EXHIBIT C

Nevada Prison Commissioners Meeting, April 20, 2010

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Mass Incarceration in Nevada Is a Failed Strategy/SB398

My name is Dahn Shaulis. I am an instructor at the College of Southern Nevada, a former Nevada correctional employee, and an attender of the Las Vegas Friends Worship Group—the Quakers.

My purpose for being here again is to discuss Nevada's justice options for the future. In discussing these options, we need to examine where we are and were we have come from in terms of justice and prisons. When I speak of justice it's about a justice much broader than many people perceive.

The State of Nevada is in crisis, socially, economically, and spiritually. Unemployment in Nevada has been in the double digits for months and has approached 14%. For people of color and the working-class, their struggles for opportunities, including decent and humane housing, education, employment and justice have taken longer. Nevada's unemployment rate for African Americans is estimated at 20%, but that does not even include discouraged workers and those part-time workers who are seeking full-time work. Unemployment rates for Latinos are not much better and I suspect rates for indigenous peoples are also above the average.

As I mentioned at the January 2010 Prison Board meeting, Nevada has heavily invested in a Prison-Industrial Complex (PIC) for more than four decades. Prison expansion began in the mid-1960s and has continued into the 21st century. Since the 1970s, the State has also chosen to mass incarcerate youth, giving NDOC more potential recruits for prison. Even as index crime rates began to drop in this State in the early 1980s, Nevada continued on the path of mass incarceration. Conditions were so deplorable in Elko that the youth facility required federal oversight. Nevada has also chosen to jail and imprison many women, rather than find alternatives to incarceration or to remedy the situation by understanding the etiology of crime.

Tough on crime legislation has been tough on society, as Nevada leaders chose for decades to disregard human needs: underfunding education, mental health treatment, drug treatment, and decent affordable housing. The State chose to increase sentence structures and to punish probation and parole violators, at the expense of long-term social and economic costs. Prisons in Nevada were supposedly constructed to save rural economies, but they also provided low-wage convict labor--reminiscent of the racist South after the Civil War. Prisons may bring work for some, but the work is often inhumane—it bleeds into all those who are near it.

From the 1980s to the present, Nevada followed the most dysfunctional aspects of the California prison system, and built *Golden Gulags*, facilities that cost hundreds of millions of dollars to construct, staff, and maintain. Limited efforts were made to rehabilitate prisoners despite increasing knowledge about what works in correctional treatment. Recent attempts to privatize prisons and prison services at Summit View, the women's prison in Southern Nevada, and the medical services at Ely State Prison (ESP) have been huge failures—yet Governor Gibbons continues to push for more privatization.

In 2007, Governor Gibbons proposed $1.7 billion in new prison construction to include a new death chamber—because he saw no other alternatives. Only a budget crisis and unforeseen drops in crime prevented the Governor and Director Howard Skolnik from continuing this mass incarceration master plan.

So here's the picture in 2010. According to the US Census, Nevada ranks 2nd in prison spending per capita and 48th in education spending. The State has chosen a path of mass incarceration and a system that promotes violence and ignorance rather than a path of education and innovation. In April 2010, Nevada has been labeled as the most place dangerous state in the US. **But this is a *pyrrhic defeat* for the Nevada prison system, which profits from crime and the fear of crime.**

Prisons today function inadequately as drug treatment and mental health facilities, as *"the new asylums."* They also serve inadequately as high schools, work houses, and as high-cost warehousing of throw-away people. **Nevada's prisons, frankly, serve as graduate schools and network hubs for organized interstate crime and White Supremacist hate groups.**

Little effort is made to help prepare prisoners for work and independent living after they leave the facilities. One of Governor Gibbon's recent strategies to cut the budget included closing Casa Grande, the state's transition facility; Mr. Skolnik did not protest the plan to cut Casa Grande. This plan to close Casa Grande should be understood in the context that **the Nevada Department of Corrections wins when it receives *"repeat customers."* NDOC is an agency that grows in proportion to its failures.**

When I publicly made statements two years ago, that NDOC officials were morally corrupt, and reported my experiences in the Justice Policy Journal, prison officials told the media I was fabricating information. They refused to comment on the record, however, because they knew I was telling the truth about prison conditions and the state of justice in Nevada. As a payback perhaps, Mr. Skolnik denied me access into NDOC facilities to teach college courses or to volunteer.

As UNLV criminal justice Professor Randall Shelden will tell you, our prison system is a failed system. Mass incarceration is a drain on society and it's a dysfunctional strategy to improve

public safety. **In terms of economic opportunity costs, money spent on prisons means less resources for education, drug treatment, mental health care, and community redevelopment.**

So what are our options?

Privatizing prisons does not work. They are not even an adequate short-term fix. No other civilized nations use this failed strategy of punitive justice to this extreme. Our only reasonable option is to think long-term and to think holistically. We need to recognize that resources are limited and that there are opportunity costs. Even US Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy, a Reagan appointee, questioned this approach as early as 2004.

One of the most obvious short-term solutions would be to pass **Senate Bill (SB) 398. This program would divert hundreds of nonviolent offenders from prison and into treatment. The SAGE Commission has estimated a savings of $280 million over a 5-year period—savings that could be used to invest in people rather than in concrete shrines to man's ignorance and greed.**

The ideal situation would be to take the savings from this diversion program to reinvest in communities hardest hit by mass incarceration, *"million-dollar blocks,"* to be spent on prevention and reentry. Good Pre-K programs, for example, reduce crime in the long run. The Rand Corporation and others have ideas of what programs would be most effective.

I would like to have your support today and am asking that you promise to promote **SB 398** immediately--with the courage to promote it publicly. I would also ask you to encourage educators and working-class communities to support this bill.

In my January 2010 statement to the Board I explained several sources to safely plan for the downsizing of prisons—and for long-term community investment that reduces crime. These sources include legitimate authorities: Michael Jacobson and the Justice Center of the Council of State Governments. We also need to train and retrain workers so they don't have to resort to prison work, as I did, for a decent paycheck. In the long-term, we need to mature as a State, divest ourselves from prisons and sources of crime such as casino gambling, while investing in the People.