

Save Ex-Inmate Programs, Save Money

One of the first places state and federal governments look to make cutbacks in an attempt to balance their ballooning budgets is in the penal system. As a result, ex-offender re-entry programs that help rehabilitate those who are at risk for returning to prison are on the chopping block. Sure, cutting funding to these programs may help balance budgets in the short

MATHIS' MIND

Judge Greg Mathis

incarcerate them. Additionally, communities and individuals will continue to be victimized by crime and trapped in a seemingly never-ending cycle.

Recently, USA Today reported on these cutbacks and the impact

ber of ex-offenders who committed a new felony while on probation. Instead of looking at the bigger picture and continuing to invest in programs designed to reduce recidivism, Florida, in an attempt to get its fiscal house in order, plans to cut such programs. Other states are also weighing significant budget cuts to all parts of their criminal justice systems.

This is just bad business. In many states, the number of ex-offenders committing new crimes has increased, partly because of cuts to programs that help them transform their lives and stay out of prison.

Any state considering such cuts should look to Michigan for guidance. Budget gaps and increasingly high unemployment rates have lead lawmakers there to address both problems with a novel plan: help ex-offenders find and keep

jobs that will keep them out of prison. According to a report by the Institute for Research on Poverty, Michigan has used job

avoid making budget cuts to prison re-entry programs at all costs.

In these difficult economic

Michigan has used job placement programs to cut the prison population by about 15 percent

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term. But, as ex-offenders become repeat offenders and return to jail or prison, we end up shelling out more money in the long run to

they could have on states across the country. Florida, for example, saw a small decrease in the num-

placement programs to cut the prison population by about 15 percent during the last four years and has saved more than \$200 million each year.

Here's hoping other locales will follow Michigan's lead. With your help, maybe they can. Call or write your county, state, and federal legislators and demand they not be so short sighted; ask that they

times, it is only reasonable that lawmakers conserve resources where they can. The criminal justice system, particularly ex-offender re-entry programs, is not the place to make these cuts. Our lawmakers must think about the effect these budget reductions will have on our overall safety and the economic impact they will have on taxpayers down the road.

Koch Brothers: Libertarian, Free Market Enthusiasts

According to the liberal left media, Charles Koch is gearing up to help raise and spend \$88 million during the 2012 election cycle. Most African Americans have never heard of billionaire brothers Charles and David Koch, but if they could be "good people to know." Charles and David Koch are the owners of Koch Industries, which is headquartered in Wichita, Kansas. Their annual revenues are estimated to be \$100 billion. Their holdings include: Oil refineries, four thousand miles of oil pipeline, Brawny paper towels, Dixie cups, Georgia-Pacific lumber, Stainmaster carpet, and Lycra. Koch Industries is the second-largest private company in the USA, after Cargill. If Koch Industries were a public company it would rank about 16 in the Fortune 500. Their combined fortune of \$35 billion is exceeded only by those of Bill Gates and Warren Buffett. Charles Koch is Koch Industries, Inc's chairman of the board and chief executive officer. Charles and David Koch's and his strategy for running a business, Market Based Management (MBM), is

BUSINESS EXCHANGE

William Reed

described in his 2007 book *The Science of Success*, which promotes long-term planning for success even at the expense of short-term gains. The Kochs are empirical examples of successful capitalists. Koch is a libertarian and his philanthropy includes co-founding the Cato Institute, the Institute for Humane Studies, and the Mercatus Center.

The Kochs and their affiliates have recently been recipients of received negative media coverage. Charles and David Koch were raised as Libertarians, and advocate individual liberty, especially freedom of expression and action. Liberal Democrats accused the Koch brothers of funding opposition against Obama Administration's policies. It's a spurious argument, the Kochs and their foundations have been donating to many pro-free market organizations and think tanks long before Obama came into the White House. For more than 40 years these brothers have been steadfast proponents of individual and economic

freedom. Through their personal involvement and private foundations they lawfully support activities and causes consistent with their beliefs. Koch Industries is the source of funds for free market foundations and causes. Koch Industries and its subsidiaries spent more than \$20 million on lobbying in 2008 and \$12.3 million in 2009. Enterprising Black groups and individuals may want to take note that the Kochs' network of non-profit groups, once centered around sleepy free-enterprise think tanks, seems to some to be emerging as a more ideological counterweight to Bush-era GOP political operatives. This has cheered fiscal conservatives seeking to reorient their political apparatus and aspirations around free-market, small government principles and candidates. In recent years the Koch brothers have increasingly focused their giving on more activist groups, and, perhaps more significantly, they have used their influence to help guide millions more in contributions from other major conservative benefactors, primarily through twice-a-year donor summits they have been organizing since 2003. The

conferences bring together roughly 150 wealthy conservative business titans or their representatives to hear presentations from politi-

they know not of." Among the hundreds of organizations that have received support from Koch companies and/or the Koch founda-

YEK chapters teach free enterprise fundamentals through hands-on experiences and encourage students to start their own business, enhance their business skills for future career opportunities and continue into higher education. Many Koch-funded YEK programs are located in inner-cities. Students write a business plan, participate in classroom competitions, and receive school credit for successfully meeting class completion requirements. YEK graduates' involvement is maintained through the Alumni Program, which promotes continued learning opportunities and community service.

William Reed is available for speaking/seminar projects via BaileyGroup.org

To prosper, Blacks should steer clear of 'hating those they know not of'

cians and thought leaders to fund their non-profits. At the most recent summit in Rancho Mirage, Calif., the Kochs and their invited donors pledged to contribute \$49 million towards an \$88-million budget goal for policy and political projects in the 2012 election cycle.

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tions are Americans for Prosperity and Americans for Prosperity Foundation. Youth Entrepreneurs® Kansas (YEK) was founded in 1991 by the Charles G. Koch Foundation to teach business and entrepreneurial skills in high school classrooms, and offers hands-on experience to help students succeed as business owners or employees.

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