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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

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County Attorney, Pima County (Tucson), Arizona

Shalena Cook Jones

District Attorney, Chatham County (Savannah), Georgia

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District Attorney, Dallas County, Texas

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Satana Deberry

District Attorney, Durham County, North Carolina

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Michael Dougherty

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

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District Attorney, Wyandotte County (Kansas City), Kansas

Matt Ellis

District Attorney, Wasco County, Oregon

Keith Ellison

Attorney General, Minnesota

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Commonwealth's Attorney, City of Norfolk, Virginia

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State's Attorney, Cook County (Chicago), Illinois

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District Attorney, Nashville, Tennessee

Kimberly Gardner

Circuit Attorney, City of St. Louis, Missouri

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District Attorney, Salt Lake County, Utah

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District Attorney, Bexar County (San Antonio), Texas

Deborah Gonzalez

District Attorney, Western Judicial Circuit (Athens), Georgia

Eric Gonzalez

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Commonwealth's Attorney, City of Fredericksburg, Virginia

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Michael Jackson

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County Attorney, Hennepin County (Minneapolis), Minnesota

Steve Mulroy

District Attorney, Shelby County (Memphis), Tennessee

Jody Owens

District Attorney, Hinds County, Mississippi

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Commonwealth's Attorney, City of Charlottesville, Virginia

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Eric Rinehart

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