$PENDING MONEY IN ALL THE WRONG PLACES:

NAMI www.nami.org
The Nation's Voice on Mental Illness

JAILS & PRISONS

Prisons are overcrowded: 2,019,234 people were incarcerated in U.S. prisons and jails by mid-2002. The federal prison population increased by 8,042 persons – 5.7%, between 2001 and 2002. State prison populations increased by 12,440 people – 1%- between 2001 and 2002. Local jail populations increased by 34,235 people – 5.4% between 2001 and 2002. Between 1995 and 2002 the average increase in the incarcerated population per year has been 3.8 % overall – 8.1% for federal prisons.

Costs: $24.5 billion was spent to house inmates in the U.S. in 1996. $22 billion of this tab is paid by state prisons. State prison costs increased by 82% from 1990 to 1996. Federal prison costs rose by 160% between 1990 and 1996. The average cost per inmate in 1996 was $20,100/year in state prisons - $103 per U.S. resident. Federal prisoners cost $23,500 each on average in 1996. Federal prisons are 31% over capacity. State prisons are up to 16% over capacity.

Parole and probation systems are overwhelmed: Nearly 4.7 million adults were on probation or parole at the end of 2001, an increase of 113,791 in one year; 53% on probation or parole were charged with a felony.

As many as 400,000 inmates held in the nation's prisons and jails suffer from mental illnesses.

- Between 25% and 40% of all Americans with mental illness will at some point pass through the criminal justice system.
- Approximately 70,000 prisoners in 2000 were actively psychotic.
- Nearly 25% of white state and locally incarcerated prisoners reported that they had a mental illness.
- Nearly 40% of white female inmates 24 or younger had a mental illness.
- 19 out of 31 states responding to a survey reported a disproportionate increase in prisoners with mental illness in the past five years.
- State prison inmates with a mental illness received sentences an average of 12 months longer than other offenders.

Treatment can benefit both the public and people with mental illness.

- Most jail inmates with mental illnesses are charged with non-violent offenses – treatment is the best way to prevent recidivism.
- 53% of inmates with a mental illness were in prison for a violent offense, while only 46% of inmates without a mental illness were incarcerated for violence. Treatment is the best way to prevent violence.
- Inmates with mental illnesses cost more to incarcerate than other inmates. Treatment is the best way to prevent these costs.

Mentally ill prisoners need treatment to prevent re-incarceration.

- Over half of all inmates with a mental illness report three or more prior sentences.
- Only 6 in 10 state inmates with a mental illness reported receiving treatment since their incarceration.
- Only 4 in 10 local inmates with a mental illness reported receiving treatment since their incarceration.

Prisoners with mental illness cost the nation an average of nearly $9 billion a year. By regularly treating people with mental illnesses, we can prevent unnecessary incarcerations, thereby reducing overcrowding in jails and the cost to the American public. We can also prevent the crimes committed by people with mental illness, due to their illness, thus improving public safety.