



Our mission is to end Life Without Parole sentencing in California and afford relief to those currently serving the sentence, no matter the conviction, through legislative change, commutations, pardons, resentencing, and public awareness about the injustice of the LWOP sentence.

LIFE WITHOUT PAROLE (LWOP) IS CRUEL, ARBITRARY, AND DOES NOT MAKE OUR COMMUNITIES SAFER.

- California has one of the largest LWOP populations in the United States. Over 5,000 people are serving Life Without Parole in California state prisons. More than 200 are in women's prisons.
- LWOP was first enacted as a more "humane" alternative to the death penalty, but people serving LWOP call their sentence death by incarceration or a living death sentence.
- People sentenced to LWOP are not afforded the same legal protections as those sentenced to the death penalty. They do not receive the same legal assistance for appeals, which reduces the possibility of exoneration even if they were wrongly convicted.
- People sentenced to LWOP are sent to prison for the rest of their lives. They do not have a chance to demonstrate their growth or change.
- People sentenced to LWOP are labeled irredeemable and stripped of hope.

LWOP REPRESENTS A CULTURE OF EXTREME SENTENCING AND PERPETUAL PUNISHMENT.

- Racist, tough-on-crime policies were a backlash against civil rights advances, resulting in laws that were increasingly punitive and extreme.
- Between 1992–2017, the population of people serving LWOP in the U.S. grew by 400% — from 12,453 to over 50,000.
- Since 1978, CA has enacted dozens of new laws adding more "special circumstances" that prosecutors can charge to mandate LWOP or death penalty sentencing.
- If prosecutors add a felony murder special circumstance, they only need to prove participation in an underlying felony during which a death occurs. The defendant need not be the perpetrator of the death to receive LWOP or the death penalty.
- Extreme sentencing continues unabated in California. Between 2015 and 2018, nearly 400 people were sentenced to the slow death of LWOP. Mass incarceration cannot be reversed unless we end LWOP and extreme sentencing.

LWOP IS RACIST. THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE SENTENCED ARE YOUNG PEOPLE OF COLOR.

- 68% of people sentenced to Life Without Parole in California are Black and Latinx.
- 62% of people sentenced in CA were 25 years or younger at the time of the offense.
- 71% of people sentenced to LWOP were convicted for the first-time.

- Family members & communities of color carry the financial & emotional burden of supporting loved ones condemned to die behind bars. They are serving their own life sentences, undermining their survival & advancement of their life goals.

PEOPLE SENTENCED TO LWOP FACE SYSTEMIC MARGINALIZATION AND EXCLUSION INSIDE PRISON.

- People serving LWOP are excluded from most educational opportunities in prison & barred from the majority of self-help courses.
- People serving LWOP are usually only allowed the lowest-paying jobs in prison.
- People serving LWOP are ineligible for Elder Parole and Compassionate Release, even if they are severely or terminally ill.
- Despite being labeled as irredeemable by the prison and the state, people serving LWOP provide mentorship, leadership & stability within CA prisons.

IT'S TIME TO COMMUTE ALL 5,000+ PEOPLE SERVING LWOP IN CALIFORNIA AND END LWOP SENTENCING!

- Commutation (Executive Clemency) is one of the only ways people sentenced to LWOP can achieve a sentence reduction and be considered for release by the Parole Board.
- From 2000-2016, only one person serving LWOP had their sentence commuted by a California Governor.
- Since 2017, with the support of the Drop LWOP campaign, 154 people received commutations from Governor Brown & Governor Newsom. The recidivism or "return to prison" rate for this population is 0%.
- As a society, we need to divest from a culture of retribution & perpetual punishment and promote transformative justice, rehabilitation & mercy.

Get involved at droplwop.com | droplwopoutreach@gmail.com | @drop_lwop on IG

Donate to the coalition!

