

## **Pennsylvania Governor Stops All Parole**

By Sadot Williams

Under a direct order from Pennsylvania Governor Edward Rendell, the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole in conjunction with the Department of Corrections has suspended indefinitely all parole and early release for state prisoners after a shoot-out that left one Philadelphia police officer dead and another one seriously wounded by a Pennsylvania prisoner who was also killed. The former prisoner was taking part in the early release program.

The early release program was put into place in the mid-90's in a meager attempt to ease over crowding of Pennsylvania state prisons, with legislators in Harrisburg signing into law a much needed good time/work time legislation for prisoners.

In Pennsylvania prisoners must complete their entire minimum sentence before being considered for parole!

The early release program gave mostly non-violent low custody prisoners a way to do only half of their minimum sentence in prison and then got to a half-way house/community corrections center and then to be reviewed for parole by the Board of Probation and Parole.

Many state prisoners are fearful the Governor and the Department of Corrections will exploit this very unfortunate incident to not only stop the early release program, but also to make it much more difficult for PA prisoners who fall under the classification of "violent offender" to get out of prison on parole!

I guess this incident will be artfully manipulated in a way that gives Governor Edward Rendell and the Department of Corrections justification when asked by prisoner advocates: Is it really necessary to have twenty-eight state prisons up and running with two more under construction costing Pennsylvania tax payers well over seven hundred million dollars to build, at a time when banks are failing and the country is in a financial crisis.

*Madness!*

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