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Updates for August 5th

15 Jul - Prison Legal News July Update

We are including a few of the articles in the latest issue of Prison Legal News (PLN).

MORE:

New York City Loses Bid to Withhold Jail Records

by Douglas Ankney

On June 26, 2024, New York City's constructive denial of records from its Department of Correction (DOC) was vacated by a state court. Calling that a violation of the state Freedom of Information Law (FOIL), the Supreme Court of New York for New York County ordered the DOC to produce the requested materials. Because petitioner was an attorney, it also held that the DOC was liable for attorney's fees.

On July 12, 2023, petitioner Cyrus Joubin, from his eponymous law office, requested DOC's rules, procedures and policies in effect on October 10, 2017, regarding guards' responsibilities "to protect inmates from assaults by other inmates" and "to supervise and monitor DOC housing units to prevent violence by inmates against other inmates." The request further sought policies for conducting investigations into such assaults and violence, as well as investigations into trip-and-fall accidents. It was further refined to include both the Brooklyn Detention Center (BDC) and the Rikers Island jail complex. Identities of guards and other employees on duty that day and their duty rosters were also requested.

When the DOC Records Access Officer (RAO) denied the requests, Joubin then turned to the Records Access Appeals Office (RAAO). But he received no decision on his administrative appeal within the applicable time limit. Joubin then petitioned for review.

The state supreme court began by observing that DOC had 10 business days to respond to Joubin's administrative appeal under the law, and since he received no response, his FOIL requests were deemed constructively denied.

Turning then to the requests themselves, the court disagreed with the RAO that the requested records were not "reasonably described." To the contrary, the requests did "not require the DOC to produce each and every policy document governing all of the training, duties, obligations, and conduct of the officers and employees"; rather the request was "limited to policy documents that particularly address the manner in which DOC officers and employees are obligated to prevent, respond to, and investigate inmate-on-inmate violence, and to investigate slip-and-fall accidents."

In support of this determination, the court pointed to *Matter of Partnership for the Homeless v. New York City Dept of Educ.*, 2019 NY Misc. LEXIS 5813 (N.Y. Sup. N.Y. Cty.), which refused to affirm denial of a FOIL request by officials who "offered no evidence to establish that the descriptions provided are insufficient for purposes of extracting or retrieving the requested document from the virtual files."

The RAO had also acquiesced to the DOC's objection to producing records of policies not "currently in effect," but the court found that was error, too. The court agreed with the RAO's determination that requests for the identities of employees were interrogatories and not requests for specific records; denial was appropriate because FOIL does not "require any entity to prepare any record not possessed or maintained by such entity." But the duty rosters were not properly withheld, the court said, brushing aside the DOC's objections to releasing sensitive personnel information because that could be redacted from copies provided to Joubin.

Joubin was also deemed eligible to recover attorney's fees because he was an attorney representing himself. He was therefore directed to submit an affidavit setting forth the specifics of the time he expended in prosecuting the proceeding.

First of 10 Guards Charged with Killing of New York Prisoner Pleads Guilty

Former New York Department of Corrections and Community Services (DOCCS) guard Joshua Bartlett pleaded guilty on May 30, 2025, to helping cover up the March 1 killing of prisoner Messiah Nantwi at Mid-State Correctional Facility by fellow guards who beat the man to death.

Prosecutors said guards beat Nantwi while he was handcuffed and continued to beat him while he was recovering from the assault in the prison infirmary. "As a result of the numerous beatings by defendants and their fellow correctional officers, incarcerated individual Messiah Nantwi died due to massive head trauma and numerous other injuries to his body," the indictment said. The officers "demonstrated depraved indifference" to his life, according to the indictment.

As reported by the *New York Times*, other prisoners said Nantwi had been beaten so severely he was unrecognizable. "Mr. Nantwi's death is a tragedy and we extend our deepest condolences to his family and loved ones," said New York Gov. Kathy Hochul (D), who directed the head of DOCCS to fire guards allegedly involved with the beating.

Bartlett, who was the first of 10 guards charged in connection with the fatal beating to plead guilty, admitted to two felonies: hindering prosecution and falsifying records. The former guard was accused of filing a false use of force report in an effort to help fellow guards cover up Nantwi's murder.

As *PLN* reported, Nantwi was the second prisoner to be beaten to death at a DOCCS facility in the last six months; six guards were charged with the December 9, 2024 beating of prisoner Robert Brooks, who died the next day.

14th Alabama Sheriff's Employee Pleads Guilty in Jail Detainee's Death

A guard pleaded guilty in June 4, 2025, in connection with the death of a man held at an Alabama jail who died in freezing conditions in January 2023. The guard, Braxton Kee, 23, pleaded guilty to deprivation of rights under color of law, and could face up to a year in prison and a fine up to \$100,000.

According to court documents, Tony Mitchell, 33, who was mentally ill, was arrested on January 12, 2023, after a relative requested a wellness check for him. When officers arrived at his house, they said he was talking about demons and portals to hell. Law enforcement said Mitchell then fired a weapon at an officer.

For the two weeks he was booked at Walker County Jail, guards held Mitchell in a freezing cell that had no bathroom, bed, or running water. Court documents described Mitchell as "almost always naked, wet, cold, and covered in feces while lying on the cement floor without a mat or blanket."

According to an *Associated Press* report, Kee voiced concerns about Mitchell's condition, but he did not take matters into his own hands when his concerns were dismissed. Mitchell died of hypothermia and sepsis due to medical neglect, according to his death certificate. His body arrived at an emergency room on January 26, 2023, with a temperature of 72 degrees Fahrenheit.

Kee was the 14th employee of county Sheriff Nick Smith who has been indicted or pleaded guilty for contributing to Mitchell's death. Of those, 11 had been convicted before Kee, including most recently another guard at the jail, Carl Lofton Carpenter, 55, who pleaded guilty in April 2025 to a federal charge of depriving the civil rights of the mentally ill detainee with a brutal kick to the groin during Mitchell's arrest, as *PLN* reported. [See: *PLN*, June 2025, p.33.] Like previous plea deals filed before Kee's, according to the *Washington Post*, the former guard blamed a "culture of retaliation [that] made him afraid to report Mitchell's deadly conditions."

Sixth Guard Sentenced in West Virginia Killing of Pretrial Detainee

A former West Virginia guard who failed to intervene while fellow guards beat to death pretrial detainee Quantez Burks, 37, was sentenced on June 9, 2025, for her role in the 2022 assault.

Ashley Toney, 25, got six and a half years in prison and an additional three years of supervised release from the federal court for the Southern District of West Virginia. As *PLN* reported, five other guards who participated in the attack have also been charged. [See: *PLN*, Mar. 2025, p.39.] One former lieutenant, Chad Lester, 35, was sentenced in May 2025 to 17 years in prison after being convicted of three counts of obstruction of justice.

According to the federal Department of Justice, Toney and other guards at Southern Regional Jail in the town of Beaver brought Burks into an interview room, handcuffed him, and closed the door while multiple fellow guards beat Burks. He died on March 1, 2022.

Toney pleaded guilty on August 8, 2024 to deprivation of rights under color of law resulting in physical injury. “The defendant’s inaction led to the death of a 37-year-old man, and afterwards she attempted to shield herself and fellow officers from being held accountable for his death,” Acting U.S. Attorney Lisa G. Johnston said in the release.

22 Jul - Community Packs Court in Support of ‘Frederick Four’

Report back on community mobilization in support of the ‘Frederick Four,’ who were violently arrested on May Day.

MORE:

via It's Going Down

After two months of fundraising and general outreach by the Frederick After Party Care team, the time had come for the Frederick Four to make their first court appearance. The court hearing was set for July 3rd at 8:30am and supporters began to gather out front of Frederick Social around 7:30. Supporters wore black and passed around red flowers on hair clips and pins to add to their outfits. By 7:50, around fifty people slowly entered the Frederick courthouse. Once everyone was through security, they started to ascend to the building’s third floor.

When everyone was finally gathered outside of the courtroom and the last latecomers arrived, the crowd numbered about 65 people strong. It was hard to miss the amount of Frederick Police that also inhabited the semi-crowded space as they brushed by supporters. Someone told me they overheard a conversation between two cops mumbling, “This is our space...,” seemingly disapproving of the mass show of support.

The crowd waited now past 8:30, as people and police shuffled in and out of the courtroom. I had to turn my phone off before entering, but if I had to guess, everyone was allowed to enter at around 9am. Some were seated in the very limited bench seats, while the rest lined the perimeter of the room. The presiding Judge was Judge Dino E. Flores, who didn’t seem moved by the packing, from what I could tell.

Those who were visibly affected by the group were the Frederick police, who stood at the sides and the entrance of the room, as if anticipating some sort of outburst or protest. This, however, never happened, as the purpose of packing the court is to show support for the Frederick Four. That support was overwhelmingly clear. When court finally started, each defendant was called up with their lawyer, and each time the prosecutor just copied and pasted her words, which were that “13.8 gigabytes of drone footage” was sent to the defendants that morning and it was yet to be reviewed.

After that back-and-forth, the judge would postpone each case until the defense had a chance to view this evidence. Everyone is eagerly awaiting a new court date now. It’s important to note that one of the

Frederick Four had to reschedule their court date due to their lawyer being out of the country and that new date is August 5th at Frederick courthouse at 8am.

Despite only being in the court room for about 10 minutes, the large community response seemed effective and was a great way to show support. When court let out everyone gathered at Mullinix Park for a community cook out which was attended by supporters and park-goers. The Frederick After Party Care team has an update on their fundraising site thanking everyone and emphasizing that this is just the beginning and how invaluable the community support continues to be.

23 Jul - Top L.A. federal prosecutor struggles to secure protester indictments

U.S. Atty. Bill Essayli has aggressively pushed for indictments in the high-profile prosecutions of people arrested during demonstrations against federal immigration actions in Southern California, leading to an incident that sources said involved an outburst overheard by grand jurors.

MORE:

by James Queally and Brittney Mejia (*The Los Angeles Times*)

To bystanders at the federal courthouse in downtown Los Angeles, it sounded as though U.S. Atty. Bill Essayli would not take no for an answer.

A prosecutor had the irate Trump administration appointee on speakerphone outside the grand jury room, and his screaming was audible, according to three law enforcement officials aware of the encounter who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals.

The grand jury had just refused to indict someone accused of attacking federal law enforcement officers during protests against the recent immigration raids throughout Southern California, two of the federal officials said.

It was an exceedingly rare outcome after a type of hearing that routinely leads to federal charges being filed.

On the overheard call, according to the three officials, Essayli, 39, told a subordinate to disregard the federal government's "Justice Manual," which directs prosecutors to bring only cases they can win at trial. Essayli barked that prosecutors should press on and secure indictments as directed by U.S. Atty. Gen. Pam Bondi, according to the three officials.

Court records show the reason for Essayli's frustration.

Although his office filed felony cases against at least 38 people for alleged misconduct that either took place during last month's protests or near the sites of immigration raids, many have been dismissed or reduced to misdemeanor charges.

In total, he has secured only seven indictments, which usually need to be obtained no later than 21 days after the filing of a criminal complaint. Three other cases have been resolved via plea deal, records show.

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Five cases have been dismissed without prejudice — meaning they could be refiled — and records show nine have been filed as misdemeanors, which do not require a grand jury indictment to proceed. In some cases, prosecutors reduced charges against defendants to misdemeanors after repeatedly falling short at the grand jury stage, according to the three officials.

Essayli declined to be interviewed for this article. A statement provided by his office on Tuesday accused *The Times* of spreading “factual inaccuracies and anonymous gossip,” but offered no specifics or further comment in response to questions.

“The U.S. Attorney’s Office will continue working unapologetically to charge all those who assault our agents or impede our federal investigations,” the statement said.

Legal experts said Essayli’s low number of indictments raised concerns about the strength of the cases he is filing.

Carley Palmer, a former federal prosecutor in L.A. who is now a partner at Halpern May Ybarra Gelberg, said the grand jury’s repeated rejection of cases was “a strong indication that the priorities of the prosecutor’s office are out of sync with the priorities of the general community.”

Essayli has won indictments in some serious cases, including two where defendants are accused of throwing or planning to throw Molotov cocktails at L.A. law enforcement officers, and a case where defendants allegedly fired a paintball gun at federal police.

High-ranking Justice Department officials have repeatedly praised his work.

“My friend, U.S. Attorney Bill Essayli, is a champion for law and order who has done superlative work to prosecute rioters for attacking and obstructing law enforcement in Los Angeles,” Bondi said in a statement to *The Times*.

But legal experts and some of Essayli’s prosecutors say he’s stretching legal limits to serve as President Trump’s attack dog in L.A.

“It’s just generally a culture of ‘if Bill asks you to jump, you ask how high,’” said one prosecutor who feared retaliation. “Any case he wants to charge, find a way to make it a yes.”

Questions about Essayli’s effectiveness come at a crucial time for the former California Assembly member. Bondi appointed him in early April, giving him 120 days to serve as interim U.S. attorney until receiving Senate approval. If he is not confirmed by then, a panel of federal judges will have the opportunity to appoint him — or someone else — to the position.

Democratic Sens. Adam Schiff and Alex Padilla of California raised concerns about Essayli’s leadership of the office in interviews with *The Times*, and a direct approval from the bench is no sure thing. This month, a federal judicial panel blocked Trump’s choice for U.S. attorney in upstate New York after the time limit for Senate confirmation had expired.

On Tuesday, another judicial panel declined to appoint New Jersey’s interim federal prosecutor, Alina Habba, one of Trump’s former personal lawyers. Bondi, however, decried the judges for going “rogue,” fired their choice for U.S. attorney and reappointed Habba. Legal experts say the move is unprecedented.

Meghan Blanco, a former federal prosecutor in L.A. who serves as defense counsel to one of the protesters who is facing charges, said the cases are faltering in part because of unreliable information provided by immigration agents claiming to be victims.

“Frankly, they’re not deserving of prosecution,” she said. “What is being alleged isn’t a federal crime, or it simply did not happen.”

Blanco represents Jose Mojica, who was accused of pushing a federal officer in Paramount on June 7.

According to an investigation summary of the incident reviewed by *The Times*, a U.S. Border Patrol officer claimed a man was screaming in his face that he was going to “shoot him,” then punched him. The officer said he and other agents started chasing the man, but were “stopped by two other males,” later identified as Mojica and Bryan Ramos-Brito.

Blanco said she obtained social media videos showing no such chase took place and presented them at Mojica’s first court appearance. The charges were soon dropped.

“The agent lied and said he was in hot pursuit of a person who punched him,” Blanco said. “The entirety of the affidavit is false.”

Felony charges against Ramos-Brito and two related defendants, Ashley and Joceline Rodriguez, were also dismissed, though prosecutors refiled misdemeanor cases against them.

Christian Cerna-Camacho, the man who allegedly punched an agent, has been indicted. He has pleaded not guilty, with trial set for next month.

Similar issues arose in the case of Andrea Velez, who was charged on June 25 with assaulting a federal officer. The criminal complaint alleged Velez, who is 4 feet 11 inches, stood in the path of an Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer with her arms extended, striking his head and chest when they collided.

Diane Bass, Velez’s attorney, said the incident occurred when masked, unidentified men in plainclothes pulled up to question a downtown L.A. street vendor.

Velez had just been dropped off for work when some of the masked men ran at her and one shoved her to the ground, Bass said. Velez, fearing she was being abducted, held up her work bag to shield herself.

Bass requested body-worn camera video and witness statements cited in the complaint. Soon after, she said, the prosecutor dismissed the case.

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“There are a lot of hotheaded [Customs and Border Protection] officers who are kind of arresting first and asking questions later. We’re finding there’s not probable cause to support it,” said the prosecutor, who requested anonymity over concerns of repercussions.

One case under close scrutiny is that of Adrian Martinez, a 20-year-old charged in a criminal complaint last month with conspiracy to impede a federal officer.

Martinez said he was on a break from his job at Walmart when he spotted immigration agents chasing down a custodial worker, and told them to leave the man alone.

Video shows Martinez being thrown to the ground and shoved into a truck, which he said took him to a parking structure.

Once there, Martinez said, he was told he’d been arrested for assaulting a federal officer by striking an agent in the face and breaking his glasses. Martinez, who weighs around 150 pounds, said the agents arresting him pointed to the colleague he was being accused of attacking, who looked “like a grizzly bear.”

“I don’t even remember you,” Martinez recalled saying. “It just seemed like they were trying to get me to say like, ‘yes, you assaulted him,’ but I knew I didn’t.”

The next day, Essayli posted a photo on X of Martinez, still in his blue Walmart vest. Martinez, he wrote, had been arrested “for an allegation of punching a border patrol agent in the face.”

The criminal complaint makes no reference to a punch and video taken at the scene does not clearly show Martinez striking anyone. Federal prosecutors instead charged Martinez with conspiracy to impede a federal officer, alleging he blocked federal law enforcement vehicles with his car and then later a trash can.

Ciaran McEvoy, a spokesman for the U.S. attorney’s office, previously told *The Times* that complaints do not always include “the full scope of a defendant’s conduct, or the evidence that will be presented at trial.”

A Department of Homeland Security spokesperson said the agency could not comment on cases under active litigation.

“Our officers are facing a surge in assaults and attacks against them as they put their lives on the line to enforce our nation’s laws,” the Homeland Security statement said.

Charges against nonviolent defendants have repeatedly raised alarm bells among current and former federal prosecutors. In early June, union leader David Huerta was charged with conspiracy to impede a federal officer for allegedly interfering with immigration enforcement actions in the downtown L.A. garment district. Legal experts said Huerta’s conduct did not appear criminal.

“Where do you draw the line between an organized protest and a conspiracy to impede?” Laurie Levenson, a former federal prosecutor and professor at Loyola Law School in Los Angeles, asked last month. “It’ll actually be interesting to see if a grand jury indicts these cases.”

Huerta has denied all wrongdoing and his attorney did not respond to a request for comment. A deadline of Aug. 5 looms for prosecutors to secure an indictment.

Court filings show some prosecutors appear to be refusing to sign their names to contentious cases.

An indictment returned against Alejandro Orellana — who is accused of conspiracy and aiding in civil disorder for passing out gas masks at a protest scene in early June — was signed only by Essayli and his second-in-command, Jennifer Waier, records show. Such cases are typically handled by rank-and-file assistant U.S. attorneys.

In early May, when Essayli pushed to offer a lenient plea deal to L.A. County Sheriff’s Deputy Trevor Kirk months after a jury convicted him of assaulting a woman during a 2023 arrest, several prosecutors refused to sign the document asking for the deal, and some later resigned.

23 Jul - KC teen allegedly lit Tesla cars on fire. Feds want to imprison him for ‘decades’

Federal investigators surveilled Owen McIntire for a month before arresting him on charges of setting fire to two Tesla Cybertrucks.

MORE:

by David Hudnall (*The Kansas City Star*)

On paper, Owen McIntire’s summer looks like a lot of 19-year-old college students: living back home with his parents, working shifts at a sandwich shop, trying to stay out of trouble.

Come August, though, McIntire is unlikely to return to the University of Massachusetts for his sophomore year. He is more likely headed to federal prison.

McIntire has pleaded not guilty to the charges brought against him: malicious destruction of property and unlawful possession of an unregistered destructive device. One charge carries a mandatory minimum of five years in prison. All told, McIntire faces up to 30 years.

His offense? Torching two Tesla Cybertrucks in a south Kansas City parking lot.

There were no casualties. Nobody was injured. No buildings were damaged. But McIntire's case was elevated to the Department of Justice's national security division, an arm typically focused on terrorism and espionage. A small, isolated act of vandalism on State Line Road elicited comment from the top four law enforcement officials in the United States: the attorney general, her deputy, the director of the FBI and the director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

"Let me be extremely clear to anyone who still wants to firebomb a Tesla property: you will not evade us," Attorney General Pamela Bondi said in April, announcing McIntire's arrest. "You will be arrested. You will be prosecuted. You will spend decades behind bars. It is not worth it."

The intensity of the federal response reflected the aims of President Donald Trump, who in March said he considered acts of vandalism against Tesla to be "terrorism." Trump's comments were made at a time when Elon Musk, Tesla's CEO, was a high-profile advisor to the administration at the newly formed Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE).

Their relationship has frayed in recent weeks as the two men traded blows on X and Truth Social following Musk's departure from the White House. But their political alliance was strong when the Justice Department took up McIntire's case and a handful of other cases involving Tesla vehicles and vandalism.

That has put McIntire in a position few defendants in local cases encounter: facing federal charges with severe penalties in a prosecution where the victim is — or, at least, was — a close associate of the president.

The Department of Justice declined to comment.

Allegations against Owen McIntire

McIntire grew up in Parkville, the only child of two music educators. His father, David, a retired college professor and experimental composer, runs a small classical music label from home. His mother, Michelle, teaches voice and piano and directs community theater productions. The McIntires did not respond to requests for comment.

As a kid, McIntire trained in ballet, participated in Scholar Bowl, and worked on robotics teams. At the time of his arrest, he was studying physics at the University of Massachusetts. He's tall and rail-thin (6 foot 1, 140 pounds) with long hair that falls halfway down his back. According to court filings, he has long managed a set of diagnoses that includes autism, ADHD and depression.

McIntire was back in Kansas City on spring break the night of March 17. Musk had been in the news. His fervor for firing federal workers in the name of government efficiency had sparked protests across the country and already led to some vandalism directed at Tesla cars in other cities. One week earlier, Trump had stood next to Musk at the White House and declared that he would label violence against Tesla dealerships "domestic terrorism."

According to prosecutors, McIntire drove his parents' Subaru from Parkville to a house a block away from the Tesla dealership near 103rd Street and State Line Road. He proceeded on foot to the dealership, wearing dark clothes and a light-colored brimmed hat with a black ribbon. He carried a bottle of Bragg's apple cider vinegar with gasoline and a rag stuffed inside — a Molotov cocktail.

A little after 11 p.m., a Kansas City police officer noticed a small blaze in the parking lot of the dealership. The officer approached the scene and saw that the flames were coming from an empty Cybertruck. KCFD arrived soon after and extinguished the fire, which in the meantime had spread to a second Cybertruck. Two nearby charging stations were also damaged. The dealership had been closed for four hours, and no human beings were anywhere near the fire. The damages were later estimated to be around \$215,000.

The next day, officials with the ATF, the FBI, and the Kansas City Police Department descended on the dealership to begin an investigation. By the end of the week, they had linked the firebombing to McIntire through surveillance footage and witness testimonies. A month later, he was arrested in Boston.

Prosecutors sought strict pre-trial arrangement

If the severity of the charges hadn't already made clear that prosecutors intended to bring the full weight of the federal government to bear on McIntire's case, that became unmistakable when he made his initial court appearance in Boston.

There, prosecutors took the unusual step of arguing that the 19-year-old should be detained ahead of trial, saying he posed a danger to the community due to the alleged use of a destructive device and was a flight risk. They also cited a federal law that presumes detention for terrorism-related offenses.

McIntire's federal public defender argued successfully that strict home confinement with GPS monitoring at his parents' house in Parkville would sufficiently mitigate any risk.

But back in United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri, where the court proceedings moved after McIntire returned home, the government appealed that judge's order.

By then, McIntire had hired Dan Nelson and Patrick McInerney of the Kansas City law firm Spencer Fane as his defense attorneys. In their opposition to the government's motion, they pointed to a string of recent cases involving similar or even more serious allegations where federal defendants were allowed to go free on bond.

There was James River Phillips, accused of purchasing large amounts of ammonium nitrate and planting an improvised explosive device in an Ohio sports complex parking lot; he walked out on a recognizance bond. In Colorado, a man charged in April with firebombing two Teslas using Molotov cocktails — nearly identical to McIntire's alleged offense — was released on \$10,000 bail. In another case, a South Carolina defendant who attacked Tesla charging stations with five incendiary devices was also allowed to await trial at home.

Even a former federal agent who leaked classified information to an ISIS target was granted bond, despite national security concerns and government objections.

Nelson and McInerney, who declined comment to The Star, also pointed out in their filing that the government didn't arrest McIntire for a month after identifying him as the person who set the fire.

"The Government's investigative conduct itself — waiting 30 days to effect an arrest — demonstrates that they have no genuine fear of public danger or flight risk from McIntire," they wrote.

On May 29, Judge Stephen Bough sided with the defense. McIntire remains out on bond under stringent conditions. He has a location monitor and is allowed to leave his parents' house only to work at the sandwich shop or meet with a lawyer or doctor. His trial is set for Aug. 11.

How charges for Tesla vandalism compare

What if McIntire had set fire to a car not made by the man who gave \$250 million to Trump's campaign? What if he instead torched a couple of Tahoes in the Chevrolet lot around the corner from the Tesla dealership?

McIntire "would likely be charged in state court, not charged federally as a purported terrorist," his attorneys argued in May.

Several Missouri defense attorneys interviewed by *The Star* agreed that similar acts of property destruction have typically been prosecuted in state court, where punishments tend to be less severe.

Attorney Casey Symonds described the likely state charges as Class E felonies, each carrying up to four years in prison. "Probation would be the floor, and the ceiling is eight years in prison," he said, adding that because McIntire is a first-time offender, probation would be the most common outcome.

Tony Miller, a former county legislator and assistant prosecuting attorney in Jackson County, said that for a first-time offender with no criminal history, probation or a short jail term followed by probation would be the likely result.

"As a defense attorney, I'd be aiming for probation with no time served," Miller said. "As a prosecutor, if I were being zealous, maybe a 120-day callback. That's basically a shock time situation where they do 120 days in jail and undergo a treatment program, a substance abuse evaluation or life skills program. And then they are released on probation." He added that restitution for the damaged vehicles would also be a priority.

Greg Watt, a former Jackson County prosecutor who now does federal defense work, agreed, saying that in a typical arson case involving property damage but no injuries, "at most he would have a 120-day callback with a restitution plan in place."

Roughly 2% of federal cases actually go to trial. The vast majority are resolved through plea agreements where defendants plead guilty to reduced charges and receive a lighter sentence.

But federal crimes that carry mandatory minimums — such as the malicious destruction of property charges against McIntire — give prosecutors a great deal of leverage in plea negotiations. If McIntire pleads guilty to that charge, the judge has no choice but to sentence him to at least five years in prison.

A plea deal in this case could involve the government dropping that charge if he pleads guilty to the other charge of unlawful possession of an unregistered destructive device. In such a scenario, the judge would not be bound to issuing a minimum sentence.

But that assumes the Trump administration's Department of Justice is willing to bargain. Deputy attorney general Todd Blanche — the second-highest-ranking law enforcement officer in America — said in an April press release announcing McIntire's arrest that "the people behind these violent and dangerous attacks on private property will face decades in prison — we will not make deals and we will not negotiate."

25 Jul - They are waiting for us on the balcony

Greece: July 23 marks the thirtieth anniversary of the political assassination of the anarchist comrade Christoforos Marinos by EKAM by government order.

MORE:

by Dimitris Chatzivasileiadis (*Dark Nights*)

The extrajudicial executions of social activists, by government decisions during the current political regime, aimed to secure it in the face of the danger of the emergence of an open subversive movement. The murder of Marinos took place in order to lock in the anarchist movement the political results that the

assassination of Michalis Prekas (October 7, 1987) had produced, the internalization of military terrorism and the separation from the subversive struggle.

Comrade Christoforos was by Michalis' side in his last battle. Preka's exit to a balcony with the guns held high, the impetuous meeting with the firing squad, instead of negotiating a surrender, constituted a steel political message, a call that would reverberate until the death of the state and capital: the irreversible historical passage to the unyielding revolutionary struggle. As a prisoner, the killers of Marinos' partner manipulated him to consolidate their terrorist order. His close friends were sold out in tactics. Those who understood what was at stake politically, moved backwards from the passage that was opened with the exit of Kalogreza. The others found an opportunity to cannibalize those targeted by the state in order to bury everything that had a reference to the subversive struggle. Marinos himself revived the passage. When it was kidnapped in Bulgaria, it overthrew the rule of its torturers. It has taken to the streets again on all social fronts. It embraced the younger fighters like no other. It was rearmed. It confronted internalized terrorism and its political products and finally cleared the passage from hypocritical relativisms. Since then, everyone has come to know that the two worlds are irreconcilable: In front of the passage is the revolution that springs up fighting and bleeding. Behind the mockery of rotting culture.

On July 11, 1978, doctor Tsironis was also murdered. On a balcony and this unyielding revolutionary, with a gun in his hand and the people in his heart. These balconies are the door to our home.

The crossing has been kept open until today. Anarchy flourished on the free side of history. But the passage stands there for every now, not for the reminiscence of the fragrance of past flowers. In these three decades the tyrants have departed, the seas and the earth have turned red like fire, the chains have become unbearable, one on top of the other they have shaded the sky. The nation of bosses is at war, more work is needed and the human surplus is in the landfill. The masses wake up, naked they regress back and forth. The predatory opportunists of the left and the right make the nakedness of the masses a new political surplus.

In a neighborhood today, on the platform of the Propylaea and in Paris, London, Berlin tomorrow, the balcony of the doctor, Michalis and Christoforos, they eagerly await the embrace of an armed forest. The screams of history will set the pace along the way. Release the comrades from the balcony guard. They will leave a banner on the railing, written on the foot with their stone patience, a note for the latecomers: "I MOVE AGAIN".

Willem the Captain

I saw Willem last week among the workers of the United Farmer Workers of America, outside a farm, facing the prison guards of the American colony. He took the place of a brother who was to testify under the boots of ICE. Four days ago, on July 19, on the anniversary of his attack on an immigrant prison in Washington, D.C., he sent me a message. He rigged a ship in Barbaria. He took his Cretan rifle and has set fire to the yachts and the cruises, the five-star shacks and the clubs in the Greek brothel of the imperialists and their Zionist gendarmes. Chapter is the common sun, the water of the dispossessed, the sand of the Athenian desert, the bloody salt of the Mediterranean, the sweat of the workers who are called upon not to raise their heads so as not to be slaughtered like the barbarians of the South. Harmful flows from the looted places invade the brothel. They spoil the harmony of European capitalism in Christ. Yes, Captain! Rules from Gavdos to the North Pole, not to stay swimming from the two-millennial Roman Empire. Let's bring my bright captain.

26 Jul - RICO Charge Dropped in 'Northumberland 2' Case

Two women from Massachusetts and several dozen supporters from around the country traveled to a small central Pennsylvania town for the first major hearing in a felony case stemming from their arrest last November.

MORE:

by Chris Schiano (*Unicorn Riot*)

The ‘Northumberland 2’ – Celeste Legere and Cara Mitrano – face a litany of PA state charges after being accused of an October 18-19, 2024 break-in at the Richard H. Stahl & Sons, Inc. fur farm in which 683 mink were released from their pens and breeding records were destroyed.

Monday’s hearing saw prosecutors drop the RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) charge leveled against both activists from Massachusetts. While each still face over a dozen counts and possibly decades in prison, their attorneys and supporters appeared cautiously optimistic as the state appeared to be holding a very weak hand when forced to show its cards.

“We hope the court sees through the prosecution’s gross overcharging of defendants accused of releasing animals who, with absolute certainty, would have suffered extreme torture and unconscionable death,” said Chris Carraway, a staff attorney at the Animal Activist Legal Defense Project, which represents defendant Cara Mitrano. Mitrano is also being represented by Harrisburg attorney Natalie Burston; Celeste Legere is represented by Sunbury criminal defense lawyer Jim Best.

Pennsylvania State Police and Northumberland County District Attorney Mike O’Donnell initially charged Legere and Mitrano with RICO, Ecoterrorism, Agricultural Vandalism, Criminal Mischief, Theft, Burglary, Loitering and Prowling at Nighttime, Accidents Involving Damage to Attended Vehicle or Property, Recklessly Endangering Another Person, Cruelty to Animals, Agricultural Trespassing on Posted Land, and Depositing Waste on a Highway — as well as Conspiracy counts related to the Ecoterrorism, Agricultural Vandalism and Burglary charges.

Released on bond in November after their October 19 arrest, Monday was the first chance Legere and Mitrano had to challenge the allegations against them in court.

In February, defense attorneys filed an omnibus motion for habeas corpus (‘show me the body’ in Latin) – arguing that the prosecution didn’t have enough evidence to go to trial. This meant District Attorney O’Donnell had to call several witnesses and present evidence to show how much substance there was to the case against the alleged mink liberators.

“There was very little that was clarified today,” defense attorney Carraway told Unicorn Riot. “And that’s because there’s just very little there.”

Before calling any witnesses, DA O’Donnell quietly moved to dismiss the RICO charge, one of the more serious elements in the case. At the same time O’Donnell’s office added a new count of Aggravated Animal Cruelty, arguing that the defendants were responsible for the deaths of some mink the Stahls say died after release — mink raised in fur farms are usually killed for their pelts before they turn one year old.)

Legere and Mitrano each still face one criminal count of Ecoterrorism — under the Pennsylvania state law, not the similar federal statute.) A line of questioning by defense attorneys Jim Best and Natalie Burston seemed to poke holes in this charge, as the subsection charged in this case requires that an “intent to intimidate” be proven on top of the underlying crime. The prosecution was unable to show any communication between the defendants and the victims in this case, and no graffiti, leaflets or manifestos were found at the fur farm.

[Note: ‘Ecoterrorism’ is a relatively new concept pushed into law shortly after 9/11 by industries that harm animals and/or the environment, eager to criminalize effective anti-corporate activism after the mass protests of the 1990s. Read ‘Green Is the New Red’ by journalist Will Potter to learn more.]

Witness Testimony: Mark and John Stahl

The first two witnesses in the case were Mark and John Stahl of the Richard H. Stahl & Sons, Inc. fur farm, which is located on PA State Route 890 just a few miles from the courthouse. The Stahl ranch is the last mink fur facility in Pennsylvania (the fur industry has seen a dramatic decline in recent years, due to lower demand, COVID-19 and opposition from animal rights and animal liberation activists.) It was founded in 1955 and currently has 7 employees with an annual revenue of \$298,790, according to business directory information.

The Stahl fur farm is estimated to have 21,000 mink on site at any given time, according to testimony by Mark Stahl, and kills some thousands of mink to “harvest” their pelts every year. As per industry norms, mink are killed either by gas, electrocution, being beaten to death or having their necks snapped. Banned in 22 countries but not in the USA, fur farms confine mink — semi-solitary aquatic predators who roam miles in a day in the wild — to crowded rows of small, often unhygienic cages not much larger than the size of their body. Caged mink routinely injure themselves by fighting with each other or biting and scratching on their cages until they bleed and their teeth and claws break.

The Stahl mink ranch was listed online for sale online in December, less than two months after the break-in that set 683 mink free which Legere and Mitrano are accused of. A spokesperson for the Stahl business insisted that “the decision to list the property was not influenced by these attacks”; another animal liberation direct action successfully targeted the facility in September 2023, setting free between 6,000 and 8,000 mink; no charges have been filed in that incident. A security camera system was only installed after the 2023 raid, according to 2024 reporting by PennLive.

Footage from the fur farm’s security cameras was supposed to be shown at the evidentiary hearing on Monday, but DA O’Donnell couldn’t get the file to play. Judge Paige Rosini instead agreed to watch the video before ruling on the motion by the defense. Based on court proceedings referring to the video, it is understood to show, but not identify, two individuals entering the Stahl & Sons property, opening hundreds of mink cages and destroying breeding cards attached to most or all of the cages in the facility.

According to Mark Stahl, the destruction of “90 percent” of the fur farm’s genetic cards caused a financial loss at a scale beyond the 683 released mink, because the business relies on these records to cultivate a “herd” with more profitable pelt traits, and because a live mink has less sale value without its breeding information. He repeatedly said “the set is broken” when asked about the destroyed records — “the most value is when a whole ‘set’ — mink, cage, and card — is intact. It’s just salvage value without that.”

Mark Stahl testified that he rushed to the fur farm in the early hours of October 19 after being alerted by “our IT security guy” that an alert had gone off. Upon arriving he looked for holes in the fence, anticipating that the ranch had been breached in a similar fashion to the 2023 raid. He explained that the night of the September 2023 mink release, there had been a concert at a nearby winery with lots of cars parking on the road, and that he believed the mink liberators from that incident parked amongst concertgoers to cover their tracks.

No fence holes were found, but Stahl said he quickly noticed the ranch’s east gate was “swung wide open” and that no lock was on the gate. No lock was ever recovered from the scene. Pressed by the defense if he remembered that the gate was definitely locked before the incident, Mark Stahl admitted he didn’t remember for certain.

Mark Stahl claims that his family’s business suffered \$146,000 in total damages from the direct action on October 18-19, 2024: a “primary loss” of “around \$47,000” from the missing mink and destroyed genetic cards and hiring people to catch loose mink, a “secondary loss” of “\$2,100” in reduced profits from “fur quality of mink that were recovered alive and harvested later” and “tertiary expenses” of “around \$111,000 calculated over about 8 years” from “disruption to herd value” due to the destruction of so many genetic cards and from some minks’ medical/breeding status being contaminated while roaming free. Asked by Cara Mitrano’s attorney Natalie Burston how he arrived at this figure, he said “from experience.”

Mark Stahl told Celeste Legere’s attorney Jim Best that he made an insurance claim to Farmers Mutual but hadn’t yet collected — “we’re still in negotiations” — and said the Stahls were demanding an insurance payout of “\$160,000 for both instances” — the other being the September 2023 mink release, which Legere and Mitrano are not charged in.

Mark Stahl’s younger brother John Stahl is the official owner of the family business. John Stahl testified that after he got a security alert on his phone around 12:45 a.m. on October 19, he and his wife April Stahl quickly drove towards the farm, but stopped on a property bordering the fur farm where they saw a Subaru parked by the road. He said he parked immediately behind the Subaru and got out to confront the driver to see why there were there, but then had to run to get back in his car because he forgot to put it in park and it was rolling away.

The Subaru then made a three-point turn in order to leave. John Stahl had testified that he parked in such a way that the Subaru would have had to either hit his car to leave or drive into a ditch. He later contradicted himself, claiming he wasn’t actually blocking the Subaru from leaving—“they could have gone around me” — before later admitting that he had deliberately maneuvered his vehicle so that the Subaru couldn’t leave the area without striking him.

Burston asked John Stahl about the collision with the Subaru, which is the basis for some of the charges in the case — Accidents Involving Damage to Attended Vehicle or Property and Recklessly Endangering Another Person. Under cross-examination he conceded that when he moved to trap the Subaru it wasn’t parked on his property and that he himself didn’t have the property owner’s permission to be there.

The Stahl couple then pursued the Subaru down surrounding roads before stopping to pick up clothes and other items they claimed were thrown out the fleeing vehicle’s windows. The Subaru was later pulled over by a local cop who arrested Celeste Legere and Cara Mitrano before handing them over to Pennsylvania State Police.

John Stahl said his F-150 took some damage from being hit by the Subaru but remained operable afterwards. He testified under cross-examination that neither he nor his wife April were injured or sought medical treatment and that he wasn’t wearing a seat belt that night. He no longer drives the vehicle after selling or trading it at a \$1,500 value, and reported the damage to authorities but never submitted an insurance claim, the court heard.

Pictures taken by April Stahl during her husband’s vigilante confrontation with the Subaru were entered into evidence. They show the driver’s side of the Subaru and a side profile of the driver, which the defense did not disagree was Celeste Legere. April Stahl was called to testify as a witness at Monday’s evidentiary hearing but ended up not taking the stand at the last minute for reasons unclear.

Mark and John Stahl also mentioned that both the October 2024 incident Legere and Mitrano are accused of and a September 2023 release of 6-8,000 mink from their farm were claimed in Animal Liberation Front (ALF) press releases. The Stahls admitted under cross-examination that they couldn’t tie the ALF or any of its websites or publications to either of the defendants, and said they only knew about the ALF after reading about it in the news.

Witness Testimony: State Troopers Cody Fischer and Jacob Hook

Two Pennsylvania State Troopers testified about evidence they collected after Legere and Mitrano’s arrest. Notably, neither mentioned or knew of any fingerprints, shoe prints, DNA or other forensic evidence collected at the Stahl’s fur farm after the incident.

State Trooper Cody Fischer briefly testified to arresting Celeste Legere and Cara Mitrano after they were pulled over by Ralpho Township Police. Fischer said that the defendants had a backpack, a purse and a map with “directions in and out of the fur farm” with them at time of arrest.

The rest of the testimony came from State Trooper Jacob Hook of the PSP Criminal Investigations Unit, who offered an ample serving of speculative opinion with a few actual hard facts mixed in. An initial affidavit by Hook — the foundation for the case — made lurid mention of so-called “anarchist propaganda” found in the Subaru, indicating a desire to criminalize the defendants’ political associations. Hook’s affidavit also made sure to mention stickers with anti-police messages on them as among the evidence collected.

When asked by defense counsel to clarify what counted as “anarchist propaganda,” Hook said he used that term to describe 4 items – 3 “online privacy... manuals” — one about using a burner phone, one about Virtual Private Networks and one about the Tor Browser).

The 4th evidence item Hook cited as “anarchist propaganda” was as a notebook with handwritten notes that seemed to be from a ‘Know Your Rights’ seminar encouraging radical activists to avoid speaking with police. Hook conceded upon cross-examination that the privacy literature was not “anarchist-specific” and that he didn’t know whose handwriting was on the notebook.

Despite DA O’Donnell dismissing the RICO charge, Hook continued to insist that an unknown criminal organization was tied to the defendants, because Legere and Mitrano had a support network that they accessed upon arrest.

Hook’s testimony repeated claims from his affidavit that jail phone calls in which the defendants were “promised” bail money actually meant that they had been paid in advance to commit the alleged acts. A portion of a recording of one of Legere’s calls from jail – that Hook referred to as proving this theory – was played in court. On the clip, Legere was heard asking friends for bail money.

Trooper Hook also cited the defendants contacting people offering jail support while they were in jail – a routine part of many protest movements – as itself proof of a larger criminal enterprise because “they were talking to people who referred to themselves as jail support and in all my years in law enforcement I’ve never heard anyone described as jail support.” — Hook told the court that he’s been a State Trooper for 5 years.

Hook also described physical evidence that he collected the day after Legere and Mitrano’s arrest. Items found in the Subaru reportedly included headlamps, plastic crowbars, walkie talkies, and a Massachusetts E-ZPass. One smart phone was recovered and analyzed – Hook told the DA “nothing came back from it, I believe their primary phones were not with them.”

The fact that the defendants were driving a borrowed car was also cited by Hook as evidence of a criminal organization – “clearly there’s some kind of network.” Hook said he did contact the owner of the Subaru but did not try to ascertain whether items found in the vehicle belonged to the vehicle’s owner or the defendants.

Hook also testified that accessing the car’s navigation computer turned up an “address of interest” – one of the collective houses in Massachusetts where the defendants have lived. Legere and Mitrano’s bond hearing in November featured DA O’Donnell demanding to know the names and political affiliations of people living at collective houses the defendants resided at, and insisted on sensationally referring to the homes with several roommates as “anarchist compounds.”

What’s Next?

After hearing from the four prosecution witnesses, the hearing quickly wrapped up after some exhibits were officially entered into evidence. The defense didn’t call any witnesses. Both sides have 30 days to file briefs and a ruling by Judge Paige Rosini on the defense’s motion is expected, roughly, sometime in the

next two months. Judge Rosini's ruling could in theory throw out the case entirely, or allow it to continue with the same list of charges or with some of the charges thrown out for lack of evidence.

"Be scared – that's the message the prosecution wants to send," attorney Carraway told Unicorn Riot. "They're going to call someone who's accused of a nonviolent act a terrorist to scare people away from activism in general. The message people should take away from this is to have tenacity and know that there is support for people going through the criminal process, and to not be scared."

27 Jul - New York Prison Guard Strike Effects

Staffing shortages mean incarcerated people are not getting vital medical care, programming and other services.

MORE:

by Rebecca McCray (*The Marshall Project*)

In January, James Johnson began a journalism course at Sing Sing Correctional Facility, north of New York City, offered through Columbia University. He was eager to wrap up his bachelor's degree and enroll in a master's program this fall. But state correctional officers began a 22-day-long wildcat strike in February, and all educational, vocational, and mental health programs in prisons ground to a halt.

Four months after the strike ended, it's unclear when the journalism course will restart — normal operations have yet to resume in most of the state's prisons. Johnson likened his post-strike experience to life after a natural disaster: "The media coverage is gone, and we are still waiting on FEMA, while we try to make do with whatever scraps we can salvage from the rubble that we find ourselves standing in."

When the illegal strike ended, more than 2,000 of the 13,000-plus striking guards were fired after they refused to return to work. That compounded an ongoing staffing shortage that partially sparked the strike itself. Thirty-five of the state's 42 prisons are operating with an average of 32% of guard posts unfilled, *New York Focus* reported.

As of this week, nearly 3,000 National Guard members remain stationed in at least 34 prisons, according to a spokesperson for the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision. In April, Gov. Kathy Hochul told reporters the cost of the roughly 4,400 National Guard members' presence at the time was "well over \$10 million per month." The governor's office and the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs declined requests to confirm the current price tag.

While National Guard members can support prison operations, such as head count and basic supervision, they can't fill all the responsibilities of correctional officers, such as escorting incarcerated people and intervening in violent encounters.

For incarcerated people, the lingering dysfunctions from the strike run the gamut from frustrating to life-threatening. At Auburn Correctional Facility, west of Syracuse, Bartholomew Crawford said that only one of two prison yards has been open since the strike, and it doesn't have any sports or weightlifting equipment — just blacktop to walk or run on.

Meanwhile, civil rights and criminal defense attorney Amy Jane Agnew, who represents people in prisons throughout the state, said she's concerned about her elderly and ill clients. Without enough officers to drive people to and from specialized doctors' appointments, Agnew says some of her clients are going without vital medical care.

"That right now is a huge systemic problem," said Agnew. "I'm way more worried about a guy who's not getting his oncology visit than not getting the same amount of rec time."

In addition to limited recreation, understaffing has led to prisoners spending more than 17 hours a day in their cells at some facilities. “It feels like a perpetual lockdown,” said Crawford, the man incarcerated at Auburn Correctional Facility.

Seventeen hours is a legally important number. Under a 2022 state law, any confinement longer than that qualifies as “segregated confinement,” and triggers special protection and restrictions.

Previously, segregated confinement was defined as 23 hours of isolation. The law, dubbed the Humane Alternatives to Long-Term Solitary Confinement Law, or HALT Act, drew fervent criticism from corrections staff. They argued that the effort to reform solitary confinement put them in danger by removing a crucial disciplinary tool, and its repeal was a central demand of the strikers.

“It takes a little of the fight out of them,” striking officer Doug Langtry told *CNY Central* in February, referring to incarcerated people. “It used to work all the time.”

A temporary suspension of some provisions of the law was among the 14 concessions the Corrections Department made to the officers’ union to end the strike. The Legal Aid Society of New York challenged the suspension, temporarily winning its reinstatement in early July. This week, lawyers for the society argued in a court filing that the department continues to defy that court order, keeping people isolated in cells without access to programming for more than 21 hours a day.

Johnson and his fellow incarcerated students haven’t been told when classes might start again, he said. The school building at Sing Sing houses a range of programming and classes, but Johnson said it has been inaccessible since the strike began. Laura Roan, vice president of in-prison services at the Osborne Association, helps run a parenting program in that school building. “Across the board, we’re struggling with almost all of our programs being able to operate as normal,” said Roan.

The ongoing partial closure of facilities like Sing Sing’s school building and missed medical appointments reflect the system’s shortage of 4,700 correctional officers, according to James Miller, a spokesperson for the guard’s union, the New York State Correctional Officers and Police Benevolent Association. Understaffing has also inhibited visits from family and loved ones, limiting them to weekends at most facilities, shortening visit times, and ending programs such as a “summer camp” at Bedford Hills that previously enabled women to spend multiple hours per day with their children for a brief period each summer, according to Roan.

The corrections department says they are working to “aggressively recruit” officers to fill that gap, so the prisons can resume regular operations. They’ve launched recruitment centers throughout the state, and earlier this month announced a new agreement with the union to offer sign-on and retention bonuses. In May, lawmakers passed Hochul’s budget, which decreased the age cap for prison guards from 21 to 18 and removed the state’s residency requirement.

Recruitment alone may not be able to resolve the agency’s staffing issues. As *New York Focus* reported, the department has long struggled with guards not showing up to work, with officers engaging in “sick-outs.” These absences contribute to the prison system’s costly overtime expenses: In 2024, the department spent \$445 million on 7.4 million hours of overtime pay, as reported by *Gothamist*.

On Tuesday, Commissioner Daniel F. Martuscello sent a memo to the incarcerated population offering an update on the system’s broader “recover, recruit and rebuild” post-strike campaign. The memo announced that all phone calls will become free for incarcerated callers as of Aug. 1, highlighting the change as part of a broader goal to “rebuild the progressive corrections system that mirrors our values and protects the human dignity of all.”

As the department slowly presses forward, the efforts to adapt and resume normal operations are clear to Jaquan Myers, who is incarcerated at Washington Correctional Facility, east of Adirondack State Park. While the changes have been slow, he can see the progress.

“They’re trying,” said Myers, “but they’re still short-staffed.”

31 Jul - Words of Gratitude for Each Gesture of Solidarity

Chile: A letter of thanks from Aldo and Lucas Hernández.

MORE:

via *Abolition Media*

It is the desire to send us affection, the movement of the body that goes on to develop acts of propaganda, action and solidarity that makes us write these lines. We approached that freedom in that fire on July 10 outside the USACH, our names sound in the streets of this city, also on that wall in Montevideo, Uruguay on which anonymous comrades wrote at night, they expressed that ideas will be a real threat, in those solidarity letters of different comrades who experience confinement just like us and send us pushes of conviction for these days of trial, also that oxygen that we breathed on the first day of trial with the rally outside the courts, where comrades, brothers, family went to accompany us and shout loudly our names and those of those who are in the prisons of this State, and who filled the entrance with papers, propaganda vindicating us, even the most filthy gendarme knew that we are not alone.

We are part of that incendiary joy of the youth when the glass breaks and the fuse lights the gas in the police cars on that morning in Providencia outside the José Victorino Lastarria High School, that fire that in the young people is a cry of war, revenge and lifelong experience. Grateful for the real affection of our people, that concern for our lives, compañeros, compañeras, siblings, relatives and loved ones who have never killed us. That genuine love embraces us in these moments. They show it every day in their concern and their desire to steal more than a smile from us in such a defining moment, and they undoubtedly achieve it completely. A hug to those who remember us and seek ways to be with us...

31 Jul - Charges Dropped on Alejandro Orellana!

This is a huge win for protesters and activists everywhere, as well as the immigrants' rights movements in the US and everyone who opposes Trump's deportation policy.

MORE:

His bogus federal charges of conspiring to commit civil disorder and aiding and abetting civil disorder were a travesty to civil liberties in the US and to our First Amendment right to protest.

This outcome comes as a result of a national defense campaign to popularize Orellana's case. The Trump administration and US Attorney Bilal Essayli tried to demonize Orellana with allegations of giving out PPE, or face shields, to protesters during the Los Angeles movement against ICE in June. They tried to put Orellana behind bars for up to 5 years for this "crime." They failed to realize that the public viewed Trump, ICE, and the National Guard as the real criminals for violating due process and for kidnapping and detaining immigrant workers, parents and children. Eventually, it became clear as we organized that the public's sympathy lay largely with Orellana and not with ICE. In the end, the prosecution had to face the music: they had no case.

Orellana's case showed us the importance of being public with your cause, name, and charges; the importance of organizing people to your court appearances to show support for you; and the importance of having a lawyer who will work hard to defend you even if it means going to trial. These were lessons learned during the campaign of the Tampa 5, Carlos Montes, and the Anti-War 23, and we learned them all over again in the defense of Orellana.

If you find yourself charged unduly for exercising your First Amendment rights to protest, you need to speak out. Learn from the example of the protesters in Los Angeles and don't be afraid to say no and to stand up for yourself and for your neighbor. You have the right to object to injustice, to act to stop it, and to defend yourself if unjust charges come. Don't let anything stop you from being a part of the movements, never speak to the FBI, and never give in to fear. Just like Orellana, if we organize, we can win!

9 Aug - Saxapahaw Prison Books Packing Party

WHAT: Book packing

WHEN: 4:00pm, Saturday, August 9th (and every other week)

WHERE: P.I.T. - 411 South 5th Street, Brooklyn

COST: FREE

MORE:

Join Saxapahaw Prison Books to get packages of books loaded up and sent out to prisoners.

12 Aug - World War Three Illustrated Live

WHAT: Release Party

WHEN: 7:00pm, Wednesday, August 12th

WHERE: P.I.T. - 411 South 5th Street, Brooklyn

COST: FREE

MORE:

Featuring Seth Tobocman, details to follow.

16 Aug - A Bronx Tribute to Bilal Sunni Ali

WHAT: Fundraiser

WHEN: 3:00pm, Saturday, August 16th

WHERE: The First Congregational Church of Morrisania - 761 East 166th Street, Bronx

COST: Suggested donation \$10-20

MORE:

The veterans of New York's original Black Spades and Black Panther Party presents:

A medical fundraiser for New York Black Panther elders Dhoruba Bin Wahad and Kamau Sadiki

Featuring a historic panel discussion and audience talkback with original Bronx members of both the Black Spades and Black Panther Party, plus film screenings of both "Passin' It On" and "The Black Spades."

19 Aug - Letter Writing for Anti-ICE Arrestees**WHAT: Political Prisoner Letter-writing**

WHEN: Tuesday, August 19th, 2025 6:30-9:00pm

WHERE: Interference Archive—314 7th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11215 (Directions Below)

NOTE: Interference Archive is on the ground floor, is wheelchair accessible, and has a gender neutral toilet.

COST: Free

MORE:

Cruising through the heat of a Summer hot enough to melt ice, join NYC ABC as we come together to support folks facing repression from the state for standing up to the USA's very own Gestapo. We will provide all the materials you need, as well as background on who we are writing and guidelines to take the stress off putting pen to paper.

In case you're joining us having never written to a political prisoner or prisoners of war, we've got a handy set of guidelines to make it easy and fun, demystifying elements that might otherwise feel stressful or intimidating. You can check those guidelines out at <https://nycabc.wordpress.com/write-a-letter>

Writing a letter to a political prisoner or prisoner of war is a concrete way to support those imprisoned for their political struggles.

A letter is a simple way to brighten someone's day in prison by creating human interaction and communication—something prisons attempt to destroy. Beyond that, writing keeps prisoners connected to the communities and movements of which they are a part, allowing them to provide insights and stay up to date.

Writing to prisoners is not charity, as we on the outside have as much to gain from these relationships as the prisoners. Knowing the importance of letter writing is crucial. Prisons are very lonely, isolating, and disconnected places. Any sort of bridge from the outside world is greatly appreciated.

With that in mind, avoid feeling intimidated, especially about writing to someone you do not know. And, if possible, try and be a consistent pen pal.

Directions:

Getting to Interference Archive is simple:

From the N/R/W Train:

9th Street Stop: Walk north on 4th Avenue (away from 9th Street, toward 8th Street). Turn to walk east on 7th Street and continue about one block. We're on the south side of the street.

From the F/G Train:

4th Avenue Stop: Walk north on 4th Avenue (away from 10th Street, toward 9th Street). Turn to walk east on 7th Street and continue about one block. We're on the south side of the street.

7th Avenue Stop: Walk north on 7th Avenue (away from 9th Street, toward 8th Street). Turn to walk west on 7th Street and continue about two blocks. We're on the south side of the street.