



WORKING TOGETHER: Interfaith organizing for public defense reform

Michigan's public defense systems are failing. The Campaign for Justice is fighting for a justice system that works for all. Our two goals for public defense reform are adequate state funding a system that meets and enforces minimum national standards.

We are a broad-based, non-partisan coalition seeking legislative reform of Michigan's public defense systems. Our coalition includes the Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Network, Citizens for Traditional Values, Michigan Catholic Conference, Michigan Jewish Conference, Prison Fellowship, Council of Islamic Organizations of Michigan and MOSES.

Faith-based communities have a long tradition of advocating for justice. Please join in our mobilizing effort to bring reform to Michigan's failing system!

Religious people must do more than offer prayers if the world is to become a better place to live.

- **The Dalai Lama**

Of the people of Moses, there is a section who guide and do justice in the light of truth.

- **Koran. Chapter 7. Verse 159.**

The righteous care about justice for the poor but the wicked have no such concern.

- **Proverbs 29:7**

Justice, Justice, You Shall Pursue.

- **Deuteronomy 16:20**

In the courts give real justice – the kind that brings peace.

- **Zechariah 8:16**

If we don't do it together, we will not be progressing at the rate we would like, to see our community and our people do justice.

- **Imam Steve Elturk**

What you desire for yourself, you should desire for others. What you do not like others to do to you, you should not do to others.

- **Mahābhārata, Shāntiparva, 258**

Never deny justice to poor people in court.

- **Exodus 23:6**

He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

- **Micah 6:8**

All it takes is one person.....and another.....and another.....and another.....to start a movement.

- **Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel**

Michigan Campaign for Justice

A JUSTICE SYSTEM THAT WORKS FOR ALL



RESTORING COMMUNITIES: Fixing our failing justice system

The Constitution says every person has the right to an attorney if accused of a crime, even if she or he cannot afford one.

But a 2007 poll found that three-quarters of Michigan residents agreed that a rich person gets better treatment in the state's criminal justice system than a poor person.

Michigan's public defense system has been repeatedly singled out as one of the worst in the nation. Even the best attorneys cannot function without the time and resources they need to provide an effective defense.¹

A failed system hurts us all:

- Public safety is at risk when the innocent are wrongfully imprisoned and the guilty are free to commit more crimes.
- When the right to effective representation is not upheld, lives are destroyed. Families and communities are broken up.
- Children facing delinquency charges without adequate defense representation can end up trapped in the system.
- Costly errors and inappropriate sentences mean Michigan taxpayers pay millions in unnecessary lawsuits and corrections costs.

The Campaign for Justice is fighting for a justice system that works for all. We welcome you to join our efforts in restoring communities by fixing our failing public defense system.

Build the Movement!

- **Contact your state legislators** and tell them "I support public defense reform!" Go to www.mijustice.org and click on "Contact legislators." This is one of the easiest and most important ways you can help.
- **Tell five friends:** Talk to friends or family who you think would like to join our campaign effort.
- **Invite** the Campaign Speakers' Bureau to present at your organization's next meeting or conference or your place of worship's social action committee.
- **Attend** one of our upcoming coffee hours. Find the next coffee hour in your county at www.mijustice.org or by searching for us on Facebook.

¹ Marketing Resource Group, September 12-19, 2007, 600 respondents.

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Imagine...
Being accused of a crime and meeting your attorney only a few minutes before a trial.

Imagine...
Despite your attorney's best intentions and experience, she or he has little access to experts or investigators with which to build your defense.

Imagine...
Your attorney has an unmanageable caseload that makes it impossible to spend enough time to provide an effective defense.