

If there is no justice there cannot be peace. Hello everyone. My name is Callie. I flew out from Minnesota so I could be here today to speak on behalf of our loved ones who are trapped inside the Vermont DOC facilities and cannot speak for themselves. What I am going to tell you today is one person's story, but in a failing system like this one, it could be anybody's story. I thank you all for taking the time to listen to what I have to say and doing all you can to support this very important cause.

I want to tell you today about someone very special and very important to me. He is the kindest, most brilliant, talented, intelligent, and selfless person I have ever known. He chooses to spend his holidays volunteering and serving meals to people in need. You may have seen him here in Brattleboro on past Thanksgivings. He has voluntarily officiated funerals bringing inspiration, comfort, and hope to the grieving loved ones. He has said since he was a small child that he believed his purpose in life is to bring people joy, give hope to the hopeless, and show love to the loveless. His name is Dave Allen, and making better the lives of all he touches is something he has always done.

Dave is highly sensitive to the struggle of others. As a little boy, he was diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome, a very highly misunderstood brain disorder characterized by uncontrollable body movements and vocal outbursts known as tics accompanied by a plethora of other mental health issues. His entire elementary school years was spent being labeled a freak, bullied by not only his peers, but by a few of his teachers, as well. With this disorder came the expectations that he would never amount to anything by societal standards. He probably would not be able to finish school or even get his driver's license.

Dave hated the bullying, but chose to still love the bullies. Not only did he maintain the honor roll with almost all A's, including in advanced placement courses, but he also earned his driver's license at 16 on the first attempt. Still focused on bringing smiles to people's faces and laughter to people's hearts, David did graduate high school with honors, was quite popular, and was named the class clown. He has been beating the odds and proving negative predictions wrong his entire life.

Sadly, the past three years in the custody of the Vermont Department of Corrections, he has been forced to live in fear and never-ending suffering. It has been the worst time and experience of his life. He still tries to be positive and keep laughing, but those of us who have known him best can tell that he is in great physical, mental, and emotional pain most days and is barely clinging to life.

I met and became close friends with David in the 90's when we were both children. I've never met anyone like him. He is so kind, considerate, and understanding. He is a great listener, deep thinker, and is incredibly gifted. He is so easy to love. He is the best friend anyone could ever ask for and is cherished and adored by many.

In November of 2000, his life was forever changed when he was rushed to the hospital and diagnosed with his second chronic condition. His pancreas had stopped producing insulin and he was forever "cursed" with Diabetes Type One. The permanent complications, as I'm sure many of you know, include heart, liver, and kidney failure, circulatory issues, brain damage, gum disease, and tooth loss, blindness and limb amputation-just to name a few. Any day, he also could suffer a stroke, fall into a coma, or worse-die. At the time of his diagnosis, he was told there was a 60% chance he would suffer at least one of these complications, he'd surely die in his fifties, or be on dialysis by 35. The treatment at that time was so archaic and the knowledge of diabetes so elementary that at least 5% of those with Type 1 were guaranteed disaster.

Fortunately, for everyone not under the care of the Vermont Department of Corrections, the advances in technology and understanding of the disease allows personalized treatment plans for patients which promises full, happy, and healthy lives. Dave and others like him, need not suffer, need not have irreparable damage, and most of all, like the other recent victims in Vermont's system, need not die!

David was arrested three years ago tomorrow on allegations made against him by somebody who should never be considered reliable or credible. Currently in the United States of America, there is no innocent until proven guilty. The presumption of innocence we all have a guaranteed Constitutionally and

federally protected right to does not exist. Especially not in Vermont. People are guilty the moment they are accused. There's no grand jury, no indictment, no investigative process, and not even a requirement for evidence to get a person charged, arrested and locked away.

I expect better from the United States. I expect better from this state. Vermont legalized marijuana and provides marriage equality. Vermont is a state full of amazing people and natural beauty, a state blessed with the best experiences of all four seasons. Vermont is considered to be on par with California as a progressive and forward thinking state, leading all others in the country. Vermont is considered a sanctuary from injustices, prejudices, and inhumane treatment of all living beings. Vermont has a population of only 643,000 people. Each year more than 9,000 people are booked into local jails in Vermont. Vermont locks up a higher percentage of its people than any other democratic nation on earth. Vermont has an average incarceration rate of 288 per 100,000 people with the United Kingdom at 129, Portugal at 111, and Canada at 104. The rest of the Founding NATO countries average 93 of 100,000 people and below. Vermont is one of only 15 prison systems that does not provide free hygiene products to incarcerated people. The Prison Policy Initiative conducted research and graded all 50 states on the parole release system and scored Vermont at a D+ and gave Vermont's prison system a failing grade for its handling of the COVID 19 pandemic. This is why me-being from elsewhere-(and hopefully all others) are so shocked to learn that the legal system and the treatment of incarcerated individuals is so cruel, corrupt, and cataclysmic here. David has been sitting inside the razor wire laced fences and concrete walls of the Southern State Correctional Facility for three years and still has not been convicted of anything.

At the time of his arrest, David was a long-time full-time single father to a little boy. He acted as this boy's father and mother, caregiver, provider, protector, role model, mentor, and best friend. David also became a dad to a girl when he had a daughter he shared with her mother. Dave was a substantial, positive presence in both children's lives. When he was taken away, David's son was 11 and his daughter just shy of three. Now they are 14, and a month shy of 6. Not a day goes by that he is not thinking about them.

As soon as David arrived at the facility, his medical treatment completely changed. Having been diagnosed in 2000, this was the first time in 20 years that he was no longer in control of or had any say in his diabetes management. He wasn't getting any of his needs properly met. His blood sugars were rarely even close to the required target range necessary for staying healthy and to avoid complications and even death. Even today, 2023, with all of the advances in diabetic medication, improper care is still making diabetes the seventh leading cause of death in America.

Prior to being at the facility, David did spend time with specialists and experts, did utilize available technology, did receive and provide for himself the best possible care. He did have the normal struggles all diabetics face, but he avoided all serious issues and was in the best of health with no danger of future problems. Now, David's health and life is in grave danger at SSCF with the absolute indifference to his serious medical needs being shown to him by many members of the prison and medical staff. He has tried to advocate for himself by utilizing everything at his disposal within the prison, seeking nothing more than adequate medical care. He has filled out countless request forms, medical slips and has filed grievances. He has written and sent letters anywhere and everywhere including to Prisoners' Rights and to the commissioner. He has filled out applications for reasonable accommodations through the Americans with Disabilities Act. The only ADA accommodation he was ever granted was the ability to keep glucose tablets on his person at all times-something he had been doing as part of his initial recommendations at his diagnosis 20 years before as an item all diabetics should automatically have. The nurse who worked with David to get this added to his file was later let go. Coincidentally, every DOC or medical staff person who has tried to vouch for or assist David has either been let go, transferred or forced to quit. The small few who still remain at SSCF are made to work in parts of the prison where they almost never come in contact with David.

Getting nothing for results other than retaliation for his requests for proper care, David decided to file his case in federal court. With such a beautiful mind which cannot remain stagnant David with his mother as his sponsor, put himself through a correspondence course and earned his paralegal certificate. With his new obtained knowledge, he was not only able to build a strong case, but he also learned that

the majority of what happens inside the Vermont facilities, the conditions the people are forced to live in, the lack of proper medical care, and the mistreatment by the members of the staff are all things that have previously been decided by federal courts to be unsatisfactory, unconstitutional, and unacceptable.

Basically, he found out and started to call them out on the truth that the highest degree of what is commonplace in the facility is illegal. The ones receiving high salaries from taxpayers' dollars for housing those considered to be and called criminals are actually carrying out criminal acts themselves. Most simply, according to the 8th Amendment, the prohibition of cruel and unusual punishment requires the government to provide adequate healthcare to prisoners-treatment at a level reasonably commensurate with modern medical science and of a quality acceptable within prudent professional standards.

David has witnessed and experienced the opposite. He and all others are being forced to deal with uneducated and untrained staff likened to the type you wouldn't trust to feed your goldfish, non-medical staff members speak on medical issues, there are HIPAA violations such as medical staff sharing private medical information with other incarcerated individuals and non-medical staff members, there are not enough glucose tests, wrong doses of insulin are given, untimely doses are given, and sometimes no insulin is given at all, food trays come much later than the required within 20 minutes after insulin if they come at all, inadequate care causes a roller coaster of highs and lows, the syringes are filled with air, symptoms may be over treated, staff members often do not recognize symptoms of an issue or know what to do in the event of an issue or when one is brought to their attention, there is refusal to follow orders from community physicians or specialists. a denial or rejection of every request, every grievance and much more. As a result of this poor quality of care, Dave has had to experience, multiple times and still regularly, extreme hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia, pain in his eyes and limbs, weakness, gum decay, nausea, headaches, shakes, sweats, rapid heartbeat, mood swings, exhaustion, delusions, dehydrations, dizziness, light-headedness, confusion, hallucinations, falls, panic attacks, diabetic ketoacidosis, difficulty breathing similar to suffocating, loss of consciousness, blackouts, and seizures. David has been forced to suffer every single day with no end in sight. With the absolute indifference to his diabetes care, he is at a high risk for irreparable complications such as trigger finger, cognitive and memory deficits, decreased spoken language abilities, fatty liver disease, severe nerve

damage, tooth loss, circulatory and kidney issues, heart problems, hearing loss, limb amputation, dementia, blindness, stroke, coma, and death.

David's mother, maternal grandmother, younger sister, myself, and others have tried to reach out to the VT DOC SSCF staff on his behalf. We have been disrespected, told he is a baby, have been lied to or have been told he is lying despite having full access to his medical records. We have been ignored, rejected, and told to be silent. From correctional officers to case workers to assistant superintendents to the superintendent to nurses to people at Central Office and even to the commissioner who boasts about being former CIA, which has a reputation for covering up and keeping the truth from the public...None of them will help.

Dave has witnessed guards using racial and homophobic slurs towards incarcerated individuals, he has seen prison staff pay inmates to physically assault others, he saw a guard enter an inmate's cell and beat him up, he has seen many terrible things. Most troubling of all, is the times he has had to watch an inmate die because the VT DOC did not provide the medical care and attention needed. How is this happening here? The Commissioner spoke to the news to declare that the demographic of the prison residents has aged and they are dying of natural causes related to the aging process. This was stated following the deaths of two inmates in the same week. One was 46 years old and it was reported he had been to "Shut up" and was called "Cinderella". The other was told to "stop faking" shortly before he died at the age of 32! How is this "aged"?

Because Dave has been standing up and trying to fight the constitutional, civil and human rights' violations, he has faced almost daily retaliation. He has been abused verbally, emotionally, psychologically, harassed every 15 minutes, he has had frequent cell changes, cellmate changes, or even unit changes, he has had much of his property taken or stolen, he was denied visitors with no explanation, which is a violation to the visitors as well, he has had mail withheld, been denied insulin, been physically assaulted, sexually abused, traumatized, degraded and dehumanized, locked in segregation with nothing but a mattress, two blankets, a roll of toilet paper, and a toilet that did not flush.

He has been denied jobs he is more than qualified and eligible for, he has been rejected to have items others have and much more. We talk to each other nearly every day and each day there is a new nefarious act that has been carried out against him.

The medical provider who has been making all of David's diabetes' treatment decisions without any regard for David's knowledge and experience or for prior orders and prescriptions given by other medical professionals with far superior medical credentials, told David she is aware he has an accommodation from the ADA for glucose tablets to be on his person, but since he and his loved ones were making such a fuss about his poor medical care, she had decided not to allow him to have them. David was told days later by another inmate there was now a shortage of glucose tablets for all other diabetic inmates because of the "inmate with a lawsuit". Which violation of protected rights does that come under? This same provider said and I quote, "Your blood sugar levels have nothing to do with how much insulin you take".

One day when David had a low blood sugar reading, he asked the nurse for an adjustment in his insulin to which she screamed at him, "I don't give a f\*\*k if you die"!! Several others have been equally cruel and have knowingly tortured him with poor medical practices. Numerous reliable sources have confirmed that every evil act done to Dave is now the direct result of him filing his federal lawsuit, which makes no sense.

Just short of being detained for three years, Dave was finally brought to see his specialist who wrote a letter to SSCF medical informing them David has serious medical needs which are not being met. The doctor of endocrinology explained Dave needs all of the items he has been asking for all along, glucose tablets, dental and eye care, regular medical meetings, and specifically a hybrid pump-sensor system with training. The medical staff at SSCF told David four days later, they would not be following the specialist's letter despite multiple federal rulings requiring them to do so.

Not all who are incarcerated in Vermont's facilities are bad people as we are often taught to believe. Some have mental health issues. Some need help, encouragement, and support. Some made a bad choice or stupid mistakes. Some took a plea because it was cheaper and safer and some are actually innocent. Regardless of how and why they are incarcerated, they are still human beings. They still have people they love and people who love them. They deserve adequate medical care. It is of great benefit for all if each of them leaves the facility better than when they arrived. In the US, in Vermont, nobody should be suffering, having their rights violated, and enduring any type of torture while incarcerated. None of our people should be getting killed by those hired to care for them and to keep them safe.

We on the outside, in the community, citizens, voters, taxpayers, family and friends...We all together have a responsibility to stand up for those being held down. It is up to us to be their voice. We need to let the nation know...we will not tolerate the mistreatment of the incarcerated individuals to continue!

Alan Cormier, we know you have an insulin pump yourself, and we are calling you out!

Centurion, Vital Core, and Well Path, we know you are nothing more than for profit entities, but you still need to provide proper care...we are calling you out!

Max Titus, you are in a position to guarantee quality medical care, we are calling you out!

Kevin Jenkins, Mike Lyon, and Michaela Merrill, you have been cheating, lying, corrupt, mistreating people in your custody, being wrong and evil for years and getting away with it. No more, we see you for what and who you really are and we are calling you out!

Attorney Pamela S. Eaton and the entire Paul, Frank, and Collins Law firm, stop defending the VT DOC employees and government officials who violate the rights of the people. We are calling you out!

Commissioner Nicholas Deml, you said you'd make things better, but since you took over, things have gotten much worse. More rights have been violated and more people have died. Stop lying to the cameras and do what you promised to do by taking responsibility. We are calling you out!

Judge Doyle and Judge Crawford, hold VT Doc and all affiliate accountable. Grant relief and award damages to all prison plaintiffs named in lawsuits. We are calling you out!

Governor Phil Scott, stop letting the VT Doc have unlimited power. Stop letting your people be tortured and murdered in prison. You can make things right. You can force change. Governor Scott, we are calling you out!

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I want to close today by inviting all of you to help us save our loved one, Dave. Save Dave before he has another seizure. Save Dave before he loses teeth and limbs. Save Dave before another one of his major organs fails. Save Dave before he loses his sight, hearing, or voice. Save Dave before he has a stroke. Save Dave before he falls into a permanent coma. Most of all, Save David before the VT DOC lets him die.

Please stop killing those we love. Myself and so many others in Vermont, New England, nationwide and even around the world are begging-Please, stop killing our friend. Malcolm, Betty, and Kilburn are asking-Please, stop killing our grandson. Wendy and Robert are shouting-Please, stop killing our son. Carrie Elizabeth is screaming-Please, stop killing my big brother. 14 year old Jacoby David and almost 6 year old Zayleah Mae are crying out-Please, stop killing our Dad! Save David-we need him in our lives making them better.

Speaking for all American people-We are demanding-stop killing those we love. Stop killing us.

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