

6/21/16

Honorable Nikki R. Haley, governor / Bryan P Stirling, SCDC Director

Our apology up front for taking up your valuable time but my husband and I have some disturbing observations regarding some practices occurring in the South Carolina Department of Corrections. First, allow me to say our son was incarcerated in the SCDC serving two years and released as a felon one year ago. We have no problem with this - If he is a criminal and committed a crime, he needs to take responsibility for his actions and pay his dues.

However, the problem with us lies with the time they are incarcerated and the parole follow-up. It was our observation that inmates have an excessive amount of idle time - allowing lots of time for head-to-toe body tattooing. The inmates are released owing thousands of dollars, which is fine, but why can't they be made to work while in prison with pay which would be reimbursed to the state while they are in prison so they will not have these enormous fines when released?

The tattooing - - How can someone enter the prison system with possibly a couple of tattoos and when they are released, they come out tattooed from head-to-toe. Is this even legal? The instruments used for tattooing could be possible weapons and why can't their time be spent working instead of tattooing. How can the corrections system be even remotely concerned with what happens to these inmates - as you must know, finding a job as a felon is hard enough but when you are covered from head-to-toe in tattoos which were done in prison is almost a combination of a death sentence when trying to find a job when released. What employer would give a head-to-toe tattooed felon a chance for a job - I wouldn't, would you?

And the parole follow-up - It has been our observation that as long as you pay what you owe you are allowed to go about your business with hardly any questions asked. It does not really matter whether your parole money comes from the inmate, their family or friends or even if it is obtained from drug transactions - as long as you come up with the money, that's all we want. In our opinion from our observations, the inmates should be made to check in once monthly with random drug tests and be made to bring in they last check stub from the job they "should" have in order to pay back these fines every month when they check-in.

As we have observed and experienced, there needs to be some grave changes within the corrections system or it will continue to be revolving door of coming in, going out, and the same cycle repeated over again. In our case, because of the above incidents, our son's chances as we see them are over, however, unless some major changes are made in the system, our experiences will probably be the same experiences of just about every inmate that goes through the system. Something is broken and needs repairing. It has surely made us have serious issues with the system as it is and really makes one's respect for the system be

completely lost. We urge that changes be made - Thank you for your time -

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