RESTORE THE RIGHT TO VOTE

The right to vote for incarcerated people was taken away in 2000 by a bill signed by Governor Celluci. The amendment was passed to punish organizers in Norfolk prison who created a political action committee in order to more fully participate in elections as constituents.

WE NEED 80,000 SIGNATURES FROM MA VOTERS BY NOV. 20th, TO GET THE RESTORATION OF THE RIGHT TO VOTE ON THE BALLOT IN 2022.

8,200-9,000 PEOPLE INCARCERATED IN MA WOULD GAIN THE RIGHT TO VOTE AGAIN AFTER WE PASS THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT!

WHY SHOULD I SUPPORT?
FROM SLAVERY TO INCARCERATION

Black and Brown people experience worse treatment than white people at every point of the MA criminal justice system including policing, charging, and sentencing. Due to system-wide racial disparities, Black and Brown people make up the majority of the MA state prison population. The Census Bureau counts people as residents of the town where they are incarcerated, so Black and Brown prisoners increase the legislative representation (political power) of mostly white suburban towns. Yet Black and Brown people were stripped of their right to vote while they are incarcerated. This shameful practice continues the legacy of slavery because it mirrors the Three-Fifths Compromise, which counted enslaved people to determine the state's total population for legislative representation while still denying their right to vote.
DISENFRANCHISING THROUGH INCARCERATION DOES NOT MAKE OUR COMMUNITIES SAFER.

People who are incarcerated are mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, husbands, wives, sons, daughters, and neighbors. All people - including people in prison - should have a voice in shaping the laws and policies that affect them, their children, and their loved ones. Allowing prisoners to vote poses no credible threat to public safety, but disenfranchise is dangerous to our democracy. Restoring voting rights to people while they are in prison will allow people to have more opportunities for positive and productive engagement with their families and community. To advance dignity, equity, and justice in the Commonwealth, voters are also encouraged to support:

S.1372 An Act Relative to Inmate Phone Calls that would allow people in prison to make no-cost calls to their families to maintain healthy communication and properly prepare for re-entry.

H. 2047/S. 1379 An Act to Strengthen Inmate Visitation that would ensure people in prison can stay connected with their loved ones through consistent visits. This bill would prevent unreasonable restrictions on visits, promote rehabilitation, and reduce recidivism.

ROAD TO VICTORY

What is the process for restoring the right to vote through a ballot initiative?

After 80,000 signatures have been collected by Nov. 20th 2019 we will submit them to the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

In 2020, the proposed amendment is presented to the joint session of the MA legislature and must pass with the support of 25% of legislators.

In 2021, the proposed amendment is presented again to the joint session of the MA legislature and must pass with the support of 25% of legislators.

In 2022, the proposed amendment is on the ballot and must gain support from the simple majority of those who vote on the amendment.