More Than 65 Elected Prosecutors Pledge to Visit Their Local Correctional Facilities

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

Today, 66 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 nearly 51 million people across 28 states 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 Fair and Just Prosecution’s ongoing efforts to advance FAMM’s #VisitAPrison challenge, which encourages all state and federal policymakers to visit a prison or jail.

“It’s hard to grasp how incarceration can cause irreparable harm to people if you haven’t seen the inside of an American prison or jail. Yet, every day across the country, prosecutors who’ve never stepped foot in these facilities are making decisions that significantly impact whether someone will be removed from their community and sent to spend time behind bars,” said Miriam Krinsky, Executive Director of Fair and Just Prosecution. “We’re proud to stand with the elected prosecutors who have made it a priority for their staff to see the conditions of confinement in their local correctional facilities. We hope these experiences will build empathy, heighten awareness of the need for alternatives to incarceration, and inspire other elected leaders to join the pledge.”

Each year, there are over 10 million jail admissions and around 600,000 people are sent to prison. Prosecutors have immense influence over whether someone becomes incarcerated and for how long, but far too many only have an abstract idea of what these facilities are really like. As more prosecutors implement reforms to help reduce our jail and prison populations, it is critical that they and their staff 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.

“For too long, prosecutors have taken the position that we have no control over what comes to our door nor what happens to people once we have secured their conviction, including the collateral consequences imposed by the legal system because of our actions. That can no longer be the case…. By providing our staff opportunities to build proximity to the people most
impacted by the decisions we make, giving them a sense of not only the facilities they are sending people to and their programs, but what they really look and feel like, we are humanizing the experiences of people subjected to the legal system,” Ramsey County (St. Paul, MN) Attorney John Choi, a signatory to the pledge, wrote in a new reflection piece recounting the impact on his office of visits to the correctional facilities where individuals in their cases are sent following disposition or conviction.

The pledge was last issued in July 2022 and now includes many of the inspiring reform-minded prosecutors who have recently assumed office. Participating offices will carry out their commitment over the coming year and beyond, as the elected leaders, as well as all prosecutors in their offices, complete visits to their local prison, jail and juvenile facilities. Requiring these visits is a crucial part of setting culture and expectations among those who make vitally important decisions in these offices every day.

“As a recently elected county attorney, it’s important to me that our staff fully understand the consequences and impact on an individual and the community when they ask for a jail or prison sentence. That empathy and understanding is not possible without seeing our local correctional facilities up close and speaking to those who live and work in them,” said Hennepin County, Minn. Attorney Mary Moriarty, a 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**

Amy Ashworth  
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
Danny Carr  
District Attorney, Jefferson County, Alabama

John Choi  
County Attorney, Ramsey County, Minnesota

Darcel Clark  
District Attorney, Bronx County, New York

Dave Clegg  
District Attorney, Ulster County, New York

Shameca Collins  
District Attorney, 6th Judicial District, Mississippi

Laura Conover  
County Attorney, Pima County (Tucson), Arizona

Shalena Cook Jones  
District Attorney, Chatham County (Savannah), Georgia

John Creuzot  
District Attorney, Dallas County, Texas

Benjamin R. David  
District Attorney, 6th Prosecutorial District, North Carolina

Kara Davis  
District Attorney, Gilliam County, Oregon

Satana Deberry  
District Attorney, Durham County, North Carolina

Parisa Dehghani-Tafti  
Commonwealth’s Attorney, Arlington County and the City of Falls Church, Virginia

Michael Dougherty  
District Attorney, 20th Judicial District (Boulder), Colorado

Mark Dupree  
District Attorney, Wyandotte County (Kansas City), Kansas

Matt Ellis  
District Attorney, Wasco County, Oregon

Keith Ellison  
Attorney General, Minnesota
Ramin Fatehi
Commonwealth’s Attorney, City of Norfolk, Virginia

Kimberly M. Foxx
State’s Attorney, Cook County (Chicago), Illinois

Glenn Funk
District Attorney, Nashville, Tennessee

Kimberly Gardner
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Sarah F. George
State’s Attorney, Chittenden County (Burlington), Vermont

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District Attorney, Salt Lake County, Utah

Joe Gonzales
District Attorney, Bexar County (San Antonio), Texas

Deborah Gonzalez
District Attorney, Western Judicial Circuit (Athens), Georgia

Eric Gonzalez
District Attorney, Kings County (Brooklyn), New York

Mark Gonzalez
District Attorney, Nueces County (Corpus Christi), Texas

Kimberly Graham
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Jim Hingeley
Commonwealth’s Attorney, Albemarle County, Virginia

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Michael Jackson
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Ryan Mears
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Commonwealth’s Attorney, Portsmouth, Virginia

Mary Moriarty
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Steve Mulroy
District Attorney, Shelby County (Memphis), Tennessee

Jody Owens
District Attorney, Hinds County, Mississippi

Joseph Platania
Commonwealth’s Attorney, City of Charlottesville, Virginia

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