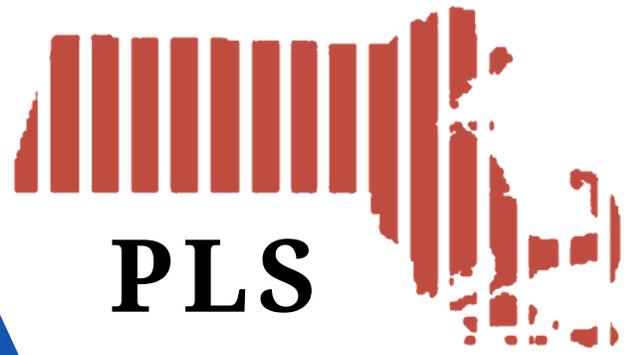


# Dignity & Freedom Campaign



**PLS**

Prisoners' Legal Services  
of Massachusetts

**Together we can dismantle systems that cause harm and build systems that create healing.**

**These bills serve the interests of public safety and come directly from the experiences and needs identified by incarcerated people and communities most impacted by crime and incarceration.**

## **Elder and Medical Parole Reform**

Address the humanitarian crisis of aging and illness in corrections by establishing elder parole and reforming medical parole to ensure access as the legislature intended.

## **Human Rights**

Establish baseline standards for human dignity in our prisons in jails including universal access to programming and education and ending solitary confinement.

## **Visiting Process Reform**

Roll back needless visiting process restrictions, address discrimination and harassment, and increase connections with community.

## **Structural Racism Oversight**

Require prisons and jails to collect race based data and establish oversight mechanisms to bring transparency and accountability around structural racism in the corrections system.

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For more information about the above bills please contact Prisoners' Legal Services  
Legislative and Policy Director Jesse White, [jwhite@plsma.org](mailto:jwhite@plsma.org)

# Dignity & Freedom



**An Act Relative to Elder and Medical Parole (S.1722 Sen. Miranda & H.2693 Reps. Sabadosa & Uyterhoeven):**

We have a crisis of aging and sickness in the Commonwealth's prisons, with our correctional system too often becoming nursing care for a population that poses little to no risk to public safety. This bill permits our elders to be considered for parole and makes needed changes to our medical parole system to ensure that people who are terminally ill and permanently incapacitated have access as our legislature intended.

**An Act to Build Restorative Family and Community Connection (S.1720 Sen. Miranda H.2591 Rep. Decker):**

One of the cruelest aspects of imprisonment is family separation, with parents, spouses, and children paying the price alongside their incarcerated loved ones. This bill protects access to daily visits, eliminates draconian caps on the number of visitors, creates child-friendly spaces, and reduces discrimination. Instituting a fair process to facilitate visits sustains families during periods of incarceration and promotes successful re-entry.

**An Act Relative to Human Rights and Improved Outcomes for Incarcerated People (S.1651 Sen. Creem H.2608 Rep. Fluker-Reid):**

The prison system continues to prioritize punishment and deprivation over supporting people to work towards personal growth and successful re-entry into the community. We are setting people up for failure on release and contributing to cycles of violence and harm. This bill would establish universal access to programming, education, and vocational training opportunities, meaningful and productive out of cell time, and ensure that people's human rights are protected while they are behind prison walls.

**An Act creating an independent correctional oversight office to facilitate the recommendations of the Special Legislative Commission on Structural Racism in Correctional Facilities of the Commonwealth (S.1725 Sen. Miranda and H.2636 Reps. Holmes & Uyterhoeven):**

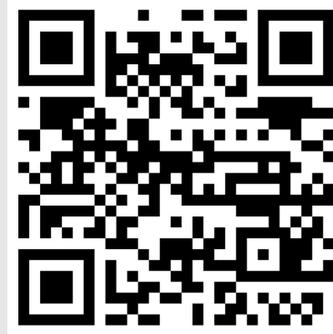
In this country and state, structural racism is inescapable in carceral institutions. These systems continually perpetuate harm against Black and Brown incarcerated people with impunity, hidden by the lack of available data and systemic non-compliance. This bill will establish an independent oversight office within the Office of the Inspector General to oversee and investigate these issues and empower it to enforce the reforms it deems necessary.

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# Dignity & Freedom



**Organizational sign on:** [plsma.org/DignityAndFreedom](https://plsma.org/DignityAndFreedom)



- ACLU Massachusetts
- Baystate Reentry Network
- BC Legal Services LAB, Civil Rights Clinic
- The Campaign to end life without Parole, (CELWOP)
- Coalition for Effective Public Safety (CEPS) Steering Committee
- Congregation Beth El of the Sudbury River Valley Antiracism Working Group
- Council on American-Islamic Relations, Mass. (CAIR-MA)
- Criminal Legal Round Table of UCC
- Dignidad
- Disability Law Center
- Diverse People United, Inc
- Drop LWOP New England
- End Mass Incarceration Together (EMIT)
- Families for Justice as Healing
- GLAD Law
- High Frequency Academy Ltd. Anthony P. Clay Healing Project
- Indivisible Acton Area
- Jane Doe Inc. (JDI)
- Justice 4 Housing
- Law Office of Lisa Newman-Polk
- MA CURE: Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants
- Massachusetts Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (MACDL)
- Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence
- Massachusetts Jobs with Justice

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# Dignity & Freedom



- Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
- Massachusetts Parole Preparation Partnership
- Material Aid and Advocacy Program
- Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee
- National Association of Social Workers/Massachusetts
- National Lawyers Guild at Suffolk University Law School
- National Lawyers Guild-Mass Chapter
- New Beginnings Reentry Services
- New England Innocence Project
- Northeastern University School of Law Prisoners' Rights Clinic
- Out Now
- Parole Review For All
- Parole Watch
- PowerUP Massachusetts
- Prison Policy Initiative
- Progressive Democrats of Massachusetts (PDM)
- Progressive Massachusetts
- Ramirez & Sunnerberg
- Social Workers for Peace and Justice
- Temple Beth Shalom, Needham, MA
- The F8 Foundation
- The Massachusetts Bail Fund
- The Real Cost of Prisons Project
- The Right to Immigration Institute
- Unitarian Universalist Massachusetts Action Network
- United American Indians of New England
- Wednesday Night Sharing Circle, Friends Meeting at Cambridge
- Women and Incarceration Project, Center for Women's Health and Human Rights

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# Dignity & Freedom



## An Act Relative to Elder and Medical Parole

- Dewey, Eliza. (2025) Has The Inhumane And Costly Massachusetts Prison Health Care System Improved Under New Management? *Horizon Mass News*.
- Kler, J.S., Victory, A., Chao, S. et al. (2025) Retrospective review of deaths in the Massachusetts department of corrections after passage of medical parole. *BMC Public Health* 25, 2465.

## An Act to Build Restorative Family and Community Connection

- Mears, D. P. et al. (2011) 'Prison Visitation and Recidivism', *Justice Quarterly*, 29(6), pp. 888-918.
- Wang, Leah (2021) Research roundup: The positive impacts of family contact for incarcerated people and their families. *Prison Policy Initiative*.

## An Act Relative to Human Rights and Improved Outcomes for Incarcerated People

- McGuire, J. (2018). Understanding prison violence: A rapid evidence assessment. *Ministry of Justice Analytical Summary. London: Ministry of Justice*.
- Rocheleau, Ann Marie. (2013). An Empirical Exploration of the "Pains of Imprisonment" and the Level of Prison Misconduct and Violence. *Criminal Justice Review*. 38. 354-374.
- Tenneriello, Bonnie (2024) Prison Reform's Shell Game. *Boston Review*.
- Wang, Leah (2022) The state prison experience: Too much drudgery, not enough opportunity. *Prison Policy Initiative*.

## An Act creating an independent correctional oversight office to facilitate the recommendations of the Special Legislative Commission on Structural Racism in Correctional Facilities of the Commonwealth

- Burrell, C. (2023). State commission calls for dismantling structural racism in Mass. prisons, jails. *GBH News*.
- Final Report: Special Legislative Commission on Structural Racism in Correctional Facilities of the Commonwealth. (2022). *Massachusetts Legislature*.