

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Coalition to Release 10 Point Emergency Plan for Prisons & Jails *Press Conference to Call for Decarceration to Reduce Spread of Coronavirus Infections*

WHAT: A coalition of more than 20 Massachusetts organizations will hold a press conference tomorrow to present concrete, urgent steps that Governor Baker must take to end the spread of the COVID-19 in the Commonwealth's prisons and houses of correction. The 10-point plan for decarceration aims to support the safety and health of incarcerated people, Correction Officers and their families, and the broader community.

WHEN: Tuesday, May 12, 2020 10:00 EST

REGISTER AT: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Hhm0_44OR_OfsC-Pkb4cyA

WHO: A coalition of more than 20 Massachusetts organizations: American Civil Liberties Union of MA, Black and Pink, Coalition for Social Justice, Committee for Public Counsel Services, Community Resources for Justice, Families for Justice as Healing, Greater Boston Legal Services, JALSA, Massachusetts Bail Fund, Massachusetts Communities Action Network (MCAN), MA Public Health Association, Mayor's Office of Returning Citizens, National Association of Social Workers, New England Innocence Project, Pioneer Valley Project, Prisoners Legal Services, Progressive Massachusetts, Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts, UU Mass Action, and World Peace Institute associated with Tufts University.

WHY: There is a Public Health Emergency in the Commonwealth's prisons and jails. Social distancing is impossible in prisons, and infections are spreading quickly. Seven people have already died. At the hardest hit facilities, infection rates are soaring beyond that of the general public, impacting incarcerated people, detained people, Correctional Officers, and other staff. At MTC Bridgewater 25% of those tested were positive; at MCI-Shirley, 54% of those tested were positive; and at MCI-Framingham, 37% of the total incarcerated population of some 200 women has tested positive.

There are ways to safely reduce the prison population safely, but Governor Baker needs to act.

This Press Conference brings together community experts from area groups working on rights issues, formerly incarcerated people, and community activists to push for needed changes.

INTERVIEWS: Speakers will be available to answer media questions at the press conference and afterwards. ###