

Resolution: Rockefeller Drug Law Reform

Whereas, the Rockefeller drug laws fill New York prisons with low-level, non-violent offenders; and

Whereas, these laws fuel a meteoric rise in state prison expenditures; and

Whereas, these expenditures detract from state investment in public schools, health services, and higher education; and

Whereas, the Rockefeller drug laws have a racially biased impact which is disproportionately devastating to Black and Latino Americans and deepens the racial fault lines that weaken solidarity among Americans and give the lie to the promise of America as a land of equal opportunity; and

Whereas, this biased impact undermines faith in principles of justice, equal protection of the laws, and fairness and efficacy of the criminal-justice system that are the bedrock of a constitutional democracy; and

Whereas, the loss of Pell Grants has destroyed many prison higher-education programs; therefore be it

Resolved, that the PSC takes a formal position in favor of legislation reforming the Rockefeller drug laws; and be it further

Resolved, that the PSC's future legislation efforts include support of Rockefeller drug law reform; and be it further

Resolved, that the PSC take a formal position in favor of restoring funding for higher-education programs in prisons; and be it further

Resolved, that the President of the PSC/CUNY write a letter to Governor George Pataki and all members of the New York State Senate and Assembly urging support of drug law reform legislation that makes sentencing reform retroactive and that includes but is not limited to a significant reduction in sentence lengths for drug offenses, the restoration of sentencing discretion to trial judges in all drug cases, and the expansion of funding available for alternatives to incarceration, including drug rehabilitation; and be it further

Resolved, that the PSC forward a copy of this resolution to the Presidents of AFT, NYSUT, and UUP.

From Executive Council
Passed: Delegate Assembly 6/14/01