

News Release: June 27, 2005

For Immediate Release

***Family Members and Friends of People Incarcerated March on Washington, DC
August 13th, 9:00 AM — 2:00 PM, Lafayette Park***

Family Members and Friends of People Incarcerated (FMI), an organization based in Montgomery, Alabama is calling for individuals and organizations to travel from their respective communities. Come to Washington, DC on Saturday, August 13th, from 9:00 AM until 2:00 PM at Lafayette Park (north side of the White House) to be heard.

The United States imprisons its citizens at rates three to ten times higher than other democratic societies and holds 25% of the world's prison population. Racially discriminatory mandatory sentencing drug laws and 'get tough' policies have made prisons crowded, dangerous and places where international human rights laws are broken every day. US prisons are guilty of torture of men, women and children housed there and do not contribute to a safer society. The impact of continued bias in employment of former prisoners, lack of voting rights and affordable housing adds stress to poorer US communities and families.

The March on August 13th is intended to send a message to US leaders that violation of international law, the continued use of the poor and bodies of color as a business commodity and the current arrest, sentencing and prison procedures are no longer acceptable. Leaders of the March note that the US must stop relying on incarceration as a first resort, provide young people with an equitable education and provide our communities with the means to equal opportunity. Abuse flourishes in US prisons, and the punishment industry is dependent on bodies of color and the poor, similar to the dynamics of slavery.

Millions of formerly imprisoned citizens can no longer vote. Laws that partially or permanently discourage good citizenship cannot be supported by evidence and is bad policy.

Please support the call of Family Members and Friends of People Incarcerated, marking August 13th, 2005 a historical day. We will no longer be silent victims of criminal justice policies that target the most vulnerable citizens. We are meeting in Washington, DC to make a unified demand for justice.

Individuals and groups will begin meeting on Friday evening, August 12th. On Saturday morning, August 13th, people will assemble at Lafayette Park (north side of the White House). Programming will begin at 9:00 AM and run through 2:00 PM.

Please make plans to be there, and support the March Family Members and Friends of People Incarcerated in all the ways that you can. If you would like to be an organizer and bring a group to march in Washington on August 13th, please register as an Organizer online at www.journeyforjustice.org, or write:

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