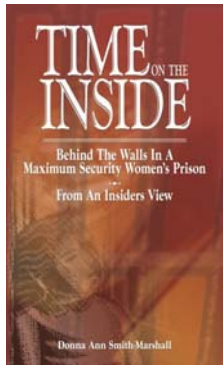


# News Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Did You Know Time Is Running Out? The United States Correctional Crisis Has Been Brewing for Years and Women Are the Fastest Growing Segment of the Prison Population with California Ranking 3<sup>rd</sup>**



#### **Contact Person:**

Deneen A. Williams, Director, Public Relations

Tell: (310) 438-3483 • Fax: (310) 438-3486 • After Hrs: (310) 930-6248

Email: [dwilliams@fmapublishing.com](mailto:dwilliams@fmapublishing.com) • Website: [www.fmapublishing.com](http://www.fmapublishing.com)

LONG BEACH, CA –March 29, 2007 – Women’s Prisons in the United States have increased in the past 20 years by 800% as there are more than 107,000 women incarcerated in State and Federal institutions. California is the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest state for the women’s prison population with nearly 13,000. The California Governor and the Legislature must act immediately to improve public safety or empower another entity that can and will; The Federal Government. In a prison system as large as California’s, the nearly 13,000 incarcerated women are overlooked. Prison causes damage and disruption to the lives of vulnerable women, most of whom pose no risk to the public. Prison is often a very expensive way of making bad situations worse.

#### **Donna Ann Smith-Marshall will inform you that/of:**

- Unsafe and Overcrowding conditions exists for inmates and correctional officers.
- Each year, the State spends nearly a half a billion dollars for women’s incarceration alone.
- The vast majority of female inmates are not a threat to public safety.
- Two-thirds were convicted of property or drug related crimes.
- More of them have been victims of violent crimes than were convicted of violent crimes.
- Two-Thirds of women prisoners are mothers with children under 18. Many were/are single mothers.
- Their children are either raised by other family members or are sent to the State’s foster care system.
- Children who have incarcerated parents are more likely to follow the path of their parents and become the next generation of prisoners continuing the perpetual cycle.
- Study shows a 12% increase in women’s prison in 2006 from 2005.
- 60% of women prisoners have mental health problems.
- 35% have attempted suicide.
- 25% have been in the foster care system as children.
- At least 50% report being victims of childhood abuse or domestic violence.
- 70% re-offend within one-year of release; 35% shortly thereafter.
- Women prisoners returning to their communities face serious challenges.
- A prison bed costs over \$34,000 a year.
- Governor must look at expanding the use of furloughs.
- Expanding community-based corrections for female offenders must be reviewed.
- California Governor must look at Sentencing and Parole Reform.
- Judges must be empowered to hand down sentences that fit the crime.



**CREDENTIALS:** Donna Ann Smith-Marshall is a national television and radio energetic media guest, a 13 year expert in the field of women and youth incarceration, a reformed ex-offender, mother, activist, and the author of a dynamic, informative, new book; ***TIME ON THE INSIDE: Behind The Walls In A Maximum Security Women's Prison From An Insiders View***— FMA Publishing — August, 2006.

Smith-Marshall says; "Taking the most troubled individuals out of society and punishing them in order to teach them how to live within society is, at best, ineffective. Whatever else a prisoner knows, she knows everything there is to know about punishment because that is exactly what she has grown up with.

Whether it is childhood sexual abuse, neglect, lack of concern; punishment is most familiar to her. Prison does not work. The best way to cut women's offending is to deal with its root causes". We must help women as they will continue to suffer and that of their children as well.

**AVAILABILITY:** California, nationwide by arrangement and via telephone. Available as a last minute guest and a great call-in show!

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