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Over 60 Elected Prosecutors Pledge to Visit Their Local Correctional Facilities

DAs to Implement Officewide Requirements Promoting Greater Understanding of Conditions and Implications of Incarceration

Today, 64 elected prosecutors [pledged](#) to personally visit the correctional facilities in which individuals prosecuted by their offices are placed and to require *all* prosecutors in their offices to do the same. The signatories – who represent over 49 million people across 27 states and territories and the District of Columbia – emphasize that “it is vital for prosecutors to understand the true impact of their decisions and to see firsthand the jails, prisons, and juvenile facilities in their jurisdiction.” The pledge is part of FAMM’s [#VisitAPrison challenge](#), which encourages all state and federal policymakers to visit a prison or jail.

“Every day, prosecutors across the country make charging decisions that have lasting ramifications for individuals and communities,” said **Miriam Krinsky, Executive Director of [Fair and Just Prosecution](#)**. “Our nation’s jails and prisons are far from rehabilitative spaces, and prosecutors should have an understanding of how these environments may actually be more harmful to an individual than alternatives to incarceration or community settings (in those instances when a custodial environment is absolutely necessary). We need more elected prosecutors and other officials to see firsthand the conditions that people are subject to in the hope that they will have an enhanced appreciation for the need to shrink the footprint of the criminal legal system.”

Each year, there are over [10 million jail admissions](#) and [around 600,000 people](#) sent to prison. And while prosecutors have immense influence over whether someone becomes incarcerated and for how long, many have never set foot inside a prison, jail or juvenile correctional facility. As more prosecutors implement reforms to help reduce our jail and prison populations, it is critical to develop a deep understanding of correctional facilities – including how isolating, dehumanizing and unsafe conditions can impact an individual’s rehabilitation efforts and in turn, the safety of the communities to which they return.

“We cannot pursue justice while ignoring the reality and complications of living behind bars,” said **Fort Bend County, Texas District Attorney Brian Middleton**, a signatory to the pledge. “I urge every prosecutor and policymaker to take this pledge and obtain an unfiltered and

personal review of the circumstances of incarceration. It was a transformative experience for me.”

The pledge will be implemented by the participating offices over the coming years, as the elected prosecutors, as well as all prosecutors in their offices, complete visits to their local prison, jail and juvenile facilities, and implement ongoing requirements for their staff. This proximity to, and deeper understanding of the challenges faced by, individuals behind bars is intended to be part of setting culture and expectations among prosecutors who make vitally important decisions in these offices every day.

“When my prosecutors stand in court and ask for a jail or prison sentence, they must do so with a full understanding of the consequences of that confinement for individuals and the community,” explained **Portsmouth, Va. Commonwealth’s Attorney Stephanie Morales**, another signatory to the pledge.

Read the full pledge statement [here](#) and see below for a full list of pledge participants.

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Fair and Just Prosecution is a national network of elected prosecutors working towards common-sense, compassionate criminal justice reforms. To learn more about FJP’s work, visit our [website](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

Pledge Participants

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Commonwealth’s Attorney, Prince William County, Virginia

Diana Becton

District Attorney, Contra Costa County, California

Wesley Bell

Prosecuting Attorney, St. Louis County, Missouri

Buta Biberaj

Commonwealth’s Attorney, Loudoun County, Virginia

Alvin Bragg

District Attorney, New York County (Manhattan), New York

Aisha Braveboy

State’s Attorney, Prince George’s County, Maryland

Leevin Camacho

Attorney General, Guam

Danny Carr

District Attorney, Jefferson County, Alabama

John Choi

County Attorney, Ramsey County, Minnesota

Darcel Clark

District Attorney, Bronx County, New York

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