

November 18, 2014
Rock Hill, South Carolina 29732

The Honorable Nikki R. Haley
Office of the Governor
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Governor:

The purpose of this letter is to spark ideas on how your office can be influential in saving millions of dollars for the people of South Carolina while giving hope to thousands of your constituents.

Each prisoner in the SCDC costs the State of South Carolina approximately \$40,000 per year. In addition, each prisoner's family is drawing welfare payments from the state at an average rate of about \$30,000 per year. This is bad enough but the stigma from being a convict is such that former prisoners find it almost impossible to gain employment once they have completed their sentence or are allow out on parole. Most are relegated to minimum wage and common labor. These people are the most discriminated against of any group in the world.

It is time that we, for humanitarian as well as practical reasons, put a stop to this torture as well as the waste of the resources of the state.

Modern technology can track individuals and sound alarms when they stray out of their allowed area.

My proposal is that nonviolent prisoners be placed under house arrest with an ankle bracelet to assure that they stay there or at work. Further, the state should assure that they have a job that pays enough to feed their family. The figure of \$20,000 per year in today's market would allow them to have a minimal subsistence and to live at home. If the individual cannot find such a job, I propose that the state provide them a job.

Such a program would lower the cost for each prisoner in the program. Today there are thousands of individuals in our prisons who are serving time for misdemeanors. Most of these prisoners could be at home, working for a living and not costing the state for their upkeep. Many other prisoners are there for drug related crimes. Offences that are now legal in many states. It does not make sense to keep people locked away for selling or using drugs that are now legal in other states.

Shows, Ronald J.
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The former mayor of Charlotte is now in prison for taking a \$50,000 bribe while in office. While this is deplorable and should not go unpunished, it does not make sense to lock him away for four years at an expense of \$160,000 to the people of North Carolina. We must find a way of dealing with non-violent individuals without putting a burden on the people of the state. Four years of house arrest with an ankle bracelet should be sufficient to teach him that this behavior will not be allowed.

Some will say that this does not teach them a lesson about criminal behavior but, that is not correct. They learn that lesson within the first five minutes of being sentenced. Others will argue that this program will not provide rehabilitation for offenders. That may be true but they should realize that the current system does not provide rehabilitation. Today we lock people away and forget about them. They are behind bars for years watching television, reading newspapers, magazines and so forth while their health deteriorates. Most leave prison without a clue of what they will do or where they will do it. They soon learn that the deck is stacked against them and they return to a life of crime that lands them back into prison.

This proposal would save the state millions of dollars each year while providing hope to each individual as well as dignity to their families. It will reduce the number of repeat offenders, thereby saving more of the people's resources. I know of no other project that can produce such a dramatic improvement in such a short time.

I beg you to give this project your complete attention and know that it's implementation will assure your place in the history of South Carolina.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. J. Shows".

Ronald J. Shows
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