagner 15:40

so to speak about these sentence lengths and how they are increasing this slide comes to us from the Michigan Department of Corrections itself, and it shows us the average minimum sentence length, and how it has grown in the last 12/13 years from 2007. It was an average of 41 months at a minimum, for the minimum sentences rather. And that number has increased as of 2019, 54.9 months or nearly 4.6 years. That's steady growth in the average minimum sentences.



Jack Wagner 16:26

Now Michigan wasn't alone. Over the decades, other states have also increased their average time served this graph on the left, or map on the left shows us in dark blue those states, whose average time served had increased by at least 50%. In the case of Michigan over the period from 1990 to 2009, that number was 79%. So we're among some of the top states in the country for average sentence length is growing. It wouldn't be a far stretch to say that over the last several decades sentence lengths have doubled, essentially, or the average time served has doubled our own Michigan Department of Corrections legislative liaison knows this and has stated it, and says it this way. Although we have fewer people coming into the prison systems. Those who are coming are coming for a longer period of time. And we also understand that by law, the rate of reduction in the prison population can't be reduced beyond a certain rate. So in order to change and really impact the rate of reduction, it's going to take a change in the laws. If we stay on the current trajectory, it's going to take 45 years approximately to cut our current prison population in half. So if we want to accelerate that rate of change, and reduce the prison population faster. We're going to need to make structural changes that is changes to the law.



Jack Wagner 18:08

Again to emphasise the average length of sentences and average time served. This graph shows us on the left, that when we look at the case of violent offences. Michigan leads the country, with an average time served of nearly 8.9 years. When you compare that to the

total country average of 6.37. That's an additional two plus years that someone will spend in a Michigan prison, and every one of those years, adds up to dollars and time taken away from people needlessly when the same goals could be accomplished by serving less time. If you think by being tough on crime in the form of longer sentences and longer time served would result in greater public safety. You'd be mistaken, based on the data that's coming out of the unified crime reporting database that the FBI keeps. When looking at all 50 states and the District of Columbia, Michigan ranks number two for the number of reported rapes, number 14 for the number of reported aggravated assaults, number 15 for the number of reported violent crimes and number 22 when we look at the number of reported murders. So the tough on crime idea of longer sentences is not equating to greater public safety, when we measure it by crime.



Jack Wagner 19:46

I think it's important to consider the case or this, the voice of the victims. And we have presented this slide. Quite often, trying to articulate the voice of the victim. This is data that was collected over a long term study by the Alliance for Safety and Justice, they contracted with a firm to study the responses of victims over a 10 year period. And to date I just think I want to focus on some of the other statements that we don't usually highlight and talk about as much. And that would be for instance here. The second statement; even victims are recognising that the prison system tend to make people more likely to commit crimes. The idea that by going to prison and staying there for longer and longer periods people aren't learning how to be better, they're learning how to be better at crime. So it's not accomplishing the goals, after a certain point in time. They also point out that these are victims voices mind you saying they would prefer if prosecutors would focus on solving neighbourhood problems, rather than worrying about how many convictions one gets- the measure of success might be how many crimes are committed, and how safe are neighbourhoods. Where we believe prosecutors might focus more on the number of convictions as a success rate victims are saying otherwise. Notice also that victims are saying that prison tends to worsen cases of mental health and mental illnesses. So these are the voices of victims, and when the voice of victims are even saying we'd like to see change in our criminal justice system. We believe the laws ought to reflect the voice of the, of the victims. Those that study crime, crime statistics and human behaviour have also agreed that the effects of longer and longer incarceration, are having little if any beneficial results. As stated by these criminologists they believe we have reached a tipping point and we at Michigan justice advocacy believe we've gone past that tipping point. And we are keeping people in longer than necessary to accomplish the goals. The Pew analysed data from three states including Michigan. And based on some modelling, they have concluded that people could have served less time, and it would not have an impact on public safety. So it does beg the question of what is the greatest way to reduce

crime, what should we be focusing on and our longer sentences and longer time serve really accomplishing the goals.



Jack Wagner 22:56

Now we want to look at Michigan as compared to other states in the country. In the dark blue, and the light blue states, these are states that have some form of an earned time or a good time credit policy in effect, notice most of the country is in either a dark or light blue, and only six states are in orange or should I say five states are in orange Michigan is in red. These are the states that don't have any kind of a good time, or an earned time credit policy in place. No incentives for encouraging positive behaviour for those incarcerated citizens. Among those states Michigan stands out as unique, in that we are the only state in the country, that has a 100% requirement that everyone spend at least 100% of their minimum sentence in a secure facility. So even amongst all of our peers in orange, Michigan stands out and truly in this regard Michigan is completely out of step with the rest of the country. Many states allow for up to a 50% or greater reduction in your sentence, that's nine states. That means out of the 44 states in the country and the federal prison systems. They'll all offer some form of incentive a positive incentive, except these six states, and Michigan being kind of at the bottom of that list. When we look at those states that have implemented a good time, and a positive incentives, we see some interesting beneficial effects. For instance, Washington, hasn't just instituted a good time policy, and made changes to it back in 2003 so we have a good, long term look at the results. Washington State benefited in that they had a reduction in the rate of recidivism. That is lowered the repeat offence rates. At the same time, benefiting financially. New York State did the same thing in 1997, New York State established a good time policy. And in addition to saving money they also found that those inmates who were part of that group of early release inmates actually had lower recidivism rates. The Pew Charitable Trusts has also looked at policies of parole and probation and Missouri is one of those states where they found that there was no negative impact for releasing those under supervision early. And they were able to reduce their average term or sentence under supervision by 14 months. So these results show us that states can actually at the very least, not see a negative effects of early release. But Furthermore, can actually see beneficial effects, positive beneficial effects in the form of lower recidivism rates and dollars saved. Getting back to Michigan, we know today that all 83 county jails, have some form of a good time policy available at the sheriff's discretion. We also passed Senate Bill 1050 last year, which allows for those who are under supervision, either parole or probation. If they complete a half one half of their sentence, with no issues, they would be eligible for an early discharge. So again, 44 states and the federal government, 83, counties, and those that are on parole and probation here in Michigan. Have all managed to figure out how to make a good time. A positive incentive like good time time off for

good behaviour, work. And we're asking why isn't this same concept applicable then to our Michigan State prisoners.



Jack Wagner 27:18

All right, I want to give a quick update on the number of meetings that just keeps increasing daily. To date, we've had over 90 meetings, I'm not going to read through all of this data. But I want to dive in deeply here to those specific meetings. We have reached out to every lawmakers office, every representative and every senator. We've now either scheduled a meeting with or already spoken to 21 senators, we have found a goodly number of those support a good time credit concept in principle.



Jack Wagner 27:52

Of the representatives we've spoken with or arranged meetings for 73 of those to speak with them. And out of that so far the ones we've spoken to we find 32 are supportive, that are open to the discussion. As I said earlier, we have turned our attention now to speaking with various prosecutors, law enforcement agencies, and the likes the size of our staff continues to grow, and I'll have more on that later. We continue to get applications for intern positions. So value the help that all of our volunteers and interns give us. We do try and stay in touch with everyone I see that number has now grown to 190, through the JPay system that we try and stay in touch with those who are inside the walls, and we send our newsletter out now to over 650 folks. We have 1000 followers or more on our social media outlets. We so appreciate everyone's support your donations and your following of our social media outlets. We believe by numbers this thing will grow to the point where I believe we can be successful.



Jack Wagner 29:09

Where are we at now. So currently we have asked Senator Irwin's office this week that is, they should have submitted our request to the legislative Services Bureau to draft a bill that would reflect our asks, specifically what we are asking for is a basically a day for day or written as a 30 day sentence reduction for every 30 days, one serves without any issue, without any misconduct class one misconduct. We've asked that language to reflect the fact that we are opposed to any specific crime carve outs we want this to be available equally to anyone, serving time in the Michigan prison systems. And we would like this to be applied retroactively. That is from the time someone first set foot into custody. In an MDOC facility. We would like the calculation to be redone, so that they could recalculate their early release date, taking into account, incarcerated citizens behaviours since they first came into the facilities. This is a historical statement, back in 2020, at the end of the

year we asked, Senator Irwin's office to drop some bills and one of those was, Senate Bill 1242, that reflected the language that had been previously attempted several times by representatives of LeGrand by Barry in 2009, and it was the original language found on the books back in the 70s of the previous good time policy, what we're asking for is something new. See how far we can get. And what we're asking for from you, are endorsements, we are seeking donations and you have been wonderful in your responses are also asking who is it, we should be talking to and how else can we grow this network, some brief comments on who we are and how to get in touch with us. This is the board of directors. My name is Jack Wagner I'm at the top of this list. I believe our Vice President, with is with us tonight and I also have noticed, Brenda Thomas one of our members at large on the board. But I also want to introduce some new folks. Brian has been with us for a while as our executive director or happy to pleased to announce that Rich Griffin has joined us as our campaign director, he will be helping to work on building our coalition, networking with other like minded organisations and just creating momentum. In addition, we're working with Martin Waymire, a public relations firm to elevate our profile and help us with our strategies as well. And if you wanted to know more information about that effort, please contact Elizabeth at Martin Waymire. With that, I think we're at a point where we'd like to stop and ask some questions so I thank you for your patience I know I went over the 15 minutes. Let's open it up and see if there's any questions.



Jack Wagner 32:44

Anybody monitoring the chat if there's any questions in the chat.



Jessica Siminski 32:48

So jack looks like lady from notes from the pen Caldwell wants to know her first question is why is it so hard for our legislators to pass a good time bill?



33:02

You know,



Jack Wagner 33:05

honestly, it's an interesting question it has to do with politics, I think, and who it is our legislators might be thinking about when they would cast a vote, or voice their support. We know one of the strongest opponents to this concept, are the prosecutors in our state. Just this past week we had a conversation with one who said that she pretty well supports

the current concept of truth in sentencing. So that is when they stand in a courtroom. And they tell that victim. This person will spend X number of months or years. Incapacitated and incarcerated. They don't want there to be any confusion about that. And we counter with, well, there is no deception. By implementing a good time credit you can tell the truth in the courtroom, you can simply say, this is the sentence. And if someone were to take advantage of this new policy of good time, they could be eligible for an early release. And based on this calculation. And as a matter of fact, the prosecutors have to do that today. If someone is sentenced to a term of one year I believe it is, which would be spent the county jail. So if a prosecutor can stand in a courtroom today and say yes this person will get a one year sentence, a 12 month sentence and by the way they are eligible for a good time or a sentence reduction. They can do that today for a county jail sentence. Why can't they do that for a state prison sentence there is no difference. You're telling the truth. We just have to pressure those prosecutors.



Jessica Siminski 35:05

Okay jack. Our next question is where do you need. Where do you MJA need the most help. And I can say personally right now that we need the most help in one area would be. We need people to continue to like and share and follow us on social media to help us create a new type of audience that has not heard some of these criminal justice reform issues before. We also need help with donations to try and help us build this momentum. It also would be helpful to when we're ready. Have people to write letters, when we're ready and make phone calls, at the right time. We also could use help with people getting ready to attend coffee hours for their legislators and representatives to help be a presence in those constituent districts, so that they, they know that this is important issue to their constituents. Go ahead jack.



Jack Wagner 36:13

Yeah right on top of that, if you're going to attend coffee hours. We've seen this effect already. We've spoken with one lawmaker, and she was well on board with us. That was Cynthia Johnson. And it turns out we had a number of questions that we would have loved to have asked Heidi Washington I think one of the folks attending. I believe they had prompted either to ask those questions or senator, or representative Johnson was prompted to ask those questions of Heidi Washington. And I think what will happen as we get more and more informed as the citizens of Michigan become more informed and more informed on the topics. They can ask very pertinent questions during these coffee hours and these opportunities to speak with their legislators, if these legislators start hearing these kinds of questions and realising that these people. We the People are asking these questions. They're going to realise they have to answer these questions. They have to deal

with this topic, and they have to face the reality, why is it that Michigan is so much different than the rest of the country. Why are we spending so much money. Why isn't it working.



Jessica Siminski 37:35

So jack, another question. So few more ideas on where we can get support. We would love you to make sure you go to our website and sign up for our weekly newsletter, this is the best way that you can keep up to date on what is happening with MJA, and where our greatest needs are and where we could use you as the most. We also have committees that meet every two weeks so that we all spread out the work, so many hands make light work. And if everyone could help pitch in a little bit, then this will help continue to make this campaign successful. Next question is what is the YouTube channel where we post presentation. Um, I don't think that we were ready to share the YouTube channel the last, I knew I don't think we have a thing ready for that one. Next question would be, would this new proposed bill include goodtime credit specific to minors sentenced as adult as previously proposed Jack?



Jack Wagner 38:42

If someone does not have a life sentence. They have a numerical sentence. I don't know why this wouldn't apply. Now I'm not a lawyer. And I'm going to go out on a limb here for a moment and tell you that, as we've been working to get support. We've gained the interest of a national actually a global law firm, not going to mention their name at this time because we haven't finished the deal. But we believe they'll help us pro bono. And when we said we need help with some basic administrative chores like complying with 501 c 4 IRS rules. They were willing to do that but when I mentioned that we would like some help looking at the language of the law, so that we can understand when this legislation comes back, whether or not this is what we're asking for. We'll have the help of this national law firm. And they are much interested, much more interested in that topic because they have young associates coming up through their firm and this is an opportunity for them to get involved in a criminal justice reform topics legislative and policy changes. And so I think with some good legal eyes helping us, we will build will be in much better shape to answer that question of does this apply, who does it apply to, I don't understand why it wouldn't apply to juveniles who were sentenced, but we would we would like to hear that from a law firm.



Jessica Siminski 40:17

Okay thanks jack. The next question is, how do you sign up to help send letters and

making calls the best way to do that again is to sign up for our weekly newsletter. And then also if you would like to sign up for a committee to actually be more involved besides just getting our newsletter, then you will also know more about our strategy and our planning. Next, for the legislators that do not support what are their reasons

 Jack Wagner 40:50

we've encountered this kind of philosophy before and it quite honestly shocked me the first time I heard it, but I don't think it necessarily represents a large portion, hopefully the lawmakers, we were speaking with someone who felt as though a maximum sentence was more or less the sentence that was meant to be. And that the fact that there's a minimum sentence that someone can come up and see the parole board sooner than their maximum was in this person's view a form of a good time, or a sentence reduction of sorts, that they could actually get out sooner than the maximum. And that's, that's scary. I don't think that view is widely held, but this is some of the views that we're facing when we speak with our lawmakers and that's just exemplified of this tough one crime mentality.

 Jessica Siminski 41:55

Okay, next question, wants to know, will you get any coverage in the major media outlets. First I will answer that jack did an op ed already and was able to get that published in the Macomb daily. And that was very successful. We are strategically planning, different media outlets when ready and necessary. That is also why we have a public affairs firm with us and our new campaign director. Next question says. It seems that you that if you educate the public about the sheer waste of current policy and how we get nothing for the extra dollars. Yes, we are definitely trying to build that campaign we are working hard to have things on our website for people to print off for education materials and talking points. So these things are being developed by our media team as well. I've also shared in this chat link our website for newsletters and the YouTube channel and we will be having that up this weekend.

 43:01

Next question.

 Jack Wagner 43:05

Yeah, before, before you leave that topic. You know numbers work for some people. There are some people that are all about the numbers and that's maybe what they only care

about. So we could certainly address the numbers but I have heard this repeatedly now as I've continued to speak with folks about trying to get reforms accomplished. The individual stories that people can tell us, and we all serves everyone on this board has been impacted by the criminal justice system so we have stories to tell when lawmakers hear those stories straight from the heart of those people who are impacted that is individuals like yourself listening on this call that has a big effect. So, I personally enjoy not enjoy. I appreciate people when they are willing and open up and share with me their individual stories. I would encourage if you have my email to communicate with me that way I mean it. It breaks my heart some of the stories I'm hearing. But I think that's also a big part of how we're going to change people's hearts in Lansing, is to share the impact.



Jessica Siminski 44:15

JACK because we have in our new weekly newsletter when you sign up we're talking about our not forgotten campaign. And that's where we're trying to put a face, and to humanise the prison numbers, our family members are not just a number. And so that is our current campaign we're building to try and bring awareness to that so sign up for our weekly newsletter so you can have more information about that campaign and how to participate to put a face to the numbers and try to help humanise that,



Jack Wagner 44:46

and I'm just gonna do a little more specifics on this, um, you know, we expect that the prosecutors, you know if this gains a lot of momentum. Will use stories, against us. They'll be happy to pull out the story of that person who was released early and does some horrible thing. And we know it happens but it happens so rarely, and the story that I would like told in response is that there are many people who go through this horrendous situation of incarceration and come out reintegrate into society and are successful. I'd love to hear more of those stories because for every one of those prosecutors who tells me about the bad guy. I want to tell him about the 10 good guys that actually turned their lives around, and made a difference. And despite the fact that mdoc didn't well prepare people to get back out and reintegrate into society. I think people are more resilient and can demonstrate the fact that, indeed, there are good news stories to tell. So I would love to hear more of those.



Jessica Siminski 45:51

Thank you jack you're absolutely right. We are looking for success stories so please email those to us as well. We would love to hear those. And then I just posted in the chat, a way for you to sign your loved one up to receive our JPAY updates as well. We are looking to

gain much greater inside support from the inside so we can keep them up to date on what's going on, they can hear it straight from us no rumours, and that way as well we can get more people to have their families come and help us. So it seems like if we can keep it spreading inside about the work that we're doing will gain momentum that way. So if everyone can fill out the JPA signup Google form that stuff can be filled out in there so what unit what facility and all that information. Our next question talks about any celebrity endorsements and things like that and public service announcements. When the time is right during the campaign we will be engaging in different various media outlets and sources and ways to elevate our voice and our campaign, so those are things that we are preparing for. We have been reaching out to many celebrities but we love any more help. So if you are working hard to get a celebrity attention please continue to do that and send them our way. Our next question says that someone agrees about sharing stories. And then, next one says, If we succeed in reinstating goodtime credit are there going to be any programmes brought forward to address the rehabilitation and reintegration. So we don't have any ways of forcing unless it's a law. How to Make sure the reallocation of funds, which direction they go into all that our bill. Currently, we'll be addressing is how to implement a good time credit system. And what would the constraints be towards that. The next comment says I think the younger voters are very supportive of this type of social change. So we can tap into that. You're absolutely right, right, Linda. We have a list of over 800 colleges and universities that we are currently in communication with that we are working hard to develop relationships with those professors with those other social organisations inside of the schools with all the clubs. There are many other professors even at U of M, that we are working with who have developed research articles, even regarding violent criminals and how they are the least likely to reoffend. Thank you for that question and comment.



Jack Wagner 48:45

Yeah, to build on that just a little I mentioned in the presentation we have. I think it's 28 interns right now. And initially I was concerned when our executive director suggested that we bring on interns because I thought well how do we pay these folks. And in fact, I was, my heart was warmed to find out that these young people want to help, they don't expect to be paid. And they're doing this in some cases not even for credits or credit hours they're doing this because they feel it's the right thing to do. And they just want to be associated with something positive like this so in fact you're right i think young people could be a source of great energy and inspiration for all of us. So I look forward to getting more interns as time goes on here.



Jessica Siminski 49:37

Another thing would be to add that we are looking and currently developing a Youth and Government committee. So if you know people that are under the age of 18 that are looking to get involved and be a part of a great movement. We are developing a campaign for those as well.

 Jack Wagner 50:00

I do see a question at the bottom here which is kind of poignant and that is what does the governor's office say. I think we know from her public facing statements. A little bit about where she's at and that is inaction. I mean if I'd have to characterise governor Whitmers behaviour so far. I would say it's disinterest, or maybe it's politically strategic avoidance of the question. She certainly has the capability to alleviate the situation through clemency and other approaches but whatever reason hasn't availed herself of that. We do need to get ourselves a meeting in the governor's office at least maybe with maybe more importantly with Governor, Lieutenant Governor Gilchrist. I don't know where we stand on that.

 50:51

Yep, we are working on those things and we're going to continue to push diligently. We have a lot of hands out in many different places working on continuing to build the coalition and movement with everyone. The next question says is the same mistake is the Black Lives Matter movement an opportunity, it disproportionately affects the people of colour. So you're absolutely right that criminal justice does affect disproportionately people of colour. And as far as Black Lives movement, Black Lives Matter movements, you're always looking for opportunities to meet with anyone and everyone who's willing to join this movement.

 Jack Wagner 51:42

Jessica you still there. I think we might have lost her audio. Yeah, I would just add to that. Absolutely, the criminal justice system disproportionately affects people of colour. There is no doubt in my mind when I've looked at this numerically, our bill would address everyone who is behind bars. And if that population is actually disproportionately people of colour. Obviously they too would stand to benefit, even greater. In terms of the numbers of folks that are incarcerated and getting those folks out. This is the old adage of a rising tide raises all ships. If we can get this bill passed. Yes, it will help people of colour. It will help all people who are serving undue and harsh long sentences in prison.



Jack Wagner 52:59

I'm sorry, the idea of turning up the volume on this legislation. We're working with many organisations behind the scenes. And I believe that if we lock arms with our, our brothers and sisters of all colours that we all need to have a voice at the table. And I do believe there is a loud voice, representing the people of colour in Michigan, who want to be heard and deserve a chance to be heard. So, we are working with those organisations wherever possible. This shouldn't be an issue of colour, but unfortunately it is. And we need to fix that. So, I think, like I said, By raising the tide for everyone. It will also fix the problem. For those who have been disproportionately affected.



Jack Wagner 53:59

I've lost my co host here. Jessica Have you been able to get back in. No. Well I know how long meetings go, and I know you've given me graciously almost an hour of your time. So I'd like to return some of the back to everyone, and let you. I want to say, get ready for the next meeting but hopefully you're done for the day. With that if there are any lingering questions please feel free to submit them to the email addresses that you have. and we'll try and make this presentation available in some way I'll check with my team. They're a great team and they do a great job so I'm sure we'll get the information out to you. Folks thanks for joining this evening and you have a blessed and wonderful rest of the evening. Good night.