



The Statewide Leadership Council (SLC) is a group of Texans who are formerly incarcerated, on probation or parole, or family members of people in the prison system. We are committed to ending incarceration in this state.

2023 TEXAS LEGISLATIVE SESSION & SLC POLICY PRIORITIES

How does the Texas Legislature work? Every two years, the Texas Legislature meets for 140 days to create new laws. Specifically, the state’s legislative sessions run from January through May of odd-numbered years. Texas’ 2023 legislative session started on January 10 and ended on May 29. The next session starts in 2025.

Many pieces of legislation (called “bills”) take several sessions to pass into law. Year after year, advocates fight to build support for a bill. Advocates go to the Texas Capitol to meet with state lawmakers, provide fact sheets, testify at committee hearings, and hold rallies. Once the bill has enough support, lawmakers will agree to send it to the Governor to be signed into law.

The Statewide Leadership Council had 3 main priorities for 2023: (1) parole, (2) planning for emergencies in Texas prisons, and (3) criminal record-clearing. *We explain more about these priorities on the next page.*

Although these 3 bills did not pass into law, they made it further than they did during the last legislative session in 2021! That means that when the next legislative session starts, they’ll already have more support.

We consider this a win, and it would not have been possible without formerly incarcerated people – who traveled to the State Capitol, shared their stories about incarceration and reentry, and advocated for the bills.



The Texas House of Representatives even honored formerly incarcerated SLC members through resolutions! In the last photo above, Maggie Luna and SLC Steering Committee member Jennifer Toon were honored with one of the resolutions!

MORE INFORMATION ON THE 2023 BILLS...

- (1) COMMON-SENSE PAROLE:** This bill would require TDCJ to give people their Individual Treatment Plan (ITP) more quickly after they enter prison. People would be able to complete pre-release and rehabilitative services before their parole review. And if a person is denied parole, they would be given a list of specific actions they must take to address the reasons they were denied.
- (2) EMERGENCY PLANNING:** This bill would require TDCJ to create a plan for storms, pandemics, and other events in Texas prisons. It would address issues like evacuation, lockdowns, programming and classes, access to commissary, medical care, protective equipment and hygiene items, and visitation. We want to make sure that incarcerated people have the support and supplies needed to make it through declared disasters without experiencing dangerous or inadequate conditions.
- (2) CRIMINAL RECORD-CLEARING:** These reforms, called “Clean Slate” and “New Wings,” would expand access to orders of nondisclosure for certain offenses, as well as automate the process in certain instances. The “New Wings” bill would specifically extend record-clearing to certain felonies.

Until Texas’ next legislative session starts, we will keep building support for these bills. Please ask your loved ones to get involved – they can contact Maggie Luna at MLuna@TexasCJE.org, or they can send mail to the address on the bottom of the page. And if you or anyone you know gets out of prison and wants to join this movement, please reach out to Maggie.

The Statewide Leadership Council in action:



On International Women's Day (March 8), SLC members joined other advocates and Texas legislators at the State Capitol to raise attention for justice-impacted girls and women.



Maggie joined other Statewide Leadership Council members and partners at the launch of JustLeadershipUSA’s JustUS Coordinating Council in Washington, DC.



Along with other system-impacted leaders, Maggie spoke with Leadership Austin about her advocacy and organizing work.



Formerly incarcerated people marched in San Antonio to call for voting rights for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people.