

10



IDEAS

*A Journal of Student-
Generated Ideas
from Across the
Roosevelt Network*



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Who We Are

The Roosevelt Institute, working to redefine the rules that guide our social and economic realities, is home to the nation's largest network of emerging doers and thinkers committed to reimagining and re-writing the rules in their communities to create lasting change. Our members, organizing in 130 chapters in 40 states nationwide, partner with policy makers and communicators to provide them with clear, principled ideas and visionary, actionable plans. Our members are actively influencing policy on the local, state and national level – from introducing legislation on protections for LGBTQ youth to consulting with local governments on natural disaster flood prevention.

What You're Holding

Now in its ninth year, the *10 Ideas* series promotes the most promising student-generated ideas from across our network. This journal, which includes submissions from schools located from California to Michigan to Georgia, stands as a testament to the depth and breadth of our network.

Our *10 Ideas* memos are selected for publication because they are innovative, rigorously researched, and politically feasible. We want to see these ideas become reality.

How You Can Join

Join us as we work to reimagine the rules! If you're interested in starting or joining a Roosevelt @ chapter on your campus, find out if Roosevelt exists at your university by visiting our website. Rooseveltors of all ages can also join our lifelong member community, Roosevelt NEXT, by visiting our website.

Thank you for reading and supporting the ideas of the emerging generation of thinkers and doers. Together we will design the future of our communities.

Dear Readers,

Welcome to *10 Ideas*—the Roosevelt Institute’s oldest and most competitive journal, elevating the top student-generated policy proposals from across the country.

At the Roosevelt Institute, we value the public good. Having institutions that are democratic and designed to benefit as many people as possible is the best way for us to achieve justice, equity, and opportunity for all. Yet in 2017, those institutions are under attack from the inside, and our political leadership is failing to enact policies that help those most in need. That’s why we need a new generation of leaders committed to fight for their ideas and their ideals.

Rooseveltters tackle pressing problems by starting locally. We believe that we are most effective when we push for change at home, while ensuring that the change we seek is connected to collective, wide-reaching fights. That is why we do our work in local chapters that together make up one nationwide network.

And we don’t just leave our ideas on the page: Rooseveltters advocate for policy change at the state and local level by meeting with their representatives, writing op-eds and organizing local actions. We are a part of the wellspring of activism in this country, pushing to realize a progressive social and economic vision.

Within this journal, you will find ideas from every major region of the country. From bringing public accountability to charter schools in Michigan to increasing access to capital for minority-owned businesses in Georgia to reducing the number of wrongful convictions in New York, our members are pushing for policy reforms that lift up communities. Most importantly, they are fighting for government and private-sector institutions to work on behalf of the public good.

We hope you enjoy reading these proposals, and take as much inspiration from them as we do.



Onwards,

Joelle Gamble

National Director

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Charting Michigan's Path to Effective Education Through Charter School Reform

By Conor Rockhill and Ruby Kirby, *Roosevelt @ U of Michigan*

Thesis Statement

To increase charter school quality and accountability, Michigan should require annual reports from charter school authorizers, prevent ineffective authorizers from opening new schools, and close charter schools that are proven ineffective after three years of failing to meet state standards.

Background & Analysis

Charter schools, which are publicly funded but operate outside of the regulations placed on traditional schools, are sponsored by authorizers such as “intermediate school districts, community colleges, or state public universities” and run by operators, which oversee everyday work such as hiring teachers and determining curriculum.¹ When run effectively, charter schools provide specialized learning environments, diversify choice in teaching style, and serve as proof points for educational methodology. But this is the exception to the rule in Michigan.

Eighty percent of Michigan charter schools have below-average achievement for reading and 84 percent are below average in math.² This lack of quality has a disproportionate impact, as 70 percent of Michigan charter school students are low-income and 60 percent are students of color.³ The effect on students also reaches beyond the charter schools, because public school districts have consistent costs despite the loss of state per-pupil funding to charter schools.⁴ When this funding goes to charter schools, it is not reaching students, as “traditional schools spend an average of \$6,985 per student in the classroom, and charter schools spend \$4,893.”⁵ This is in part because 61 percent of charter schools in Michigan are managed by for-profit operators and an additional 17 percent contract services such as staffing through for-profit firms.⁶ These private entities are not required to uphold state transparency standards, even though they are funded by taxpayer dollars.

Talking Points

- Currently, charter school authorizers in Michigan face almost no accountability.⁷
- Charter schools in Michigan consistently underperform the state average in reading and writing.⁸
- By draining teachers and students from public schools, charters drag down the quality of education in public schools, especially for low-income or minority students.⁹
- Establishing state standards and holding charter school authorizers

KEY FACTS

- ▶ 16 percent of charter school students attend a school overseen by authorizers with D or F grades.¹⁹
- ▶ 80 percent of charters in reading and 84 percent of charters in math have achievement below state average.²⁰
- ▶ 70 percent of Michigan charter school students are low-income and 60 percent of Michigan charter school students are students of color.²¹
- ▶ Despite being afforded equal per-pupil funding by the state, traditional public schools spend 30 percent more on students in the classroom because of lower administrative costs.²²

to them will cause failing schools to be shut down, incentivize authorizers to run successful schools, and improve the quality of education in both charter and public schools.

Policy Idea

The Michigan legislature should require that charter schools submit an annual report on educational achievement and allow the Department of Education to assign grades from A through F. Charter schools with F grades for three consecutive years should be closed, unless the schools can demonstrate significant improvement and serve students from school districts with failing grades. Additionally, authorizers should be given a grade that reflects the ratings of their schools. Authorizers with a D or lower should be prohibited from opening new schools until their grade improves.

Policy Analysis

The lack of rigorous standards and oversight in charter school regulation, combined with the financial incentives for establishing charter schools, has exacerbated the current problems facing public schools in Michigan. Many state-level policies, such as those in Massachusetts, focus on individual charter schools, but in Michigan this would overlook the influence operators and authorizers have on education.¹⁰ Instead, enforcing quality standards for authorizers would force operators such as National Heritage Academies, which squander hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars, to improve their management and invest in students.¹¹

Currently, authorizers are able to keep 3 percent of state funds allocated for the schools they oversee, which creates a perverse incentive to open charter schools without ensuring that they provide quality education.¹² Therefore, operators are able to move to low-quality authorizers when rejected by those with strict standards.¹³ In Michigan, the state superintendent is currently allowed to prevent failing authorizers from opening new schools, but they cannot close existing failing schools or prevent existing schools from opening new campuses.¹⁴ In 2014, the state superintendent designated 11 authorizers at risk of suspension, but no further action was taken against them.¹⁵ More detailed regulation and procedures by the state legislature are necessary for these powers to be clarified and reformed to result in real punitive action. Similar reforms were successfully implemented in Minnesota, which operates in a similar political environment, in 2014.¹⁶

Next Steps

The Michigan legislature should pass a bill that extends school rating standards to charter schools and empowers the Michigan Department of Education to close chronically failing schools and prevent authorizers from opening more schools. Senator Hoon-Yung Hopgood, who serves on the Senate Education Committee, could prove a valuable ally. In 2014, Senator Hopgood introduced a senate bill that would increase oversight over charter schools.¹⁷ Although Michigan's current political climate is highly polarized, State Superintendent Brian Whiston has expressed interest in making charter schools more accountable and acts in a non-partisan position.¹⁸ Because he can publicly recommend a set of proper regulations to the legislature, he is an essential target to ensure this issue is made a priority. A coalition of support for this policy can be built by developing standards in partnership with rigorous charter schools and engaged non-profits such as the Education Trust Midwest.

Increasing Educational Opportunities for Student Parents: The Case for Mandatory CUNY Childcare Centers

By Emily Costa, Roosevelt @ CCNY

Thesis

To assure students with children equal opportunity in completing their college education, CUNY should mandate childcare centers on all campuses.

Background & Analysis

At the end of June 2015, the City College of New York, part of the City University of New York, closed its childcare facility in order to undergo a \$1.6 million renovation project without providing alternative housing for the center. This resulted in multiple layoffs and left student parents unable to continue their degrees without affordable, accessible childcare. Moreover, there has been no clarification as to whether the space will be used as a child care facility once it is renovated.¹ City College student parents expressed that the on-campus location, affordability, and student-friendly hours of the CCNY childcare center made it possible for them to pursue their degrees.² This also has broader ramifications: Student parents are more likely to drop out of college than non-student parents, and the city takes a direct loss from tuition costs and a stagnating workforce as well as from the indirect effects of greater poverty and higher tax burdens.³

Talking Points

- Neighborhood childcare options in the Harlem area are often not held to high standards, whereas CUNY childcare programs are licensed, evaluated by the New York City Department of Health, and are non-profit organizations held to government standards.^{4,5}
- The restrictiveness of state eligibility rules for childcare assistance means that student parents often have limited access to the services they need to complete their degrees.⁶
- Respondents to a 2014 CUNY survey said that off-campus childcare would be unaffordable and not fit with their schedules. Campus childcare enabled these students to enroll in more classes, participate in study groups, and take advantage of school resources.⁷

Policy Idea

CUNY should mandate childcare centers on all campuses, ensuring that student parents have access to quality care for their dependents in order to pursue their degrees. Individual CUNY schools such as CCNY should not be allowed to close childcare facilities without providing alternative, on-campus, same-quality child care services to student parents.

Policy Analysis

Making quality childcare accessible is a crucial step toward improving college completion among the 4.8 million undergraduate student parents.¹² On average, women are more likely to be caregivers and spend more time caregiving than men, meaning this policy is also important to gender equality within CUNY.¹³

KEY FACTS

- Families that earn less than \$1,500 per month with children under the age of 15 spend 40 percent of their average monthly income on childcare. Nearly 70 percent of student parents live with low incomes.⁸
- More than 68 percent of student mothers reported spending 30 or more hours a week caring for dependents, compared with 42 percent of student fathers.⁹
- Increasing the CUNY graduation rate by as little as 10 percentage points is estimated to benefit the city and state economy by \$689 million over 10 years.¹⁰
- Only 10 percent of low-income parents are enrolled in education and training programs.¹¹

One of the greatest challenges for this policy is funding. Since the 1980s, city funding for CUNY childcare has remained at \$500,000. Currently, the state contributes \$2.7 million. In the last four years, the state's Child Care Development Block Grant to CUNY was reduced from \$1.4 million to \$141,000, along with federal funding cuts for low-income students. Amidst these funding cuts, certain CUNY schools have been able to make up the shortfall and still provide subsidized childcare that is cheaper than private daycare services.¹⁴ For example, with the threat of losing its federal grant for low income students in 2010, Kingsborough College applied for Pre-K funding and received a Federal Grant that supports student parents through the provision of campus-based child care centers, allowing it to expand its services by 58 percent.¹⁵ However, this haphazard provision of childcare funding is failing CUNY student parents, as multiple campuses currently do not offer childcare of any kind.

Funding for this policy would be minimal as CUNY already has the infrastructure through its partner, the New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute (PDI), to train and recruit staff for its childcare centers funded through public-private partnership. PDI offers career development services to early childhood professionals and comprehensive guides to obtaining Early Childhood Teacher Certification.¹⁶ However, state and city funds must be reallocated in order to assure that they are being used effectively.

Next Steps

An advocacy team consisting of CUNY's City Council representatives, leadership of the PDI, and CUNY professors invested in this policy must begin by presenting this proposal to CUNY leadership in order to galvanize interest and support citywide. This proposal would then be presented to Mayor De Blasio's office. De Blasio's previous efforts to put New York City at the forefront of paid parental leave perfectly align with the benefits of a mandated CUNY childcare system.¹⁷ De Blasio would then present the proposal to the New York City Department of Education's Panel for Educational Policy in order to pass a mandate for CUNY childcare centers on all campuses.

Stopping Subminimum Wages: Establishing Regulated Pay for Disabled Workers in Rhode Island

By Brian O’Gara, *Roosevelt @ American*

Thesis

To end the prejudicial and negligent system of subminimum wages, the Rhode Island General Assembly should establish a minimum wage for developmentally disabled workers that is equal to the minimum wage of non-disabled workers, which is currently \$9.60 per hour.

Background & Analysis

Currently in Rhode Island, no minimum wage exists for employees with intellectual or developmental disabilities. Workers who suffer from special conditions that alter their developmental or mental capabilities, such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Down Syndrome (DS), receive no regulated pay. Under a 1986 congressional amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (FLSA), the statutory wage threshold for disabled workers was removed completely. Businesses were given the authority to individually decide how much to pay disabled workers.¹ While subminimum wages were established to help prevent the loss of employment opportunities for these individuals, they have only backfired. Unfortunately, these subminimum wages have led to many instances of labor exploitation and neglectful wages throughout Rhode Island. In June of 2013, a North Providence nonprofit training organization called Training Thru Placement was discovered to be paying about 200 disabled employees wages that averaged \$1.57 per hour, with one worker being paid as little as 14 cents an hour.² Although fined by the United States Department of Labor for violating provisions of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ordered to pay workers entitled back wages for overtime, Training Thru Placement was never required to raise wages going forward.³ This example demonstrates the fatal flaw of subminimum wages; they allow businesses to exploit cheap labor while facing little to no consequence.

Policy Idea

The Rhode Island General Assembly and Governor Gina Raimondo should work together to introduce, pass, and implement legislation establishing a regulated and enforced minimum wage for workers with developmental disabilities. This minimum wage should be \$9.60 per hour, which is the current state-regulated minimum wage for non-disabled workers. Rhode Island should join the ranks of New Hampshire, Maryland, Vermont, Washington, California, and New York, which have all passed legislation or taken executive action to simultaneously phase out subminimum wages and establish regulated pay for all employees, regardless of disability.⁴

Policy Analysis

Passing legislation is the only effective way to ensure that all workers receive a minimum wage. Until the force of law compels companies to pay disabled workers a certain amount, employers will continue to exploit them. This method has worked extremely well when implemented at the state level. In both New Hampshire and Maryland, bipartisan state legislatures overwhelmingly voted to phase out

KEY FACTS

- ▶ Over 28 percent of adults aged 21 to 64 with a disability live in poverty, compared with the overall 12.4 percent national poverty rate—greater than the rate for any other demographic category, including African Americans and single parent households.¹²
- ▶ In 2014, 26,700 positions—about 1 in every 15 Rhode Island jobs—belonged to someone with a disability.¹³
- ▶ As of 2014, only 35.5 percent of Rhode Islanders with a disability were employed, compared to 79.8 percent of non-disabled Rhode Islanders.¹⁴

and replace subminimum wages for disabled workers: Maryland's bill passed 109 to 29 in the House of Burgesses and 44 to 2 in the Senate, while New Hampshire's legislation was passed into law with a unanimous vote in the Senate.^{5,6} Disabled Americans comprise the largest minority demographic in the United States and represent a significant portion of the workforce, both nationwide and in Rhode Island.⁷ Nearly 7 percent of the state's total jobs are fulfilled by Rhode Islanders with developmental disabilities, meaning that more than 26,000 workers are not currently being paid any regulated wage. Furthermore, the median income per year for disabled workers is \$5,700 less than the median income for non-disabled full-time employees, while the annual cost of living for Rhode Islanders with disabilities is almost twice as much – due to heightened support staff, medical, and transportation expenses.⁸

Talking Points

- Most workplace changes made in order to accommodate employees with disabilities are minimal and cost nothing, such as dress code allowances and more flexible work hours.⁹
- Disabled workers provide unique advantages to businesses and help create diverse, attractive, and competitive workplaces.¹⁰
- Paying disabled workers a competitive minimum wage would significantly decrease the demand for government assistance, and therefore overall state spending.¹¹

Next Steps

The next full legislative session for the Rhode Island General Assembly will take place from January to June of 2018. By September of 2017, a coalition of nonprofit organizations and public interest groups should be formed to lobby members of the General Assembly and Governor Raimondo to introduce and pass legislation replacing subminimum wages. This coalition should specifically include organizations centered around strengthening the rights and opportunities of disabled workers in the state, such as the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College, the state chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the Governor's Commission on Disabilities, and the Rhode Island Disability Law Center. These lobbying efforts should be directed at Senator Frank A. Ciccone III and Representative Joseph Shekarchi, since they lead their legislative chambers' respective labor committees. To maximize effectiveness, the coalition should also work to gain public support via a statewide public relations campaign.

Small Business Loan Discrimination: Encouraging Commercial Banks to Lend to Underprivileged Groups

By Aaron Vickery, Roosevelt @ UGA

Thesis

The state of Georgia should implement a “Linked Deposit Program,” modelled after Washington State’s 1993 Minority and Women Owned Business Assistance Act, in order to support minority entrepreneurship and reduce minority unemployment.

Background & Analysis

In 2008, commercial banks began tightening their lending standards due to the fallout from the subprime mortgage crisis.¹ This tightening resulted in entire communities being completely ignored by banks—an illegal act called “redlining”—and a large portion of minority groups being denied loans or offered unfair terms. Current laws in place that make it illegal for lenders to discriminate based on race—the Equal Rights Opportunity Act, Fair Housing Act, and Consumer Credit Protection Act²—are not sufficient to eradicate this problem.

Reports have found that black borrowers are 25–35 percent less likely to receive funding than their white counterparts.³ Blacks and Hispanics are less likely than white borrowers to receive business loans even when they have similar credit ratings, backgrounds, and loan sizes.⁴ On average, minority business owners also pay interest rates 3.2 percent higher than their white counterparts.⁵ When minority groups are left out or discouraged from borrowing, they cannot obtain the funding they need to start up their own small business. This lack of small business ownership within minority communities results in a lack of jobs for members of these communities and makes economic development in these communities even more difficult. Likewise, minority-owned firms are less likely to apply for loans out of fear of rejection, further stifling the economy.⁶ In Georgia, the unemployment rate for African Americans is 9.3 percent, and for Hispanic women it is 7.9 percent.⁷

Talking Points

- Post-recession economic growth in low-income/minority communities is still lower than any other group.
- Discriminatory access to loans is an additional hurdle to would-be entrepreneurs, stifling economic growth.
- A linked deposit program would incentivize banks to invest more equitably by offering state deposits at a reduced interest rate.

Policy Idea

In order to incentivize banks to lend to minority business owners, the Georgia state legislature should establish a linked deposit program (LDP) modeled after the 1993 Minority and Women Owned Business Assistance Act in Washington State. The State Treasurer would purchase up to \$130 million worth of certificates of deposit (CD) from banks equivalent to the amount lent to business owners certified as a Minority Business Enterprise (MBE). These CDs would be deposited at an interest rate lower than the market rate, and the interest rate on the loan would be reduced by an equivalent amount up to 3 percent.

KEY FACTS

- ▶ Minority firms with gross receipts under and over \$500,000 are 6% and 11% less likely, respectively, to receive business loans than their non-minority counterparts.¹⁷
- ▶ On average, minority business owners pay interest rates 3.2 percent higher than their white counterparts.¹⁸
- ▶ An LDP program in Georgia would lower interest rates on loans by 2–3 percent, creating or retaining one job for every \$60,000 borrowed.¹⁹

Policy Analysis

LDPs are an effective tool for improving the economy of targeted sectors. Since 1994, the New York LDP has lowered the interest rate for over 5,300 loans, resulting in \$1.79 billion in lending and \$3.77 billion in new capital investment. New York's LDP projects that its 2015 lending created 431 jobs and retained 556 jobs;⁸ these numbers will improve as market interest rates increase.⁹

Under this policy, the State Treasurer's Office and the Georgia Minority Supplier Development Council (GMSDC) would be authorized to make linked deposits totaling \$130 million. These funds would be deposited into the lending banks at a reduced rate up to 3 percent and compensated by the banks reducing their loan interest rate by an equal amount. An LDP in Georgia would target 138,000 unemployed African Americans and 22,000 unemployed Hispanics.¹⁰ As a result, 2,100 Georgia residents will gain or retain a full-time job annually.¹¹ LDP would contribute \$520 million per year to the Georgia economy,¹² much of which would flow within previously disenfranchised communities. Increased wealth would improve minority living standards and balance the minority unemployment rate. Black and Hispanic entrepreneurs, otherwise discouraged, would actively seek business loans due to low interest rates; black men and Hispanic women in particular would benefit significantly as they are more disenfranchised within the workforce.¹³

Various lenders, eager to hold the state's deposits, would be incentivized to lend to minority groups. LDP loans would pose no additional risks to banks because borrowers must still meet lending standards.¹⁴ The \$130 million in deposits would not be tied to the state budget or fiscal year, and the state would not incur any risk from defaults.¹⁵ The funds would be a revolving pool which would return to the programs within eight years, yielding a positive return of \$2.6 million. The LDP would likely receive bipartisan support since it would promote self-sufficient economic growth and entrepreneurship.

Next Steps

The LDP ultimately needs the support of the Georgia Treasurer's Office and members of the Georgia Department of Economics. Using their research and projections, the Georgia State Legislature should analyze the validity and necessity of the program. The LDP must be passed as a code under Georgia's Title 7.¹⁶ The funds for the program would originate from the state's short-term surplus funds; the Treasurer's Office and Georgia Minority Supplier Development Council would be authorized to use \$130 million for linked deposits. The state would offer the program to reputable banks and lenders, who would in turn privately reach out to minority entrepreneurs, offering them more frequent and fair loans.

Protecting the Innocent: Pretrial Actual Innocence Review as an Alternative Legal Solution

By Garrett Shor, Roosevelt @ Binghamton

Thesis

Broome County, NY, should establish Pretrial Actual Innocence Review procedures in its District Attorney's Office. This will reduce stress on public defender's offices, improve public trust in law enforcement, and, most importantly, reduce mistaken convictions by giving defendants another option to provide for their defense.

Background & Analysis

In the U.S in recent decades, there has been an increase in the use of incarceration and criminalization as a solution to rising crime rates, and while crime rates have fallen, the prison population has grown substantially as from 1978 to 2014 it grew 408%, and 1 in 35 American adults are in some form of correctional control.¹

Since 1995, felony charges have increased, but funding for public defenders has fallen.² In America, more than 80 percent of criminal defendants are indigent, meaning that they qualify for public defenders.³ The increase in felonies and lack of funding has caused many attorneys to be given larger caseloads than recommended by the American Bar Association.⁴ Because of this, public defenders cannot devote sufficient time to preparing their clients' defense.⁵ These increased caseloads associated with aggressive prosecutorial behavior spurred on by a trend from the 1980s which focuses on incarceration to combat crime.

All told, 94 percent of state criminal cases in the U.S. today end in plea bargains.⁶ In addition to the overloading of public defenders, this is due largely to the hardship of pretrial confinement for the impoverished, which is such that defendants will plead guilty to be released, regardless of their actual guilt because extended confinement causes severe mental stress due to the uncertainty of the case outcome and it gives the prosecutor greater time to bargain and scare a defendant with the threat of greater punishment after a trial.⁷

Talking Points

- In 2009, Attorney General Eric Holder declared that indigent defense systems in the U.S were in a "state of crisis" and needed to be addressed.⁸
- A Pretrial Actual Innocence Review Protocol would begin to relieve the stress on indigent defense systems by giving defendants an additional alternative to plea bargaining or trial.
- It is imperative that innocent people not be imprisoned due to lack of resources for legal defense.
- Eyewitness testimony has been demonstrated to be unreliable in criminal cases, and cases which rely upon identification of the defendant by a single eyewitness have repeatedly been found faulty.⁹ Pretrial review will give District Attorneys an opportunity to examine testimony and find possible faults with its validity.

Policy Idea

A Pretrial Actual Innocence Review Protocol presents a new option for those falsely accused of criminal acts by changing the process of defendant intake. Upon an initial meeting between a defendant and their lawyer, the defendant will have the option to request an Actual Innocence Review. The defendant will be subjected to a polygraph test, and if they pass, an Assistant District Attorney will review the physical

evidence, witness testimony, and background on the case. If they cannot establish a “moral certainty” of guilt, then all charges will be dropped.

Policy Analysis

These problems with the current system fall heavily on minority populations, as well as the impoverished.¹⁰ These groups have been found to be disproportionately charged with crimes, and often lack the resources for defense.¹¹ In Broome, the poverty rate is 42.2 percent for African Americans, and 41.1 percent for Latinos, compared to only 15.3 percent for whites.¹² These populations have their defense undermined by both the negative impacts of poverty, and the disproportionate arrest of minorities. By implementing an Actual Innocence Policy, we can reduce the impact of these issues, and prevent the hardship of pretrial confinement, which is not only unjust, but also increases the likelihood of future criminal activity and unemployment.¹³

KEY FACTS

- ▶ Out of 646,000 Americans are in local jails, 451,000 are held pretrial.^{16 17}
- ▶ 73 percent of public defenders exceeded their recommended caseload in recent years.¹⁸
- ▶ Recidivism increases 51 percent after a week of pretrial confinement.¹⁹

By intervening before trial, this policy removes the burden of a criminal record and prevents hardship for the unjustly accused. Unlike other programs such as Conviction Integrity Units, this policy will address the issue before any prison time is served. It provides the investigatory resources necessary for a proper defense to those who are innocent, helping to address the crisis of indigent defense.

This policy is similar to one in St. Clair County, Illinois, which, in its first year, resulted in nine exonerations, including a murder case.¹⁴ The review process caused exonerating evidence and details to be uncovered. The polygraph testing will additionally prevent guilty people from exploiting the procedure by acting as a deterrent to improper review requests. While the reliability of polygraphs for detecting specific lies is questionable, there is evidence to suggest that they tend to deter people from telling falsehoods.¹⁵ Additionally, failing the test is not admissible as evidence in further proceedings.

Next Steps

The Broome County District Attorney's Office should organize the program, in concert with the Broome County Public Defender's Office. To get the policy implemented, contact will be established with the Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York and NYPIRG, both of whom are interested in developing equal justice policies, and can give assistance in pushing for the Actual Innocence Policy.

In addition to these organizations, contact can be initiated with the Binghamton University Sociology department, which has numerous members interested in developing these types of policies in Broome County.

The current Broome County District Attorney is Steve Cornwell, who we can work with to implement this policy because of his inclination to improve the reputation of the county's government, alongside the new County Executive, Jason Garnar. This policy can serve as a model for other counties throughout New York, and the nation.

Support in Sickness: Expanding Family and Medical Leave Access in Virginia

By Nadia Busekrus, *Roosevelt @ Mason*

Thesis

Due to limitations in the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), many workers do not qualify for its protections. Virginia should expand FMLA coverage by modifying criteria for leave eligibility and applying FMLA to all businesses regardless of size.

Background & Analysis

Under the Family and Medical Leave Act, employees of large companies (those with 50+ employees) who work at least 1,250 hours over a span of 12 months are eligible for unpaid family or medical leave.¹ Though revolutionary for its time, this national minimal coverage law was passed with fairly bipartisan support.² Nonetheless, it has some notable shortcomings. Whether or not leave is paid and whether employees are mandated to apply sick leave for FMLA-qualifying absences is up to the discretion of individual employers. Currently only five states ensure paid sick leave, and only three mandate paid family leave.³ According to a 2012 report on FMLA by the Department of Labor, less than 60 percent of workers at worksites eligible for FMLA met the qualifications necessary for protection.⁴ This statistic leaves room for improvement, particularly as it does not include workers in small companies who are not covered by the FMLA at all. Many states have passed supplemental legislation expanding FMLA coverage, but Virginia is one of 42 states that has not.^{5,6} As a result, some employees are forced to decide between taking needed time to care for their health and keeping their jobs. The FMLA should be expanded to support all workers and their families.

Talking Points

- The Family and Medical Leave Act must be reformed because it currently covers only a fraction of Virginia's workforce.
- Costs—financial and otherwise—of expanding FMLA coverage are minimal.
- Following the model of Oregon's Family Leave Act, Virginia should expand the FMLA to cover employees at smaller companies and employees without a long tenure.
- Labor rights advocacy leaders like the Center for American Progress and the National Partnership for Women and Families already lobby for FMLA expansion and will be important partners in this effort.

Policy Idea

Virginia legislators should expand the FMLA to apply to all businesses and employers, not just those with more than 50 employees, making all workers FMLA-eligible. This legislation should also decrease the tenure requirement for leave eligibility from 1,250 hours over 12 months to a minimum of 180 calendar days with at least 25 hours of work a week, so that more workers are able to receive the protection of the FMLA.

KEY FACTS

- ▶ In 2012, the U.S. Department of Labor estimated that the FMLA applied to less than 10 percent of worksites, comprising only about 68 percent of the national workforce.¹³
- ▶ In those worksites that are FMLA eligible, less than 60 percent of workers qualify for FMLA protections.¹⁴
- ▶ Although states can pass additional legislation to expand FMLA coverage, Virginia has not yet done so.¹⁵
- ▶ In a 2012 Department of Labor survey, only 66.2 percent of employees were aware of their rights under the FMLA and only 36.5 percent had been made aware of these rights by their employer or HR department.¹⁶

Policy Analysis

Although the FMLA has been successfully enacted for over 20 years, more than 30 percent of the national workforce still does not qualify for its protections.⁷ In 2014, the White House Task Force on the Middle Class stated that greater access to work leave is necessary, and FMLA expansion should be at least considered if not pursued.⁸ Expanding the FMLA on a state level is ideal because many states have already passed FMLA expansion legislation, providing clear precedents that Virginia legislators can follow. In fact, this policy's recommendations for tenure requirement changes are based on Oregon's Family Leave Act, successfully expanded several times since its enactment in 1995.⁹ Virginia should also expand the FMLA to all worksites. A report by the U.S. Department of Labor reveals that, of worksites not under the FMLA, "32.3 percent offer parental leave and only 41.7 percent offer leave to care for a seriously ill child, spouse or parent," compared to 90 percent of FMLA-covered worksites.¹⁰

Time has shown fears about giving access to leave to be unfounded. The same Labor Department report found minimal costs for providing FMLA protections to employees, suggesting that there is little reason not to expand family and medical leave access.¹¹ While some employers were reluctant to adopt FMLA guidelines when the law was first passed, today at least 90 percent of employers that comply with FMLA note either neutral or positive effects on workplace functioning.¹² As has been the case elsewhere, the impact of expanding FMLA in Virginia is likely to be positive.

Next Steps

The next step is to lobby Virginia state legislators to write and pass FMLA expansion, as outlined above. In light of the successful FMLA expansion efforts of other states, particularly those of Oregon, Virginia legislators have many potential models to follow in authoring and enacting an expansion. Key in lobbying efforts will be partner organizations including the National Partnership for Women and Families and the Center for American Progress, who are notable advocates for family and medical leave access rights. Additionally, employers will need to be informed of how FMLA expansion would impact their businesses, and employees will need to be informed of their rights under an expanded state FMLA.

Addressing a Data Deficit: Using the Cleveland Health Department to Track Police-Involved Deaths

By Valerie Nauman, *Roosevelt @ George Washington*

Thesis

A data deficit gathered by non-law enforcement entities hinders policymaking to address police-involved deaths, both nationwide and in the city of Cleveland. The Cleveland Health Department should monitor such deaths through an independent, mandatory investigatory process in order to address this deficit for future policymaking.

Background & Analysis

The American Public Health Association identifies legal-intervention deaths, deaths caused by law-enforcement officials in the pursuit of arrest or legal action, and police brutality as public health concerns that disproportionately affect people of color and calls on government agencies to address them as they would other public health issues.¹ Doing so requires accurate assessments of scope and comprehensive, unbiased study in order to address the systemic breakdown that causes these issues. Currently, this is restricted by the lack of resources or data on these deaths provided by non-law enforcement entities. At the national level, one framework for this is the National Violent Death Reporting System, a part of the Centers for Disease Control; however, that database is built on voluntary participation and voluntary reporting of all violent deaths, not just deaths involving law enforcement. Reporting to the FBI is also voluntary, and the FBI Director has said that the data is unreliable as a result.² He also stated that the fact that journalists keep better track of legal-intervention deaths than the government does is “embarrassing.”³ Due to some recent high-profile incidents of police shootings, a Consent Decree was filed in September 2016 by the mayor of Cleveland, Ohio, opening up the police department’s use-of-force policy to public feedback.⁴ The city must act in order to stem the tide of this public health crisis, protect its citizens as well as its law enforcement officers, and improve community relations with the police.

Talking Points

- There is a severe deficit in data on legal-intervention deaths, which hinders policymaking to address this issue.
- Most data on legal-intervention deaths come from news media and law enforcement agencies, which could pose a conflict of interest.
- In 2014, the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division investigated Cleveland’s police department and determined that it “engages in a pattern or practice of the use of excessive force in violation of the Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution.” The DOJ cited insufficient accountability as one of the causes for a systemic breakdown resulting in the use of excessive force.⁵
- The Cleveland Department of Public Health Division of Disease Prevention already tracks intentional injuries and violence, therefore, this policy has a framework in place to enact this policy.

Policy Idea

As legal-intervention deaths concern both physical and mental health, the Cleveland Department of Public Health’s Division of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion should keep records on such deaths in order to address the deficit of data surrounding them. This will aid in future policymaking by serving as an unbiased governmental source of data.

Policy Analysis

Nationally, from 1999 to 2013, rates of legal-intervention deaths among blacks were 2.33 times higher than among whites.⁶ Legal-intervention deaths disproportionately affect persons of color and create a toxic stress environment that puts a considerable strain on community health, both physical and mental.⁷ The most consistent sources of data on legal-intervention deaths are *The Washington Post* and *The Guardian* as other governmental methods are non-mandatory while news sources have the capacity to go out and gather data. The Cleveland Division of Health functions with a taxpayer-funded budget of \$4,392,501 and a revenue of \$1,446,666.⁸ The costs of implementing this policy will be negligible, as it can be done by an existing division that already addresses “intentional injuries.”⁹ Costs may arise in the future based on volume and a need for a specially designed database; however, a recent settlement of wrongful death that occurred after a police shooting in Cleveland cost the city both a young life and \$6 million.¹⁰ Thus, any costs of the policy should be weighed against the potential cost of legal disputes but most of all value of saving lives.

The direct impact of collecting unbiased data will be small, but the indirect impact will create capacity for policymaking that can properly address community-police relations and legal-intervention deaths. Moreover, this policy will decrease the toxic stress environment and other negative health factors created by poor community-police relations. While some may argue that this record-keeping already happens, rendering this policy purposeless, it only exists in a voluntary fashion or from law enforcement agencies, which could have a conflict of interest.

KEY FACTS

- ▶ The city of Cleveland recently settled a wrongful death suit from an instance of police violence for \$6 million.¹¹ In 2015, 991 people nationwide were fatally shot by police officers.¹²
- ▶ A report by the Department of Justice found that only 51 out of 1,500 officers in the Cleveland Police Department were disciplined in any way for a use-of-force incident in three and a half years.¹³
- ▶ In 2012, over 100 police officers or 37 percent of officers on duty engaged in the same high-speed chase that left two unarmed citizens dead.¹⁴

Next Steps

To remedy the data deficit, the Division of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, which already deals with intentional injuries and violence data, should keep records of legal-intervention deaths in the city in order to support further policy work to address police brutality as a public health concern. The existing line of communication between the Police Department and the Department of Public Health used to track violent deaths will be utilized for the mandated reporting of legal intervention deaths. The Acting Commissioner of Health, Kathy Rothenberg-James, would need to be introduced to this solution, and it would be included in the work of the violence prevention division. The Mayor’s office should facilitate the mandate on inter-departmental reporting. Eventually, the availability of this data will bridge the gap in information and allow future policymakers in Cleveland to address legal-intervention deaths.

Election Vouchers: Fighting the Role of Big Money in Local Politics

By Nick Thomas, Roosevelt @ Humboldt

Thesis

Creating a publicly-financed election voucher system for Board of Supervisor races would allow Humboldt County, California to minimize the influence of wealthy individuals on the political process while also improving the diversity of elected officeholders.

Background & Analysis

In recent years, and especially in the wake of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Citizens United*, there has been a torrent of money entering the political sphere,¹ largely originating from a highly concentrated donor network.² To that end, it is estimated that 40 percent of political contributions come from the wealthiest .01 percent of households.³ This has created a system where a subset of Americans are able to wield undue influence in the political process, skewing governance in their favor. Studies show that wealthier individuals are much likelier to have their policy preferences enacted, while the preferences of the bottom third have no impact.⁴ Beyond this simple inequity, the pervasiveness of big money in politics has important implications because donors are disproportionately white and male and the need to raise large sums of money is a bigger obstacle for female and non-white candidates.⁵ On the local level, a similar story has played out with regard to the rising costs of elections.⁶ Successful candidates for the Board of Supervisors have recently raised an upwards of \$50,000 each, a large amount for a small county with a median income of about \$42,000. Moreover, for at least one successful incumbent, about 40 percent of all funds came from contributions of at least \$1,000.⁷ Since the size of these contributions are unattainable for most, these donors over-represent the business community and other wealthy individuals.

Talking Points

- Fundraising in Humboldt County Supervisor elections is currently dominated by large-scale contributions.
- These large donations skew governance toward policies that do not align with the preferences of the overall electorate.
- Public financing is shown to be an effective solution for increasing electoral competitiveness and the government's responsiveness to the needs of a broader constituency.⁸
- Election vouchers will make Supervisors more accountable to ordinary voters as opposed to a subsection of wealthy individuals.

The Policy Idea

Funded through the county's general fund, registered voters in the candidates' districts will receive a voucher worth \$20 and have the option to donate it to their preferred candidate. Allocated money that goes unutilized, either due to a candidate running unopposed or vouchers not being returned, will be saved for future elections. It is assumed that 10 percent of the 15,000 voters in each district will return the voucher, which is slightly less than the estimate for Seattle's new financing system.⁹ Therefore, \$30,000 will be infused into each race.

KEY FACTS

- ▶ The policy goals of the wealthiest 10 percent of Americans are 15 times more likely to be implemented than those of everyone else, while the preferences of the bottom third have almost no impact on outcomes.¹⁵
- ▶ Only 28 percent of Americans believe the government's policies benefit the middle class.¹⁶
- ▶ Arizona's public financing program resulted in individual contributions tripling, driven mostly by people making less than \$50,000 a year.¹⁷ Seattle's voucher system, which is more extensive than this proposal, costs just .062 percent of the city's overall budget.¹⁸

Policy Analysis

The primary goal of election vouchers is increasing the political influence of average voters. Historically, cases of public financing like Arizona's have led to the largest increases in contributions among lower-income people and increased the diversity of officeholders.¹⁰ While these facts indicate that other forms of public financing have been beneficial, they have nonetheless faced serious issues. Because public financing systems must be able to effectively control the amount of funds being used, they create additional requirements for candidates in how they raise money and how much they can spend. This has resulted in many candidates opting out of public funding, undermining public financing and promoting the image of candidate who utilize these funds as unviable.¹¹ For example, Los Angeles' matching system has increased the power of small donations and has succeeded in decreasing the amount of business donations from 64 percent of all contributions to 25 percent.¹² However, even though over 70 percent of candidates generally participate, Los Angeles has run into problems because many incumbents have opted out due to the stipulated spending restrictions.¹³ Similarly, in Seattle's voucher program, it is possible that candidates may opt out due to the restrictions on private contributions and the required spending cap.¹⁴ My proposed election voucher system avoids the issue entirely because it makes public funds supplementary, foregoing the need for a spending limit or candidates opting in to receive funds. Meanwhile, it will achieve many of the positives such as equity of political influence and increased opportunity for all candidates.

Next Steps

There are two primary ways this policy could be enacted. One would be through an ordinance passed by the County Board of Supervisors. This would involve gaining the support of incoming Supervisor, Mike Wilson -- who would likely be the most sympathetic person on the Board -- and generating an upswell in public support. However, this is probably the less likely scenario because it is unclear the extent to which the other Supervisors would support an ordinance that would directly impact their re-elections. The other method would be through the county initiative process. This would require gathering signatures, after which the Board of Supervisors would either pass the ordinance or call for an election. Beyond working with select members on the Board, it would be advantageous to get the support of the Democratic Central Committee and grassroots advocacy groups such as the North Coast People's Alliance.

Increased Street Cleaning in D.C.: Protecting Residents from Hazardous Sewage

By Ahyoung Kim-Lee, Roosevelt @ Cornell

Thesis

Water discharged from D.C.'s combined sewers poses a health hazard to residents. Editing D.C. Municipal Regulations to facilitate increased street cleaning under D.C.'s Department of Public Works will mitigate overflow intensity by preventing debris and contaminants from entering the watershed.

Background & Analysis

One third of D.C. is serviced by "combined sewers," in which storm water and sanitary sewage are transported via the same pipe to Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant.¹ When the city receives over a quarter-inch of precipitation,² the overwhelmed sewers discharge this mixture of untreated water into the Anacostia River, Potomac River, and Rock Creek.³ This event, known as a combined sewer overflow (CSO), is aggravated when trash from the street enters storm drains. Debris reduces the pipe's volume and capacity to hold water, and creates blockages that divert pathogenic sewage into the watershed. Toxic metals and cancer-causing organic compounds from the street also wash into waterways via overflows.⁴ Exposure via drinking, inhaling, or direct contact with contaminated water can cause residents to contract diseases.⁵ Most vulnerable to CSOs are low-income communities, which are often situated near waterways,⁶ and those with sensitive immune systems, such as the young and elderly.⁷

While D.C. Water, under the EPA's supervision, is sponsoring a \$2.6 billion project to build a tunnel to safely capture overflows, the endeavor will not be complete until 2025.⁸ Meanwhile, to protect the immediate health of D.C. residents, street cleaning is a practical, targeted approach to reduce debris and hazardous particulate matter pollutants from entering combined sewers. Currently, D.C.'s streets are swept only once a month between March 1 and October 31.⁹

Talking Points

- The EPA promotes street cleaning as an effective method to reduce pollutants from entering waterways during CSOs.¹⁰
- Pathogenic contaminants discharged into waterways via untreated sewage water are an immediate health hazard to D.C. residents.
- Increasing the frequency of street cleaning is a relatively cheap way to mitigate CSO intensity and can be implemented in the near future.

Policy Idea

The D.C. City Council would insert a clause into Action E-4.6A (Expanded Trash Collection and Street Sweeping) under D.C. Municipal Regulations' Rule 10-A623, specifying that the Department of Public Works will clean arterial and residential roads via mechanical sweepers once every two weeks.^{11 12} Funding needs could be met by increasing the fine for violating street-cleaning parking restrictions by \$15 (from \$45 to \$60). Furthermore, the EPA could collaborate with Public Works to promote awareness regarding the dangers of CSOs to incentivize D.C.

KEY FACTS

► Combined sewers, initially installed in 1855, reflect a dated form of city planning.²³ Predictions for the summer of 2015 showed a total of 279 combined sewer overflows spread amongst 30 different sites, discharging polluted water into D.C.'s watershed.²⁴

► Pathogens present in raw sewage from CSOs can cause gastroenteritis, intestinal worms, and cholera.²⁵

► In FY2014, an additional \$1 million was raised when the street cleaning parking violation fine was increased by \$15 (from \$30 to \$45).²⁶

residents to comply with the increased fine.

Policy Analysis

Preventing pollutants from entering the sewer by increasing the frequency of street cleaning is more cost-effective than treating waterways after an overflow. While a water treatment facility yields an outcome similar to street cleaning, it costs more to treat each pound of pollutant.¹³ Also, since the Department of Public Works already possesses mechanical sweeper machines, expanded street cleaning is more readily implementable.

Other cities have already implemented policies to prevent debris from clogging sewers.¹⁴ In 2014, Baltimore's expanded street cleaning program covered 76,000 more miles of street and collected an additional 401.1 tons of trash.¹⁵ This debris removal prevented flooding due to blockage and protected the Chesapeake Bay from pollutants.¹⁶ Meanwhile, predictions for the summer of 2015 forecasted 334.9 million gallons of water released into D.C.'s watershed.¹⁷

Alerting residents to the intensity of CSOs and to street cleaning's role in reducing pathogenic pollutants would encourage compliance with increased cleaning and higher parking violation fines. The EPA and D.C. Public Works could implement a public education program, disseminating information via public service announcements and on residents' sewer and water bills.

Doubling the frequency of street cleaning would cost approximately \$1.04 million more annually, as 26,000 miles of D.C. streets are cleaned annually,¹⁸ and it costs \$40 per curb-mile to operate and maintain a mechanical sweeper.¹⁹ The occurrence of parking violations would likely increase if streets were cleaned biweekly, thus yielding more money to offset increased costs.

Next Steps

The implementation of the proposed policy should be relatively easy, as finances come from D.C. residents rather than the local government. While Public Works is responsible for managing the new street-cleaning schedule, D.C.'s City Council reviews and approves budgets, and therefore holds the power to orchestrate the increase in parking violation fines. Demonstrating that increased street cleaning will create more jobs and stimulate the economy²⁰ should incentivize the City Council to approve this changed budget. Due to the immediate need for action, the \$15 fine increase and expanded street cleaning schedule would be made effective at the start of FY2018. Meanwhile, the EPA, which has already collaborated with D.C.'s government to mitigate CSOs, would serve as an influential powerhouse to push the implementation of this policy.^{21 22}

Preventing Homegrown Terrorism: Establishing a Deradicalization Program in New York State

By Vishal Mathew, Roosevelt @ Binghamton

Thesis

The New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) and the New York State Office of Counterterrorism (OCT) should implement a formal de-radicalization program based on the “Exit” and “Hayat” programs to decrease homegrown terrorism and protect civilians.

Background & Analysis

In response to the emergence of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and the Syrian Civil War, the United States has provided training and weapons to the Kurdish Peshmerga and the Free Syrian Army. While these policies managed to stop ISIS’s expansion and even diminish its territory and strength, attacks from the group have not been contained to that region. With the internet, one of the most powerful radicalization tools,¹ ISIS and other extremist groups have radicalized frustrated individuals and convinced them to commit solo terrorist attacks around the world. In fact, these lone-wolf terrorist (LWT) attacks are “poised to increasingly replace group-actor terrorist attacks for the foreseeable future.”^{2 3}

The primary targets of these strategies are young people, and parents and friends are often the first to notice changes in the radicalized person’s behavior.⁴ As a result, they must either make the difficult decision to notify the authorities and possibly ruin the rest of the person’s life or ignore the situation, which could result in tremendous harm to other civilians. In one instance, Sal Shafi handed his son Adam over to the FBI and thought to himself, “my God, I just destroyed Adam.”⁵ However, in most cases, family members remain silent.⁶ According to a House Committee on Homeland Security report, around 12 percent of ISIS-related plots such as the one Adam Shafi was considering committing had targets in New York, the most for any one state.⁷ Therefore, it is imperative that New York State implement an alternative method to prevent homegrown terrorism.

Talking Points

- Without a formal de-radicalization program, the United States and New York are setting themselves up for disaster, as lone-wolf terrorist attacks are expected to increasingly replace group-actor terrorist attacks in the future.⁸
- Family and community members who know about an individual’s radicalization must choose between informing the authorities and possibly ruining that person’s life or ignoring the situation and potentially harming other civilians.
- Current methods of countering homegrown terrorism are inherently discriminatory.
- Addressing radicalization not just as a national security concern but also as a treatable mental health issue could lead to more humane treatment of terrorism suspects.

Policy Idea

The German-based Hayat and Exit programs focus on information and family-oriented counseling to discover the underlying reasons behind the radicalization and provide psychological assistance and legal mediation. This program has been exported to Britain and there are plans to implement it in Australia and Canada.⁹ The OMH and the OCT should, with assistance from experts at Hayat Germany, recreate the program here and make it available to all NYS residents. This can be done by amending New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Title 14 to include de-radicalization programs to the jurisdiction of the Department of Mental Hygiene (DMH).

Policy Analysis

Other attempts at countering LWT have remained largely ineffective because there isn't clear leadership in coordinating strategy.¹⁰ As a result, various departments and agencies nationwide and locally have approached the issue differently. For example, the New York Police Department uses comprehensive surveillance and intelligence gathering based on individual profile analysis of LWT cases.¹¹ This policy is troubling for numerous reasons. Even though the NYPD report on radicalization concedes that there is no effective way of profiling because LWTs come from diverse racial and socioeconomic backgrounds,¹² it encourages profiling by unfairly suggesting that certain "signatures" exist in the radicalization process, such as "religious conduct" and "expressive activity" in young Muslim-Americans.¹³

Aside from its potential implications for civil liberties, the Institute of Homeland Security finds that profiling has stopped 19 percent of terrorist plots in the United States.¹⁴ However, the same report finds that 40 percent of foiled terrorist plots come from targeted observations and tips from community members.¹⁵ However, in 63 percent of cases, people close to the radicalized individual were verbally told about the terrorist plot, meaning 23 percent more could have been reported.¹⁶ This implies that other potential terrorist plots could be foiled by making it easier for community members to report them, allowing law enforcement in the future to replace existing discriminatory methods.

This is exactly the problem Hayat and Exit targeted by establishing emergency helplines for these situations. They provide free counseling to families conducted by experts on extremism (Islamic for Hayat, Right-Wing for Exit). In terms of treatment, Exit has a 2 percent recidivism rate in over 500 cases.¹⁷ They have been praised as one of the "most successful" programs.¹⁸ Its success has been attributed to its extensive use of ideology in counseling, and its structure which encourages exchange between practitioners and researchers to constantly improve methods of de-radicalization.¹⁹ There is currently no scientific data on Hayat, but it is similar in structure and use of ideology to Exit.

KEY FACTS

- ▶ LWT attacks are 16 times more common now in the United States than in 1950.²⁰ The comprehensive surveillance and intelligence gathering programs that are currently implemented has stopped 19 percent of foiled terrorist plots compared to the 40% from targeted observations and tips.²¹
- ▶ In 63 percent of cases, family and friends were verbally told by the individuals of their intention to participate in terrorism-related activities.²²
- ▶ The Exit program has obtained a 2 percent recidivism rate over 500 cases because of its unique structure and extensive use of ideology.

Next Steps

The New York State legislature should amend the law to add de-radicalization programs to the jurisdiction of the DMH. This will allow the New York State Office of Mental Health to set up such a program throughout the state. The Office of Mental Health should immediately contact the experts at the Hayat and Exit programs and ask them to come to the United States to assist with the project as they did in Britain.²³ The New York State Office of Counterterrorism should assist in establishing the program by creating a surveillance system to ensure radicalized individuals do not travel outside the United States and implementing the emergency helpline, combining it with existing tip lines and marketing the availability of such a service.

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