

Advocacy Group “Meeting of the Minds” Meeting Minutes

Tuesday April 20, 2021 7:00P EST / Via ZOOM

Attendees: 15

Overview: Meeting was initiated for families with loved ones convicted of sex offense to collaborate and discuss how to change the framing, punishment, and collateral damage that is experienced within the criminal justice system specific to the Sex Offense charges and legislative laws.

Notes:

1. In roundtable format introductions were made by each participant sharing their names, their LO's names, how long they have been impacted by the system, and what they would like to see changed as far as reform.
2. During discussion it was agreed to keep this Advocacy Group as its own entity. However it was decided to work with other groups that have similar goals. ie: War Arm, Caution Click – an added benefit would be to expand our base to include State advocates as well
3. To begin our Advocacy mission it was discussed to eliminate labeling when referring to our loved ones. A good start to getting away from the stigmatism of these type of crimes is to be cognizant of these labels and start referring to those facing or convicted of these charges as “person who was convicted of a sex crime”. The sooner we can eliminate the labeling from our own conversations the better we can educate others that people convicted of a sex offense are people and not “the frozen in time mistake” they made that the criminal justice systems paints them.
4. Additional issues discussed:
 - Reentry and successful citizens of the registry.- Inviting a Guest Speaker.
 - How the media endangers families and people returning to society.
 - Underlying Mental Health Issues for many arrested; the complicated issue between a person who was offended, as well as being an offender.
 - How the system destroys families and communities- collateral damage.
 - How to survive prison for families and their loved ones. i.e. choosing to live freely in your mind while incarcerated, Federal Prison Handbook.
 - Mandatory Minimum Statutes - Does a long sentence equate to justice?

Call to Action!!

1. Bring to the next meeting a list of 4 priorities that you wish to change within the system, and that can also be realistically changed.
2. Naming our fierce group of Advocates.
3. Identifying our strength
4. Do we become a nonprofit?

Next Meeting:

Tuesday May 04, 2021 / 7:30PM EST