

October 4, 2023



Welcome to The Drop LWOP Coalition's Bulletin!

The bulletin will provide updates on all things related to the Coalition – events, legislation, workshops, resources, and everything in between, and it will arrive in your inbox on a regular basis. We encourage you to spread it far and wide!

If you have news, stories, or information that should be shared far and wide or if you have questions, please feel free to reach out and email [droplwopoutreach@gmail.com](mailto:droplwopoutreach@gmail.com).

Looking to send the Drop LWOP Bulletin to a friend? Feel free to send them to our [website](#), where the Bulletins will be uploaded regularly!

## DROP LWOP on the International Stage!



**DBI STORY**

We are a national coalition bringing a delegation of individuals directly impacted by Death by Incarceration, more commonly known as life imprisonment, to the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland this October to demand the UN Human Rights Committee call on the US to **ABOLISH DEATH BY INCARCERATION.**

**Donate:** [bit.ly/DBIdelegation](https://bit.ly/DBIdelegation)  
**Read the report:** [bit.ly/DBIshadowreport](https://bit.ly/DBIshadowreport)  
**Join the townhall:** [bit.ly/DBItownhall](https://bit.ly/DBItownhall)

## **DROP LWOP on the International Stage!**

Too often in spaces of political power, people most impacted by the issue are left out. **The United Nations is convening its Human Rights Committee in Geneva, Switzerland this fall, and we are making sure that people who have been sentenced to death by incarceration are represented to demand an end to extreme sentencing in the US.** As such, Drop LWOP Coalition Representatives Kelly Savage-Rodriguez, and Susan Bustamante, two individuals who formerly served LWOP, and Courtney Hanson from California Coalition for Women's Prisoners are headed to Geneva, Switzerland to bring the issue of LWOP sentencing to the United Nations.

**For context, a coalition composed of the Amistad Law Project, Abolitionist Law Center, Center for Constitutional Rights, California Coalition for Women Prisoners, Drop LWOP, Release Aging People In Prison, Right to Redemption, Drexel University Thomas R. Kline School of Law Andy and Gwen Stern Community Lawyering Clinic, Sentencing Project,**

**Visiting Room Project, and Promise of Justice Initiative** filed [a complaint](#) to the UN in September 2022 demanding that the international body recognize death by incarceration as a violation of international standards.

At the United Nations, the coalition named above will urge the Committee to examine the United States' practice of sentencing people to death by incarceration sentences and recommend that the United States abolish all death by incarceration sentences, including LWOP sentences. As a delegation, we are taking the issue of death by incarceration to Geneva to uplift our collective stories, power, and demands.

On September 26th 2023, as a result of organizing and advocacy by DROP LWOP and partners, the United Nations issued a report calling on the United States to end "death by incarceration" sentences. The report is called **International Independent Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in the Context of Law Enforcement: Visit to the United States of America** and can be accessed through [this link to the report](#) and the issue of life sentences is on pages 21-22.

In particular, the report by the **United Nations body has now for the first time acknowledged that the United States's use of any life sentence, including LWOP sentences, is cruel, inhuman, and degrading in violation of international human rights standards.** They acknowledge that these sentences violate the right to life, liberty, and to be free from torture and that parole eligibility is required for any sentence under international standards.

**It is CRUCIAL that we continue building this momentum by sending a powerful delegation to Geneva to speak to the UN directly.** This convening will be the first time since 2014 that the Human Rights Committee (HRC) has reviewed United States policies. In 2016, they recommended that the US abolish LWOP for children which paved the way for important reforms.

Interested in supporting these efforts? Join the [townhall](#) and donate [here](#) to help fund this important effort. Funds raised will go to supporting our team's travel to Geneva, stay there, and fund their organizing support.

## Media!

On September 22nd, *26.2 To Life*, premiered in theaters. This documentary tells the story of incarcerated men at San Quentin who train year-round to run a marathon within San Quentin's walls. You can learn more about the documentary [here](#) and find showtimes [here](#).

Additionally, the award-winning film ["Sansón and Me"](#) premiered on PBS on Tuesday, September 19th - we hope that many folks inside had the opportunity to watch this impactful film. Sansón and Me is an award-winning film about a young man, Sansón, who is currently incarcerated at Pelican Bay with an LWOP sentence. This film will still be available for streaming until October 19th via [PBS Independent Lens](#).

# Legislative Updates

An update from our legislative team regarding SB 94:

We are so proud of pushing [SB 94](#) all the way to the Assembly floor. Unfortunately, we were not able to get it across the finish line this year and Senator Cortese has held the bill in the Assembly. This means that we will not be able to pass SB 94 this year, but that we **can continue fighting** for this bill throughout 2024. This is disappointing, of course, but know that the DROP LWOP Coalition is forever committed to addressing the terrible injustices of Life Without Parole sentencing. We will continue to update our community with the future of this bill and our movement.

Stay tuned for ways to support this bill moving forward - the fight is not over!

## Outreach

The outreach team continues to build networks for activism and mobilize support on an individual and organizational level. Interested in being a part of these efforts? Fill out this [google form](#) and we will reach out to you soon!

## Inreach

The Inreach Team is currently receiving responses to the survey sent to individuals inside and working to establish relationships with people inside who are becoming new Inreach Advocates. Inreach is working specifically with yards that do not currently have groups to support individuals abilities to start informal or formal groups. This will expand relationships and relationship building on the inside and make organizing stronger and more unified.

## GOOD NEWS!

Starting off this month's bulletin with some GREAT news - On September 7, 2023, Nataly Marinero (he/him) was released from CDCR without an ICE Transfer. This is a meaningful and momentous moment for Nataly and all those who worked to prevent ICE from picking him up.



We celebrate Nataly's win and freedom. Unfortunately, the HOME ACT, AB 1306, a bill that would've insured that immigrants like Nataly are allowed home, not transferred from California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), was vetoed by Governor Newsom on September 22nd. This veto came after the bill passed both houses of the legislature with supermajority votes and received no organizational opposition whatsoever.

The bill would have ensured that immigrant Californians who serve their time in state prison and earn release under existing criminal justice reforms come *home* instead of being automatically transferred to ICE. As the ICE Out of California coalition stated **“We denounce Governor Newsom’s cruel, callous, and cowardly decision to veto this common-sense solution. When policy-making is driven by vanity and crass ambition rather than sound judgment, all Californians suffer.”**

## Next steps + Resources

**(A Few) Resources:**

**(A Few) Resources:**

- ▶ Take a moment to read and share [Issue #70](#) of CCWP's The Fire Inside - moving, inspiring, and deeply powerful!
  
- ▶ Review [this informative report](#) on LWOP and Felony Murder sentencing in California, written by Daniel Trautfield in collaboration with Grace Kyungwon Hong, Joanne Scheer, and the UCLA Center for the Study of Women | Barbara Streisand Center
  
- ▶ The [Human Rights Watch](#) officially launched [report on LWOP reintegration](#) called "I Just Want to Give Back": The Reintegration of People Sentenced to Life Without Parole. From personal transformation to community investment, this report highlights the incredible endeavors that individuals in California have accomplished.
  
- ▶ [Hidden Hazards: The Impacts of Climate Change on Incarcerated People California state prisons.](#) Master of Public Policy UCLA graduate students have finished a report on behalf of the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights. Aishah Abdala, Abhilasha Bhola, Guadalupe Gutierrez, Eric Henderson & Maura O'Neill created this report to shed light on the dangerous effects of Climate Change on incarcerated populations and provide policy solutions that uplift and protect California.
  
- ▶ If you want to learn more about the commutation process and how to support your loved one, we recommend checking out the Commutation Workshop (details below). Topics that will be discussed include: learning about the commutation process, how to help your loved one apply for commutation, and hearing from folks who formerly served LWOP whose sentences were commuted

Fair Chance Project and  
FUEL- Families United to End LWOP  
Presents :

# A COMMUTATION Workshop

- Learn about the commutation process
- How to help your loved one apply
- Hear from former LWOP's who were commuted
- And much more



**Allen Burnett**

Guest Speaker  
Former LWOP



**Sutina Green**

Host and Co-Founder  
of FUEL



**Steven Green**

Guest Speaker  
Former LWOP



October 8, 2023



1:00 PM - 3:00 PM



RSVP: Geri Silva  
424-744-1156



Zoom Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87059527407>



Lincoln Memorial Congregational Church  
4126 Arlington Ave Los Angeles, CA 90008

\*This workshop will be held in-person and virtually

## **Eager to teach others about LWOP sentencing?**

Look no further than this thorough [one-pager](#) that provides a helpful and succinct overview of the who, what, when, and why of LWOP.

### **Support Hotlines:**

The Transition Clinic Network Reentry Healthcare Hotline is 1-510-606-6400.

► People can call it collect from inside California prisons as well as from jails that use GTL phone services. The hotline is staffed by trained community health workers with histories of incarceration who can provide information about local clinics, how to get enrolled in Medi-Cal, and how to navigate the healthcare system.

To utilize the Mental Health First Oakland call or text 510-999-9641

► Mental Health First Oakland responds to mental health crises including, but not limited to psychiatric emergencies, substance use support, and domestic violence situations that require victim extraction. Call or text 510-999-9641 on Fridays and Saturdays 8:00 p.m. - 8:00 a.m. Save this number in your phone for easy access.

To utilize the National Alliance on Mental Health, call 1-800-950-6264 or by emailing [info@nami.org](mailto:info@nami.org).

► The National Alliance on Mental Health provides a wealth of services and can be used to support you through diverse types of situations. Although the helpline is only available Monday through Friday from 10 AM until 8 PM EST, there is a 24/7 text line available. Simply text 'NAMI' to 741-741 for assistance.

► [Here](#) is a list of mental health hotlines and support across the state of California.

### ***(A Few) Opportunities:***

Ella Baker Center is hiring for a Managing Director and Development Assistant! [Apply today.](#)

California Lawyers for the Arts is taking applications for their [Designing Creative Futures Internship.](#)



**INTERESTED IN JOINING A WORKGROUP?  
LEARN HOW TO GET INVOLVED [HERE](#)**

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