



May 21, 2007

To Whom it May Concern,

As chair of the ACLU of Florida's, Treasure Coast Chapter, I'm familiar with the problems associated with and/or stemming from St. Lucie County's chronically overcrowded jail.

I was not surprised when the St. Lucie Board of County Commissioners was urged to increase the jail with the building of additional "pods".

Thankfully, even as the Commission agreed to fund the building of additions to the jail, the Commission agreed to commission a study of the entire system, in hopes of finding positive ways to reduce the need for more jail beds.

Until I started reading the ILPP report, I couldn't imagine how a study was going to save our county from what seemed to be an unending need to increase jail capacity.

As more local people saw the report and shared their perspective, I began to understand that alternatives are possible. The more diverse the expertise of those who read it, the more we all learned from one another, the more exponential the effect of the suggestions revealed by the study.

I was so impressed with the diverse positive affects many of us realized from the study, that our chapter Board invited Dr. Alan Kalmanoff to a public forum on the subject, ultimately hosted by the League of Women Voters of St. Lucie County.

Dr. Kalmanoff and ILPP were further contracted to study the "space needs" of our county. When that study was complete, Dr. Kalmanoff returned to present the space needs study, repeated the "critical issues" of both reports and offered his continued assistance.

I'm disappointed that more of the suggestions have not been implemented, since those which have, made a significant difference that will continue. It is my hope that the public will recognize the benefits of implementing more of the recommendations. Our continuing challenge is to move judges, commissioners and other elected officials to acknowledge the need to implement these sound ideas, and in doing so, restore and maintain the rights we have.

Sincerely,

T.A. Wyner, President  
ACLU of Florida  
Treasure Coast Chapter  
8800 Okeechobee Road #36  
Fort Pierce, Fl. 34945