

PRISON  
POLICY INITIATIVE

**2013-2014**  
ANNUAL REPORT

---

*September 2014*

PO Box 127 Northampton MA 01061  
<http://www.prisonpolicy.org>  
(413) 527-0845

# Table of contents

---

Executive Director's letter .....	1
Who we are .....	5
Campaign updates	
Protecting our democracy from mass incarceration by ending prison gerrymandering.....	6
Bringing fairness to the prison and jail phone industry .....	8
Fighting against overreaching and ineffective geography-based penalties .....	10
Working to end driver's license suspensions for drug offenses unrelated to driving .....	12
Ending the shackling of mothers giving birth while incarcerated in Massachusetts.....	13
Building a stronger criminal justice reform movement	
Pulling back the curtain on mass incarceration .....	14
Popularizing criminal justice reform .....	17
Research clearinghouse & Legal resources for incarcerated people.....	18
Meet our new board members	
Rachel Bloom.....	19
Ruth Greenwood .....	20
Michael Leo Owens .....	21
Jennifer Sellitti.....	22
Supporting our work .....	23
Prison Policy Initiative budget report for 2013-2014 year .....	24

*“PPI is one of the most imaginative research groups illuminating the dark recesses of our carceral landscape”*

-Pete Brook  
Prison Photography

# Executive Director's letter

---

Dear Friends,

I'm proud to share our 2013-2014 annual report recapping the Prison Policy Initiative's most recent accomplishments. It's been a whirlwind year for criminal justice reform, and I'm proud to say that the Prison Policy Initiative has been at the center of the action. We've made real progress on our core campaigns and took on some new ones (pages 6-13), and along the way we issued a number of groundbreaking reports and collaborations that are expanding the scope and effectiveness of the larger movement against mass incarceration (pages 14-18). Your partnership gave us the necessary financial flexibility to make all of this work happen, and I thank you for your encouragement, your feedback, and your generosity.

I co-founded the Prison Policy Initiative to build winnable justice reform campaigns that accomplish two goals: achieve real change on specific issues *and* make the larger point that the harm of mass criminalization extends far beyond the people who are locked up. While our campaigns remain at the center of our work, your increased support this year made it possible for us to produce a series of broad, national reports and collaborations to propel our larger movement forward.

Part of the Prison Policy Initiative model is to go deep down into the weeds of a complicated problem and then distill it to develop a nice, clean, actionable solution. For example:

- Our work sparked and sustains the national movement against prison gerrymandering. We've won victories in four states and the U.S. Supreme Court, and we're making progress towards convincing the U.S. Census Bureau to count incarcerated people at their home addresses in the next census (see pages 6-7).
- Our research and advocacy has been keeping the exploitative prison and jail telephone industry in check, and this year we won a historic ruling from the Federal Communication Commission capping the cost of calls home from prisons and jails (see pages 8-9).

This year, our work and our model gained national recognition commensurate with our victories. In June, I received the 2014 American Constitutional Society's David Carliner Award, named for one of the great public interest lawyers of the 20th Century. I consider the award both a great personal honor and a milestone for the criminal justice reform community: a clear sign that our movement has come a long way

The non-profit, non-partisan Prison Policy Initiative **produces cutting edge research** to expose the **broader harm of mass incarceration**, and then **sparks advocacy campaigns** to create a more just society.



After receiving the American Constitution Society's 2014 David Carliner Public Interest Award, Peter addresses attendees at the Society's annual conference.

(Image source: ACS)

since the Prison Policy Initiative was founded in 2001. At that time, prison populations were skyrocketing with no end in sight. Both the powers that be *and the established progressive movement* were ignoring the need for criminal justice reform. Since then, our movement has successfully focused national attention on the problem of mass incarceration, and the Carliner Award was a great opportunity to celebrate how times have changed now that criminal justice reform is solidly on the progressive agenda.

The Prison Policy Initiative's work has always been designed to fuel the larger movement, but this year —thanks to your support — marked the first time that we had the resources to explicitly focus on building the movement's capacity by filling major knowledge gaps. In an article generously entitled "Every Graph, Stat and Data Point You Need For Research on U.S. Mass Incarceration," Prison Photography creator Pete Brook summed up this shift:

The small, independent and incredibly effective Prison Policy Initiative (PPI) has delivered us a great service once more.

Not content with *\*only\** filing lawsuits, pressing states to move away from Prison Based Election Gerrymandering; battling corrupt and expensive jail phone systems; and protecting prisoners' rights to communicate... PPI is committed to providing fellow prison reformers with accurate up-to-date data on mass incarceration.

Pete is talking about four exciting Prison Policy Initiative reports that our movement had been waiting for:

- Racial and ethnic disparities are an unacceptable but defining characteristic of our prison system, yet the federal government stopped publishing information on racial disparities by state seven years ago. We used our knowledge of U.S. Census data to fill the gap with a report and 200+ graphs.
- Similarly, there wasn't a simple way to access data about the growth (and occasional decline) of the prison population in each state, so, we produced another report with 100+ graphs showing that state policy decisions drive mass incarceration.
- There wasn't a straightforward way to understand how many people were locked up in different kinds of facilities and why they were there. So we produced the groundbreaking report, *Mass Incarceration: the Whole Pie*.



Meeting Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor at the American Constitution Society's 2014 conference.  
(Image source: ACS)



- Finally, recognizing that we could use an international perspective to further encourage criminal justice reform in the comparatively less punitive U.S. states, we worked with data artist Josh Begley to show that criminal justice policy in every state is out of step with the rest of the world.

The instant popularity of these four publications was a testament to their necessity. These reports brought web traffic that overwhelmed our server, and sparked more discussions and media coverage than we were able to count (although we give a few highlights on pages 14-17). Having too much traffic and too much interest is a rare problem for the criminal justice reform movement to have.

As our work is growing in both scope and impact, so is our organization. This year, we were excited to announce our first-ever formal job opening. (Both of our previous full-time hires were people we had worked closely with for many years.) After a national search, we were thrilled to find our new Policy and Communications Associate, Bernadette Rabuy. Bernadette graduated from the University of California, Berkeley and previously worked with our friends at the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, Voice of the Ex-Offender, and Californians United for a Responsible Budget.

In other staff news, long-time member of the PPI team Leah Sakala is now a full-time graduate student in the dual Master of Public Policy/ MBA in Nonprofit Management Program at Brandeis University. While she has relocated to the Boston area, I'm pleased to share that she's staying with us part-time as a Senior Policy Analyst.

Our Board of Directors has also gained several accomplished new members this year. We are thrilled that Rachel Bloom, Ruth Greenwood, Michael Leo Owens, and Jennifer Sellitti have joined our team (see interviews on pages 19–22).

Moving forward, I'm encouraged by the progress we've made over the past year to diversify our funding and take on new projects. Our biggest challenge for the next year, however, remains funding our work to end prison gerrymandering. In last year's annual report I shared that the shifting priorities of the two major funders of our work to end prison gerrymandering prevented them from continuing their support. Both funders remain big fans of our work, and the Public Welfare Foundation, which was supporting our work with "special opportunities" grants that normally can't be renewed, was even generous enough to give us two years notice that other funders needed to step up. We still have a year to replace that funding, and we're making progress. I'm excited to report that the Joyce Foundation has agreed to invest in a special project to end prison gerrymandering in the Midwest. We still



This year, we worked with YouTube celebrity Hank Green on a video explaining mass incarceration as a failed \$75 billion/year experiment. So far, the video has been watched more than a million times.

need other funders, however, to support our work in other regions and nationally.

The Prison Policy Initiative is at the heart of the movement to end prison gerrymandering and we must bring in new support to sustain our work during this critical mid-decade Census planning period. We've come so far and are closer than ever to a national victory, so I'm confident that you'll help us, as you always have, to make the necessary connections to sources of support so that our work can continue to flourish.

Thank you for your partnership, and for being a key part of our victories over the past year. Please celebrate with me.

In gratitude,



Peter Wagner  
Executive Director  
September 29, 2014

PS. We always welcome feedback and we continue to expand the ways that you, and the public at large, can get updates about our work. Those methods include:

- Email newsletters for prison gerrymandering, the research clearinghouse, and our general work. See <http://www.prisonpolicy.org/subscribe/>
- RSS to follow our blogs: <http://www.prisonpolicy.org/feeds.html>
- Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. We're @PrisonPolicy on Twitter.

*“...for the general public, a crucial first step is to denormalize the current system. This is not the way it has always been—and this is not the way it has to be.”*

**Matt Ford**  
The Atlantic  
July 23, 2014



# Who we are

---

The non-profit, non-partisan Prison Policy Initiative **produces cutting edge research** to expose the **broader harm of mass incarceration**, and then sparks **advocacy campaigns** to create a more just society.

The Prison Policy Initiative was founded in 2001 to document and publicize how mass incarceration undermines our national welfare. Our team has grown to four dedicated staff members who, along with student interns and volunteers, shape national reform campaigns from our office in Western Massachusetts.

## Staff

- Aleks Kajstura, *Legal Director*
- Bernadette Rabuy, *Policy & Communications Associate*
- Leah Sakala, *Senior Policy Analyst*
- Peter Wagner, *Executive Director*

## Students, interns and volunteers

- Catherine Cain, *Smith College Work Study*
- Sadie Gold-Shapiro, *Smith College Work Study*
- Corey Frost, *UNC School of Law*
- Sarah Hertel-Fernandez, *Summer Research Associate*
- Kip Hustace, *Stanford Law School*
- Yoo Eun Kim, *Smith College Work Study*
- Sophia Robohn, *RRASC Intern*
- Arielle Sharma, *UConn School of Law*
- Naomi Tannen

## Consultants:

- Bill Cooper, *GIS Consultant*
- Elena Lavarreda, *Research Consultant*
- Bob Machuga, *Graphic Consultant*
- Jordan Miner, *Programming Consultant*

## Board of Directors\*:

- Neelum Arya, *Director*  
*Research Director, Epstein Program in Public Interest Law and Policy, UCLA School of Law*
- Rachel Bloom, *Director*  
*Director of Membership and Special Projects, Funders' Committee for Civic Participation*
- Ruth Greenwood, *Director*  
*Fellow, Chicago Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law*
- Annette Johnson, *Director*
- Drew Kukorowski, *Clerk,*  
*Attorney, Council for Children's Rights*
- Eric Lotke, *President,*  
*Senior Research Analyst, SEIU Public Division and author of 2044.*
- Michael Leo Owens, *Director*  
*Associate Professor, Emory University*

- Jennifer Sellitti, *Director*  
*Deputy Public Defender, Middlesex Trial Region, NJ*  
*Office of the Public Defender*
- Christopher Sturt, *Director*  
*Co-editor, Dollars & Sense Magazine*
- Heather Ann Thompson, *Director*  
*Professor of History, Temple University*
- Peter Wagner, *Director*  
*Executive Director, Prison Policy Initiative*
- Sarah Walker, *Director*  
*Co-founder, Minnesota Second Chance Coalition*
- Angela Wessels, *Treasurer*

\*Organizations for identification purposes only.

## Advisory Board\*:

- Andrew Beveridge, *Sociology, Queens College*
- Nils Christie, *Criminology, University of Oslo, Norway*
- Alec Ewald, *Political Science, University of Vermont*
- Barbara Fedders, *UNC School of Law*
- Alex Friedmann, *Prison Legal News*
- Barbara Graves-Poller, *Supervising Attorney at MFY Legal Services*
- Joseph "Jazz" Hayden, *plaintiff, Hayden v. Pataki*
- Dale Ho, *Director of Voting Rights Project, ACLU*
- Daniel Jenkins, *democracy activist, plaintiff, Longway v. Jefferson*
- Bruce Reilly, *Formerly Incarcerated and Convicted People's Movement*
- Brigitte Sarabi, *Partnership for Safety and Justice*
- Janice Thompson, *Midwest Democracy Network*
- Brenda Wright, *Dēmos: A Network for Ideas and Action*
- Rebecca Young, *Attorney*

\*Organizations for identification purposes only.

# Protecting our democracy from mass incarceration by ending prison gerrymandering

<http://www.prisonersofthecensus.org/>

*The Census Bureau's practice of counting more than two million incarcerated people in the wrong place encourages state and local governments to dilute the votes cast by everyone who doesn't live next to a large prison. For more than a decade, we've been leading the movement to prevent the prison system from exerting undue influence on the political process.*

Before we released our first report documenting prison gerrymandering in New York just over a decade ago, no one knew that prison gerrymandering was distorting our democracy and impeding criminal justice reform. Today, our work has **sparked successful legislation** in multiple states, **won major civil rights victories** in the courts, and made the problem of prison gerrymandering a key issue for state legislators, local government officials, voting rights and civil rights advocates, researchers, and journalists.

This year marked **unprecedented progress** at the national, state and local levels. The highlights:

- We joined with the ACLU and Dēmos as counsel to local residents of the city of **Cranston, Rhode Island** to **sue the city for prison gerrymandering**. The City gives every three voters in the district containing the state's prison complex as much voting power as every four voters in any other city district.



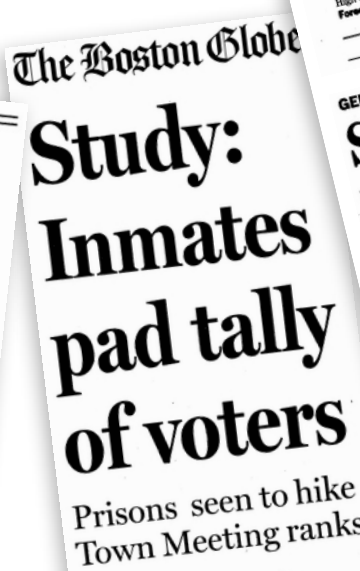
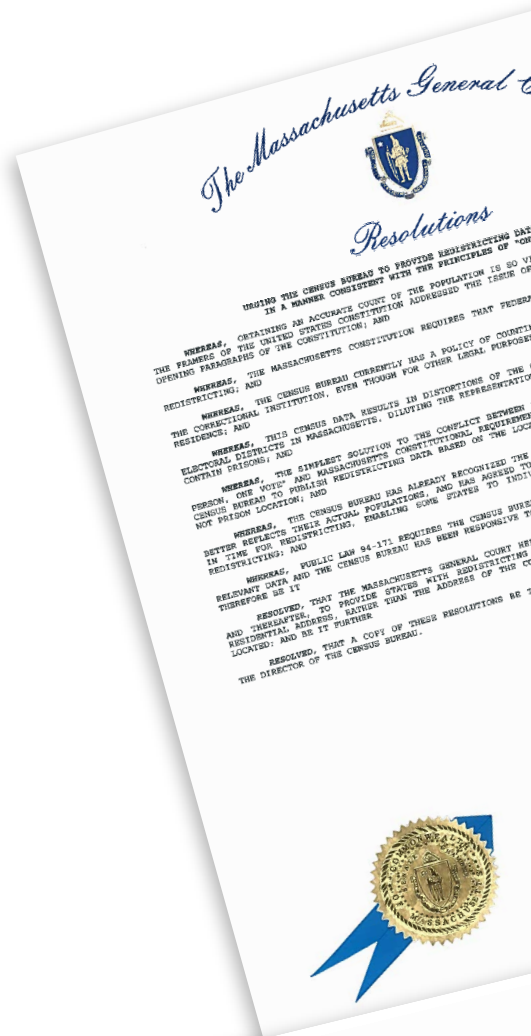
(Left to right) Peter Wagner, Aleks Kajstura, Adam Lioz (Demos), Brenda Wright (Demos), Leah Sakala, and Sarah Hertel-Ferdandez outside the federal courthouse in Rhode Island after successful arguments opposing the City's motion to dismiss our suit.



- We organized two meetings with the Census Bureau Director and more than a dozen civil rights groups, at which the Bureau finally **pledged to start research** on counting incarcerated people at home for the 2020 census. This change would bring a national end to prison gerrymandering.
- We supported the **Rhode Island bill** to end prison gerrymandering, which passed unanimously in the State Senate. While the bill unfortunately died in the House's Judiciary Committee, we expect that it will be reintroduced in the next session.
- Capping our a multi-year organizing effort, the **Massachusetts legislature passed a bipartisan resolution** urging the Census Bureau to provide redistricting data that counts incarcerated persons at home.

Beyond these wins, we've been hard at work to **expand the reach of the movement against prison gerrymandering**, both in the media and with our allies. For example:

- Peter presented on a panel organized by the **National Conference of State Legislatures** about ending prison gerrymandering. Other presenters on the panel included Census Bureau Director John Thompson and state officials from New York and Maryland who implemented the laws ending prison gerrymandering in those states.
- Aleks presented at the **League of Women Voters' national conference** with League of Women Voters members and the Chief of the Census Bureau's Redistricting Data Office.
- Peter traveled to **Ohio and Minnesota** to help grassroots groups jumpstart state-based campaigns.
- We joined 15 other civil rights and democracy organizations in endorsing **10 Redistricting Principles for a More Perfect Union**, which encourage the Census Bureau to count incarcerated individuals as residents of their home addresses.



# Bringing fairness to the prison and jail phone industry

---

<http://www.prisonpolicy.org/phones/>

*Some children have to pay \$1/minute to talk to an incarcerated parent. Why? Because prisons and jails profit by granting monopoly telephone contracts to the company that will charge families the most.*

For more than ten years, families trying to stay in touch with incarcerated loved ones had been calling on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to provide relief from exorbitant prison and jail telephone bills. Recognizing yet another way that mass incarceration punishes entire communities, we stepped in to collaborate with partners across the country to generate the research and advocacy that was necessary for change:

- The FCC capped the most expensive interstate prison and jail calling rates, effective February 2014. **Our work was cited throughout the nearly 200 pages of technical discussions** in the FCC's order, beginning on the second page in a footnote explaining why the Commission took action.
- The FCC imposed **new reporting requirements** for the prison and jail telephone industry, and placed **restrictions on the expensive fees**. When the industry sued the FCC to block this progress, the Prison Policy Initiative stepped in to protect the order as an intervenor-defendant. The Court decided to allow the rate reduction requirement to go into action, but stayed other parts of the FCC's ruling pending the litigation.
- We worked with the corporate accountability organization SumOfUs to collect **23,585 comments** urging the FCC to take the next step of regulating the high cost of in-state phone calls.
- The FCC requested comment on a number of technical matters about future regulations, so PPI submitted **seven detailed briefings**. Peter and Aleks also gave **invited presentations** at FCC workshops in July 2013 and July 2014.



Aleks (center) presents on the pernicious role of fees in the prison telephone industry at the Federal Communications Commission's July 2014 workshop. At left is Darrell Baker of the Alabama Public Services Commission, and at right is Lee Petro, pro bono counsel for the Martha Wright petitioners.

Image source: Human Rights Defense Center

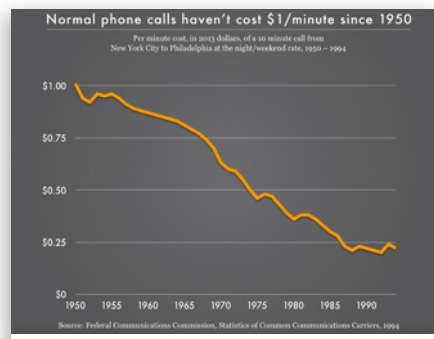




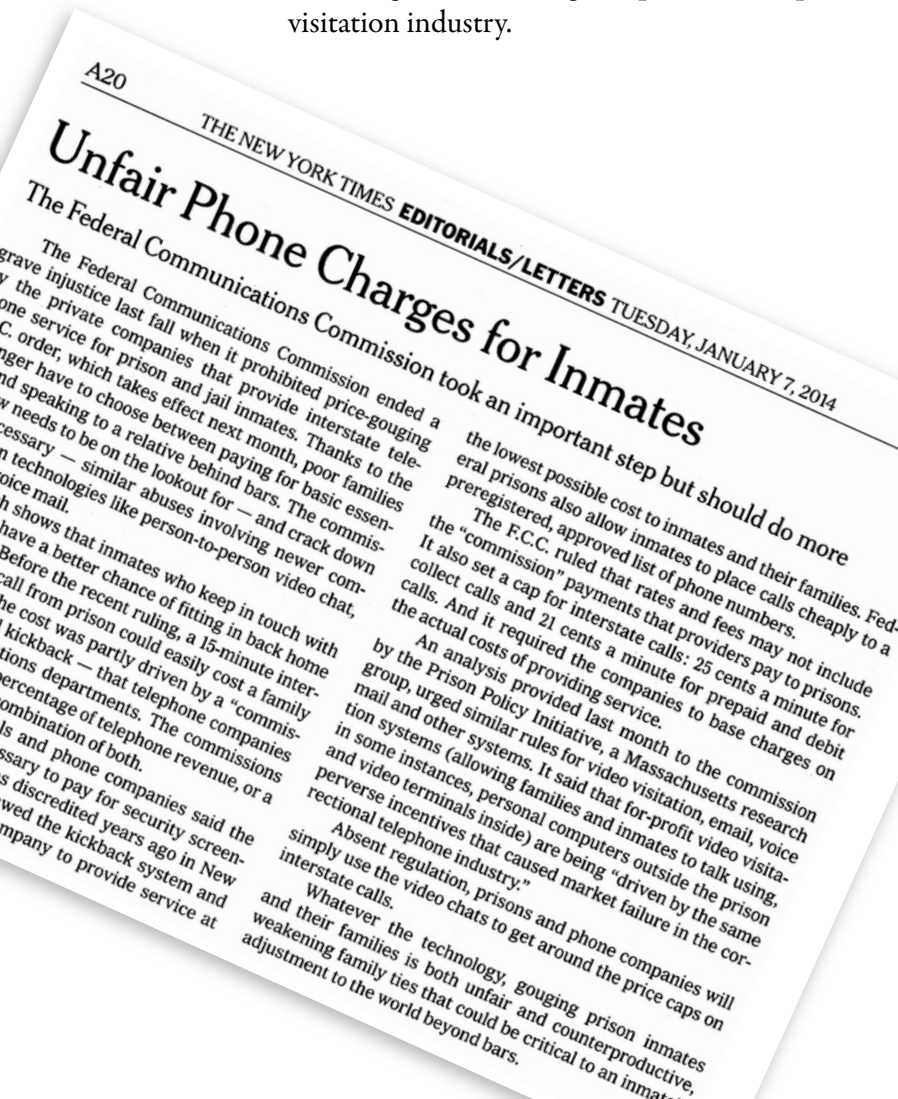
- Leah published a *Huffington Post* column featuring the voices of impacted families to argue that the prison phone companies are “The Father’s Day Profiteers That Put Hallmark to Shame.” Her piece drew from the PPI/SumOfUs petitions, calling on the FCC to finish the task of enacting comprehensive reform.
- Leah presented PPI’s research on the prison and jail communications industry on a panel about parenting and incarceration at the University of North Carolina School of Law’s 2014 Conference on Race, Class, Gender, and Ethnicity.
- We helped the FCC and the public focus on related issues in the burgeoning for-profit video visitation industry. For example, some companies ban in-person visits and then require families to pay \$1 or more per minute to talk via computer screen. Our research briefing to the FCC was endorsed by *The New York Times* editorial board, and Peter participated in a *Times* “Room for Debate” on the subject. Our work this year helped to launch a national movement to prevent the video visitation industry from following in the footsteps of the broken prison and jail telephone industry. Stay tuned for more, including a forthcoming comprehensive report on the video visitation industry.



We created a video explaining that prison phone industry giant Global Tel\*Link shares a hidden kickback with the Hamden County Jail in Massachusetts, driving up the price families must pay to stay in touch.



As we explained in a blog post celebrating the FCC’s ruling, the prison telephone industry would have you believe that the family members of incarcerated people still live in world defined by the technology of the 1950s.



# Fighting against overreaching and ineffective geography-based penalties

<http://www.prisonpolicy.org/zones.html>

*Turning large portions of cities, counties, or states into increased penalty zones may sound good on the campaign trail, but this rhetoric doesn't work in practice.*

*When a legislature decides to treat everywhere as special, nowhere is special.*

Our work on geography-based penalties began in 2006 with a research project on the over-large drug penalty enhancement zones around Massachusetts schools. With two reports, we demonstrated how increased penalties in school zone areas fail to protect children and worsen racial disparities in the criminal justice system. Our work led to successful reform of the Massachusetts law in 2013. Since then, we've made great additional progress towards documenting and focusing public and policymaker attention on the harm of geography-based penalties nationwide:

- Our **new video** overviews why sentencing enhancement zone policy is “one of the worst ideas to come out of the War on Drugs.”



Peter talking about the effects of the Massachusetts sentencing enhancement zone law on racial disparities.



*Peter explains that sentencing enhancement zone policies don't work, can't ever work, and have harmful effects.*



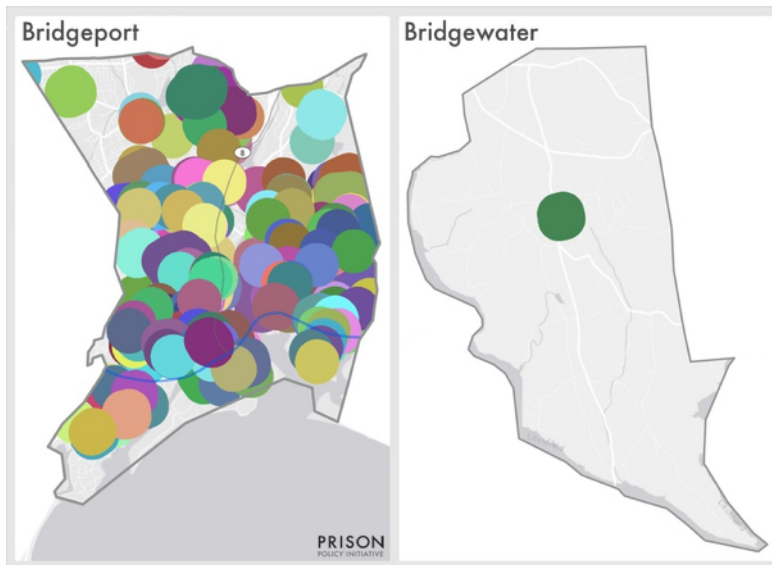
How far is 1,000 feet really? Our demonstration showed that the Massachusetts legislature erred in assuming that 1,000 feet was an effective or reasonable distance for a sentencing enhancement zone.



- We released “**Reaching too far: How Connecticut’s large sentencing enhancement zones miss the mark,**” a thorough analysis of Connecticut’s failed sentencing enhancement zone policy and the unfair “urban penalty” it creates. Aleks, author of the report, gave an **invited presentation of our research at a Connecticut legislative briefing event** organized by A Better Way Foundation. Connecticut’s 1,500-foot sentencing enhancement zones are some of the largest in the country. Aleks described how the law’s overreach prevents it from setting apart protected areas for children and arbitrarily increases penalties for urban residents.

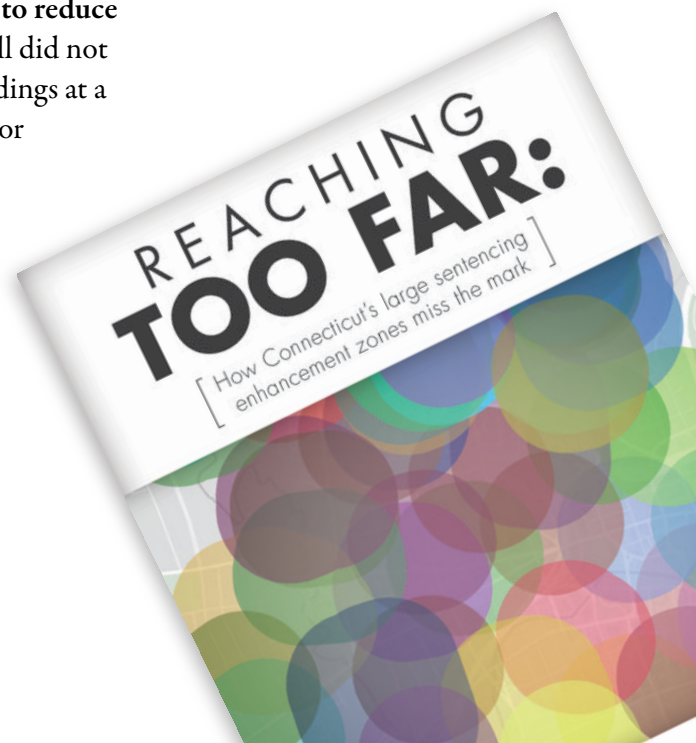


Aleks discusses Hartford’s zones with Connecticut Representative Brandon McGee at the legislative briefing.



*Our research found that in Connecticut, overlapping sentencing enhancement “superzones” blanket 92% of Bridgeport’s residents, while Bridgewater contains just one zone that covers only 8% of the town’s residents.*

- We supported the Connecticut Legislature’s **proposal to reduce the size of the zones** from 1,500 feet. Although the bill did not pass this session, Aleks testified about our research findings at a legislative hearing and our report’s findings were a major contribution towards a successful vote in committee.
- Our Connecticut report received excellent attention in media outlets such as *The Connecticut Law Tribune* and *ThinkProgress*.





# Working to end driver's license suspensions for drug offenses unrelated to driving

<http://www.prisonpolicy.org/driving/>

*Every year, Massachusetts law needlessly suspends the driver's licenses of thousands of the state's residents just because they have been convicted of a drug offense, even if the offense had nothing to do with operating a vehicle or road safety.*

- Our May 2014 report, "Suspending Common Sense in Massachusetts: Driver's license suspensions for drug offenses unrelated to driving," is the first to document how these **unnecessary license suspensions undermine public safety, destabilize the lives of people with former involvement in the criminal justice system, and waste public resources in the Commonwealth.**
- Our report was featured on the **home page of the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators**, a strong advocate for repealing policies that require license suspensions for reasons unrelated to driving.
- Leah, the report's author, gave an **invited presentation of our research at a legislative briefing at the Massachusetts State House** in support of H3099/S1643, a bill sponsored by Sen. Harriette Chandler and Rep. Liz Malia to end the practice of suspending driver's licenses for unrelated drug convictions. After the briefing, the bill sponsors distributed our report to all Massachusetts Senators.
- The reform bill passed out of committee in both the House and Senate, and even passed in the Senate as an attachment to the budget before the session ended. **The bill enjoys a broad base of support** within the Massachusetts Legislature, and we're optimistic that it will be successful next year.



Leah presents PPI's research at a legislative briefing at the Massachusetts State House.



# Ending the shackling of mothers giving birth while incarcerated in Massachusetts

<http://www.prisonpolicy.org/shackling/>

*As a member organization of the Massachusetts Anti-shackling Coalition, the Prison Policy Initiative helped Massachusetts become the 21st state to pass legislation to end the inhumane practice of routinely shackling mothers who are pregnant or giving birth while incarcerated.*

Until this year, the state of Massachusetts had no policy to protect incarcerated mothers from being put in harmful restraints (including handcuffs, leg irons, and waist chains) during the later stages of pregnancy and during and after childbirth. On May 15, 2014, after months of dedicated advocacy by the members of the Massachusetts Anti-shackling Coalition, Governor Deval Patrick signed a bill to **immediately outlaw the practice of unnecessarily shackling.**

To help bring about this victory, the Prison Policy Initiative submitted written testimony in support of the bill, recruited new members of the Massachusetts Anti-shackling Coalition, generated news coverage, and posted blog updates to focus public attention on the issue of shackling.



**PRISON POLICY INITIATIVE**  
Leah Sakala  
Policy Analyst  
lsakala@prisonpolicy.org  
(413) 527-0845

Written Testimony of Leah Sakala,  
Policy Analyst, Prison Policy Initiative  
Before the Massachusetts Legislature's  
Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security  
Public Hearing  
December 12, 2013  
**SUPPORT S.1171**

Good morning Senator Timilty, Representative Naughton, and members of the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security. I write to submit testimony on behalf of the Prison Policy Initiative, an Easthampton-based nonprofit that produces research to expose the broader harm of mass incarceration, and sparks advocacy campaigns to create a more just society. The Prison Policy Initiative strongly supports passage of S.1171, "An Act to Prevent Shackling and Promote Safe Pregnancies for Female Inmates."

This bill presents Massachusetts with the opportunity to ban the dangerous, inhumane, and degrading practice of shackling incarcerated women who give birth while in correctional custody. Current Massachusetts policy fails to protect incarcerated women from being subject to such harmful and degrading restraints. S.1171 is consistent with the national trend to abolish the practice of shackling incarcerated pregnant women: 18 other states and the Federal Bureau of Prisons have already prohibited the routine use of shackles on incarcerated women who are giving birth, and it is in Massachusetts to follow suit.

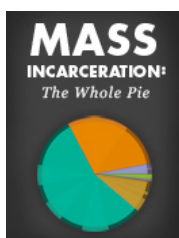
# Pulling back the curtain on mass incarceration

*We develop powerful ways to help the public understand that mass incarceration is both unprecedented and counterproductive.*

This year we published four innovative reports and a national profile series to provide the movement for criminal justice reform with critical data that was previously — and surprisingly — unavailable. With innovative graphics and hundreds of graphs, our research is laying the foundation for fairer and more effective justice policy.

## Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie

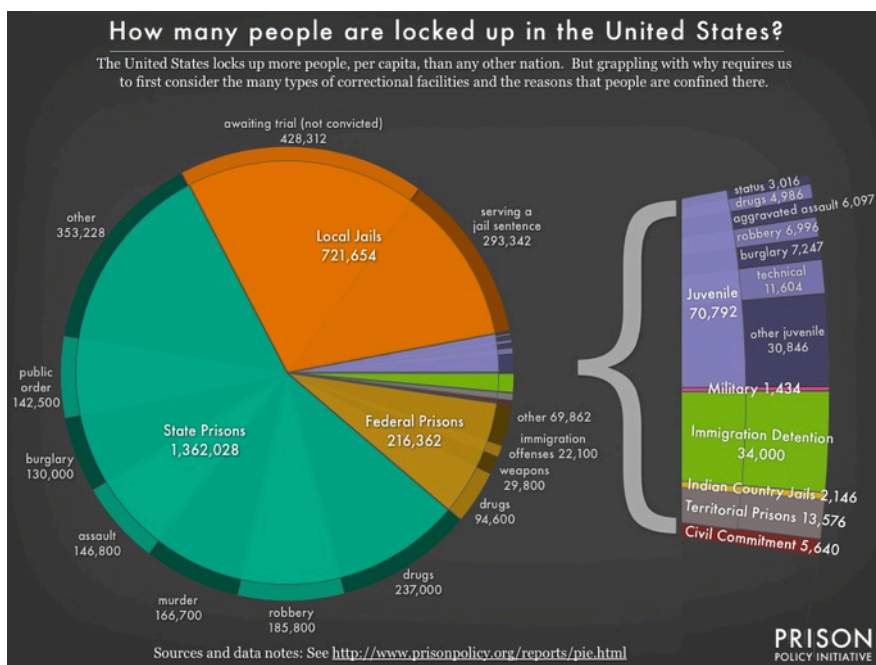
<http://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie.html>



This briefing is the first to assemble data on everyone who is incarcerated or confined in different kinds of prisons, jails, and other correctional and detention facilities in the U.S., showing the **whole pie of mass incarceration.**

The Prison Policy Initiative has, indeed, given us the “whole pie”— ipso facto altering the original question. Rather than asking “how many people are locked up,” the question has become “does it really make sense to be imprisoning this many people?”

—Audrey Williams, American Legislator, April 8, 2014





# Breaking Down Mass Incarceration in the 2010 Census: State-by-State Incarceration Rates by Race/Ethnicity

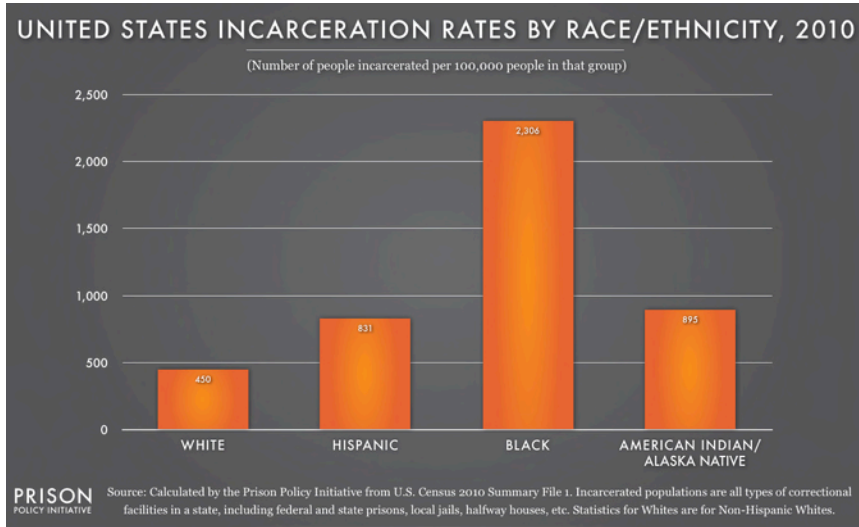
<http://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/rates.html>



Shocking but true: The federal Bureau of Justice Statistics stopped publishing information about racial disparities in incarceration by race/ethnicity in each state in 2006. We found a way to use our familiarity with U.S. Census data to **fill that critical gap with 200+ graphs**.

“The small, independent and incredibly effective Prison Policy Initiative has delivered us a great service once more” with “the most comprehensive breakdown of demographics in our state prison systems to date.”

—Pete Brook,  
Prison Photography,  
May 29, 2014



# Tracking State Prison Growth in 50 States

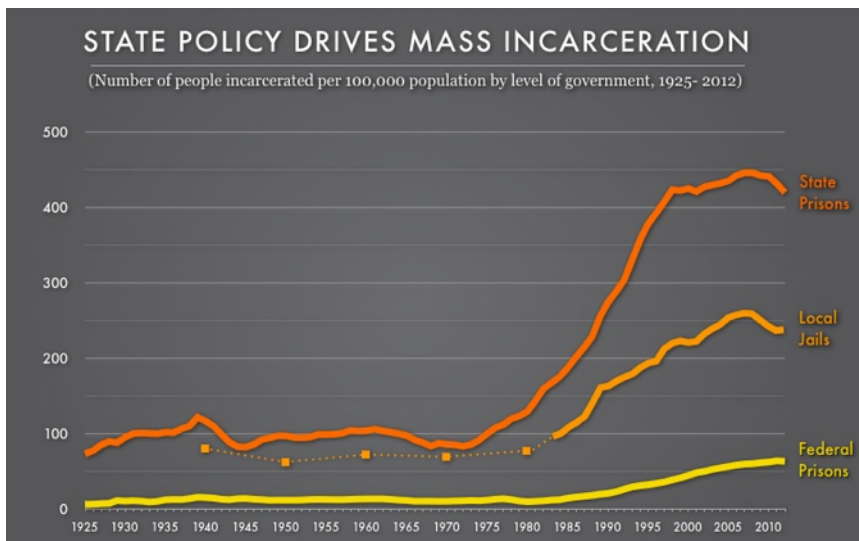
<http://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/overtime.html>



State – not federal – policy is driving mass incarceration, but each state is charting its own course. This report includes **100+ graphs** showing the rise (and occasional decline) of the incarceration rate in every state.

“If you are looking for an excellent primer on the use of incarceration in the United States, you need to read this.”

—National Institute of Corrections



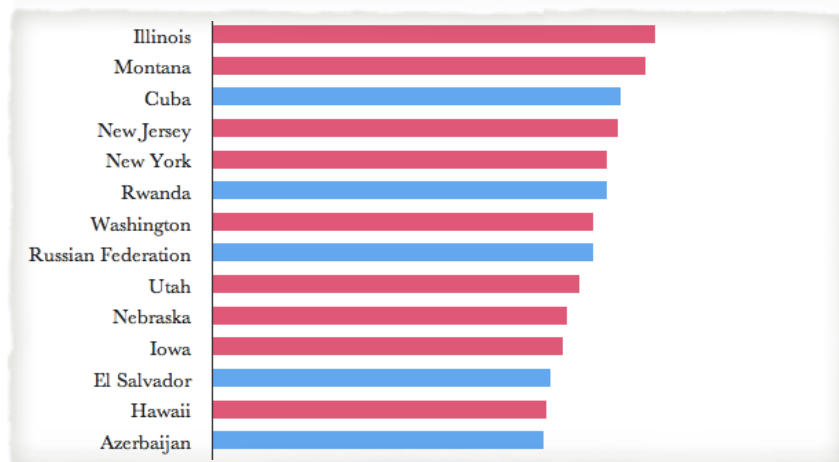
# States of Incarceration: The Global Context

<http://www.prisonpolicy.org/global/>



With data artist Josh Begley, we released a report with an interactive graphic that compares every U.S. state's use of prison to that of other nations, showing that **incarceration in every state — even those with relatively progressive policies — is out of line with the international community.**

The report is “required reading for those people striving to reform the correctional system.” It “definitively shows that the use of incarceration by individual states dwarfs the utilization of imprisonment around the world.”  
—National Institute of Corrections



## 50 state incarceration profiles

<http://www.prisonpolicy.org/profiles/>

Our 50 state profiles (and a national one) offer **one-click access** to both the findings of these four new briefings and the highlights of our work in each state over the last 13 years.





# Popularizing criminal justice reform

*We see it as part of our mission to help allies from other disciplines and movements become effective criminal justice advocates.*

This year we've expanded our efforts to bring new allies into the movement for criminal justice reform. Some of our work this year included:

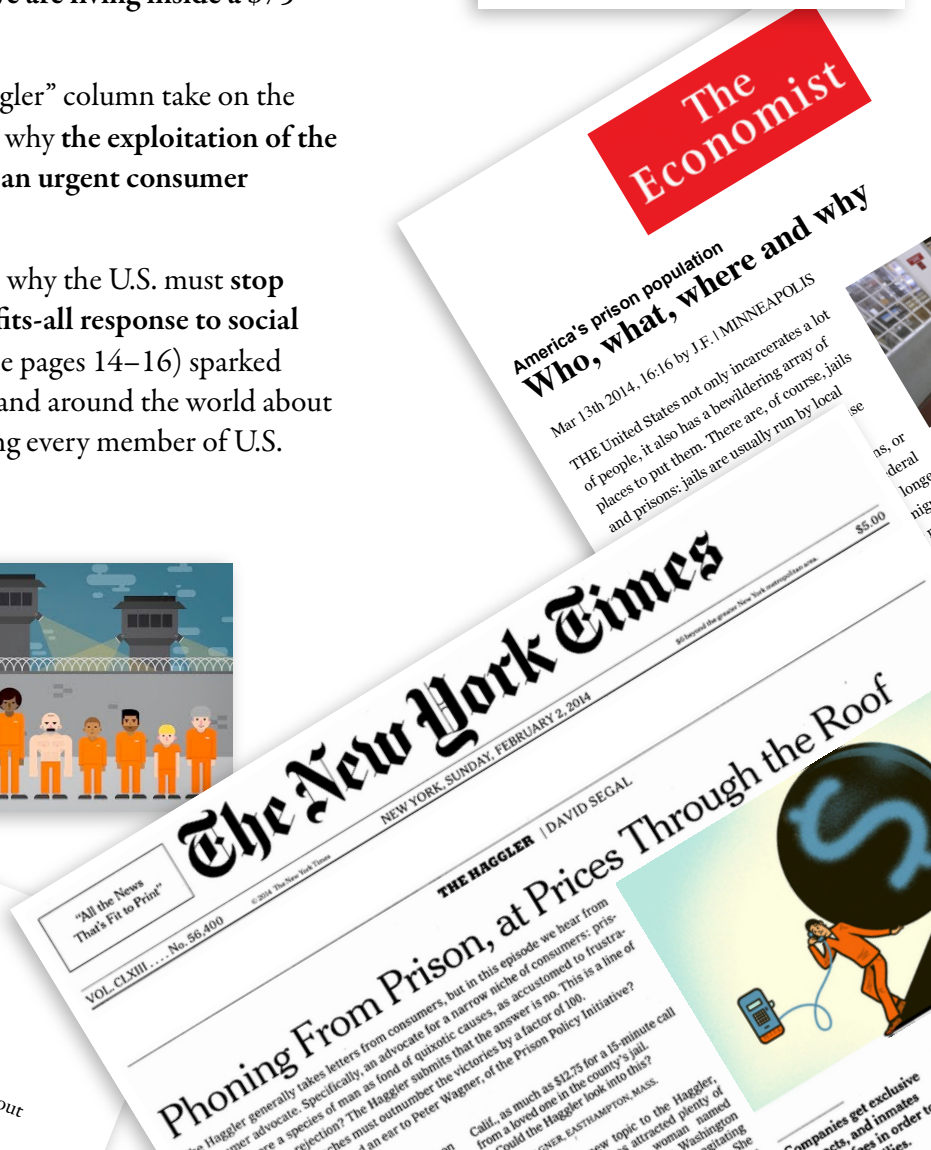
- Working with YouTube celebrity **Hank Green** on a **powerful 4-minute video** on the cyclical harms of mass incarceration. This project began when the internet communications company Visual.ly offered to help Hank make a high quality animated video on any topic of his choosing. When Hank chose to focus on incarceration in the U.S. and asked us to help, we said, "absolutely!"

As of this writing, **the video has more than 1,149,000 views on YouTube**, helping this country understand that the war on crime was failed policy and that **"we are living inside a \$75 billion a year failed experiment."**

- Helping the *New York Times* "Haggler" column take on the prison telephone industry to show why **the exploitation of the families of incarcerated people is an urgent consumer protection matter.**
- Helping the major media illustrate why the U.S. must **stop using incarceration as a one-size-fits-all response to social problems.** Our recent briefings (see pages 14–16) sparked conversations around the country and around the world about how mass incarceration is punishing every member of U.S. society.



Peter giving a Clason Lecture at Western New England University School of Law about the need for lawyers to take up policy work.





# Growing our board

---

*Reflecting the multi-sector nature of our work, our newest board members bring years of experience in different fields.*

## Getting to know new PPI board member **Rachel Bloom**

---

*Rachel Bloom is Director of Membership and Special Projects at the Funders' Committee for Civic Participation.*

### **Why did you decide to join the PPI board?**

I have long been an admirer (and colleague of PPI) and have worked with them over the years. I was working on state criminal justice reform for several years at the national office of the ACLU. As I transitioned to a new job I wanted to continue to work on criminal justice reform. Joining the PPI board seemed like the perfect step.

### **What does your work focus on? And what's the connection between that work and PPI?**

I work at the Funders' Committee for Civic Participation, a philanthropic network for foundations that support civic engagement work. Two of the issues I focus on supporting our membership with are the census and redistricting. I find it fitting that the issues that first introduced me to PPI — felony disfranchisement and prison gerrymandering — are still ones that I work on now 8 years later.

### **What do you think is most unique about the Prison Policy Initiative and the projects it takes on?**

I think that PPI has taken on some very distinct projects that no one else was willing to step up to the plate on. I am so



proud of PPI for working on such important issues and moving the needle forward on them.

### **What's something that you wish more people knew about the Prison Policy Initiative?**

I wish that people understood just how broad of a reach PPI has, how many issues we work on and how impactful we are — especially considering the size of our staff and budget. I was first introduced to PPI while working on felony disfranchisement and prison gerrymandering and thought that was the sum total of PPI, little did I know how wrong I was.

*“PPI has taken on some very distinct projects that no one else was willing to **step up to the plate** on.”*

**Rachel  
Bloom**



# Getting to know new PPI board member Ruth Greenwood

---

*Ruth Greenwood is a voting rights attorney and Fellow at the Chicago Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.*

## **Why did you decide to join the PPI board?**

I am really excited to have joined the PPI Board. I first heard about PPI through its work to end prison based gerrymandering. I saw Peter Wagner explain the concept in the movie *Gerrymandering*, and couldn't believe that a modern democracy with access to all sorts of technical data had not fixed the problem. Once I had discovered the great work of PPI in this area, I started reading about all the other work it does to highlight the problems of mass incarceration. The thing I like most about PPI is that it doesn't just explain the problems clearly, but sets out workable solutions and then works to implement them.

## **What does your work focus on? And what's the connection between that work and PPI?**

The work of PPI directly intersects with my work. I am a voting rights attorney and I focus on redistricting. In particular, I look at ways to improve minority representation in the United States. Ending prison gerrymandering would improve minority representation in my state of Illinois because pre-trial detainees can vote in the districts from which they come, yet are counted in the district where they are awaiting trial (sadly, there are tens of thousands of pre-trial detainees in Illinois and many await trial for years). I really hope PPI can end prison gerrymandering by 2020, so in 2021 when state and congressional districts are drawn again, we

will have removed at least one of the distortions to our democracy.

## **What do you think is most unique about the Prison Policy Initiative and the projects it takes on?**

I like that PPI chooses "bite size" pieces of problems to expose and solve. There is a clear overall goal (reducing the negative effects of mass incarceration on public welfare), and fixing each issue PPI focuses on takes us a step towards that goal. I love that PPI is so good at clearly explaining complex issues and is always ready to provide additional research and advice to help out state advocates like me.

## **What's something that you wish more people knew about the Prison Policy Initiative?**

I was shocked to find out that PPI does all that it does with so few staff members and such a small budget. It really made me realize that even though I'm a public interest lawyer and don't have a big budget for charitable donations, my donations go a long way with PPI. I like knowing that I am helping a small organization do big things.



*“I love that PPI is so good at **clearly explaining complex issues** and is always ready to provide additional research and advice to help out state advocates like me.”*

# Getting to know new PPI board member **Michael Leo Owens**

---

*Michael Leo Owens teaches in the Political Science department of Emory University, and specializes in urban, state and local politics, political penology, governance and public policy processes, religion and politics, and African American politics.*



## **Why did you decide to join the PPI board?**

As the piece of political science wisdom goes, “People participate when they can, when they want to, or when they’re asked.” My participation with PPI’s board covers all three bases! And I made a deliberate decision to leave another board of directors for PPI’s board. The switch is a better fit of interests, passions, and concerns.

## **What does your work focus on?**

I’m a scholar of American politics and public policy. The politics of punishment and the civic effects of mass incarceration fill a big portion of my research, teaching, and service portfolio. In particular, I’m writing a book, *Prisoners of Democracy*, about the ways in which punitive public policies and ambivalent public opinion diminish the citizenship of people with felony convictions and undermine the positive reintegration of formerly incarcerated people. Additionally, I serve on the advisory boards of two other organizations that confront the challenges and consequences of “penal harm” – the Georgia Justice Project and Foreverfamily. The former provides defense counsel, social services, and advocacy for indigent persons. The latter, formerly known as Aid to Children of Imprisoned Mothers, is an Atlanta-based but national youth development organization, one that among other activities provides children with monthly visitations with their incarcerated parents.

## **What do you think is most unique about the Prison Policy Initiative and the projects it takes on?**

What makes PPI unique is its moxie. It takes on BIG issues for a small organization and it’s successful in tackling them. Plus, by using data in a democratic way it increases the likelihood of community-based groups getting involved and taking the lead on their own behalf. Few data-driven organizations truly empower other groups. I’m glad PPI is one of them.

## **What’s something that you wish more people knew about the Prison Policy Initiative?**

I wish more people knew that PPI is about more than prison gerrymandering. I also wish that more policymakers, especially in the South, knew of its existence and successes at making criminal justice more just and effective.

*“Few data-driven organizations truly empower other groups. I’m glad PPI is one of them.”*

**Michael Leo  
Owens**



# Getting to know new PPI board member Jennifer Sellitti

*Jennifer Sellitti is Deputy Public Defender, Middlesex Trial Region, NJ Office of the Public Defender.*

## **Why did you decide to join the PPI board?**

Although I currently work as a criminal defense attorney, I began my career in prisoners' rights. I guess you could say that the mission of prison reform has been and always will be in my professional blood. It is unacceptable to me that what passes for justice in this country is a broken, unrelenting, and soulless system of mass incarceration. I am honored to be a part of an organization that not only brings attention to some of the most pressing issues in prison reform but also leads the way in proposing groundbreaking solutions to the American prison crisis.

## **What does your work focus on? And what's the connection between that work and PPI?**

As an assistant deputy public defender for the State of NJ, my work focuses on the criminal defense of indigent people accused of felonies in the NJ Superior Court. In my experience, busy criminal defense attorneys often forget that our clients live with the repercussions of their cases long after the case is resolved and the file is closed. Whether our clients go to prison, spend time on probation, or go back into their communities, their lives will be forever impacted by the choices their attorneys help them make. Through my work at PPI, I hope to spread the message to my colleagues in the criminal defense bar that we should be just as concerned about broader legal issues as we are about individual cases. These

issues include prison conditions, attorney and family access, sentence enhancements, solitary confinement, provision of rehabilitative programs and other concerns that directly impact both the quality of life and the futures of our clients and their families.

## **What do you think is most unique about the Prison Policy Initiative and the projects it takes on?**

This is not your parents' prison reform. By that I mean what makes PPI unique is that, unlike other prisoners' rights organizations, it does not try to tackle every issue in criminal justice reform at the same time. It takes a more tailored, surgical approach that maximizes resources and organizational efficiency. By focusing on key areas – such as prison gerrymandering, high rates of prison and jail telephone calls, and sentence enhancement zones – PPI can make a tremendous impact and see results in a shorter amount of time.

## **What's something that you wish more people knew about the Prison Policy Initiative?**

PPI Executive Director Peter Wagner and I began our careers together as student interns at the same prisoners' rights organization. I have many fond memories of our talks, most of which took place in prison waiting rooms, about our plans to take on the justice system in our own distinct ways. Peter was passionate about bringing attention to "prison gerrymandering," his discovery that the size of the prison population was combining with an outdated Census Bureau rule to undermine electoral fairness. When we reconnected recently,



I was amazed to see how Peter's idea has transformed PPI from a law student's dream into one of the nation's leading criminal justice policy organizations. What did not surprise me is that Peter still has the same passion, energy and enthusiasm for the work that he did all those years ago and that same zeal is now reflected in his talented staff and my fellow board members.

*"I was amazed to see how Peter's idea has transformed PPI from a law student's dream into one of the nation's leading criminal justice policy organizations."*

Jennifer  
Sellitti

# Supporting our work

<http://www.prisonpolicy.org/donate/>

The generous support of visionary foundations and individual donors has allowed the Prison Policy Initiative to grow from the idea of three enterprising students in 2001 into an innovative and efficient policy shop at the forefront of the criminal justice reform movement in 2014.

Thank you to our 2013-2014 grantmaking partners\*:

- American Constitution Society David Carliner Award
- Charity Sub
- Drug Policy Alliance
- Ettinger Family Foundation
- Gardiner Howland Shaw Foundation
- Kindling Fund
- Moses and Susan Feldman Philanthropic Fund
- National Equal Justice Association
- Open Society Foundations
- Public Welfare Foundation

In addition, we are also enormously grateful to the small network of generous individuals who sustain our work and allow us to seize timely new opportunities. Without these supporters, we wouldn't have had the flexibility we needed to help protect poor families from the predatory prison telephone industry (p. 8), for example, or been able to help Hank Green explain mass incarceration to more than 1.1 million people on YouTube (p. 17).

If you would like to join these donors, you can donate online or send a paper check to PO Box 127 Northampton, MA 01061.

If you are a current supporter of our work, we ask you to allow us to count on your support in the future by becoming a monthly contributor. Just go to <http://www.prisonpolicy.org/donate/>, select an amount and then how often you'd like it to repeat..

And if you ever have any questions about how to support our work or how your gift is being used, please don't hesitate to contact Peter, Aleks and Bernadette at (413) 527-0845.

We thank you for making our work – and our successes – possible.

\*We're also deeply indebted to the support of family foundations and others who wish to remain anonymous. If in the future your wishes regarding public acknowledgment ever change, please don't hesitate to let us know so we can properly credit you for your partnership.



# Prison Policy Initiative budget report for 2013-2014 year

---

## Income

Large foundations*	\$350,000
Individual donors	\$23,665
Small foundations	\$31,000
Consulting	\$22,865
Honoraria	\$750
Interest	\$1,079
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$429,359</b>

## Expenses

Salaries, benefits, employment taxes for 3.1 FTE staff	\$217,242
---	-----------

## Consultants

Research	\$2,000
Programming	\$2,330
Graphic Design	\$1,785
GIS/Mapping	\$2,580
Other consultants	\$320
Work study students	\$1,164
<b>Subtotal consultants</b>	<b>\$10,179</b>

## Other expenses

Travel	\$8,652
Postage	\$1,236
Printing	\$324
Website & newsletter hosting	\$1,253
Rent & Utilities	\$4,850
Telephone & Fax & Internet access	\$2,192
Computer Equipment	\$7,264
Insurance	\$2,172
Research tools/data	\$579
Supplies	\$4,067
Legal/Accounting Services	\$1,734
Staff development	\$1,124
Promotion and Conference fees	\$3,033
<b>Subtotal, other expenses</b>	<b>\$38,480</b>

<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$265,901</b>
-----------------------	------------------

\*We received two large foundation grants in this fiscal year that extend beyond the current grant year.

*“My donations go a long way with PPI. I like knowing that I am helping a small organization do big things.”*

Ruth  
Greenwood