

Coalition For Prisoners' Rights Newsletter

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TOO MUCH

Chief executives (CEOs) at big U.S. based companies received \$11.7 million in 2017. This was the median ("the middle number") amount received, as reported by the Associated Press (AP) on May 26. Their study includes pay data for 339 executives at S&P ("Standard & Poor top stock market index") 500 companies, those who have had at least two full consecutive fiscal years in those positions. And those executives got an 8.5% pay raise that year. The typical CEO made 164 times the median pay of their employees. The median annual pay in 2017 in S&P 500 companies was \$70,244. The arithmetic average pay for all U.S. workers was \$47,792.

In addition, some companies exclude some of their lower-paid foreign workers. Companies with large part-time workforces show much greater differences between the CEO's pay and median pay. At Yum Brands (Kentucky Fried Chicken, Pizza Hut, Taco Bell), the CEO receives \$12.3 million which is 1,358 times higher than the company median of \$9,111. At United Rentals (industrial and construction equipment rental and tools), the CEO received \$12.8 million.

The highest paid of all in this report was the CEO of Broadcom, who made \$103.2 million. The second highest paid CEO works for CBS. He made \$68.4 million. Third was the head of TransDigm (which designs and produces aircraft components). He got \$61 million. The fourth highest paid is CEO of Time Warner, at \$49 million. And the fifth highest paid is the CEO of TripAdvisor, (a web company providing hotel and restaurant information and services) at \$43.2 million a year.

Companies in the pharmaceutical, technology and energy businesses were on the high end of the S&P 500 for worker pay. At Facebook, for example, the median was \$240,430. The lower end is full of retailers and fast-food restaurant chains, which, as we well know, tend to have more part-time workers.

Top paid CEOs in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas and Utah range from \$67.6 million in Colorado down to \$3.2 million in Utah.

TOO LITTLE

In May, on the street, average hourly earnings rose slightly, raising the year-on-year gain to 2.7%. It was, however, the 92nd consecutive month of job creation, with a net increase of 223,000. The unemployment rate, at 3.8%, was the lowest since early 2000. In 2017, the median (the middle number) full time time weekly pay was \$865, or \$24.57 per hour. These numbers vary somewhat according to how they are calculated. Even a business-employed economist labeled as "the great conundrum" the fact that the wage growth has been "so modest."

Too Unacceptable

The federal prison system and 43 states charge imprisoned people up to \$8 to see a doctor. This is just one of many ways that people are forced to pay for their own incarceration. There are five states where imprisoned people receive absolutely no money for their work; Florida is one of them (remember who this affects most: African Americans make up one third of Florida's prison population, although they are 17% of the state's population. Throughout the country, African Americans are more than five times as likely as "whites" to be behind bars. Latinos are locked up 1.4 times more often.)

In 2017, the average minimum daily wage paid to incarcerated workers for non-industry prison jobs was 86 cents (down from 93 cents in 2001).

Michigan is a state that has been charging daily housing fees since 1984. By 2004, an estimated one-third of county jails and 50% of prisons in the U.S. charged daily housing fees. Louisiana can charge for clothing, Missouri prisoners can be charged for transportation, room, board, security and other living expenses, Illinois has a \$5 co-pay every time you see a doctor and can sue prisoners to recoup unpaid charges.

It has been estimated that 10 million people owe more than \$50 billion in debt to various parts of the police, court and legal system. Prices for food, hygiene, writing supplies, and phone calls are all part of the pay-for-stay system.

Muertes en Puerto Rico por el huracán María

La cifra de muertes causadas por el huracán María, que azotó la isla de Puerto Rico el año pasado, podría ser 70 veces mayor que la que se maneja oficialmente. La cifra de muertes oficial sigue siendo de 64 personas, pero el nuevo estudio estima que hubo al menos 4.645 muertes e incluso hace proyecciones que superan las 5.700. Los investigadores contaron no sólo las muertes directas a raíz de heridas causadas por la tormenta, como la caída de escombros, sino también las provocadas por demoras relacionadas con la tormenta en el tratamiento médico de lesiones, infecciones y enfermedades crónicas. Los hallazgos contrastan con los alardes del presidente de Estados Unidos, quien ha sostenido que Puerto Rico no sufrió una cantidad elevada de muertes como consecuencia del huracán.

To receive the CPR Newsletter by postal mail monthly, send us up to 12 self-addressed, stamped envelopes (with the CPR return address).

Keep sending us address changes and renewal requests in order for us to maintain our only permanent mailing list--the one for our January holiday card/new calendar--as accurately as possible.

Also, note that the correct address to be sure to reach us at is: PO Box 1911, Santa Fe NM 87504. Some resource address listings are incorrect in this regard.

And still: NONE OF US ARE LAWYERS OR LEGAL WORKERS; for our protection, please do not mark envelopes addressed to us as "Legal Mail."

Many, many thanks to the Real Cost of Prisons Project for posting our Newsletter on-line for free downloading and distribution. It is at:

www.realcostofprisonproject.org--this is a GREAT site! Thank you for all your support!

Former NAACP President Says:

"Mass incarceration is a result of rhetoric and policies that both Democrats and Republicans have pushed and embraced."

--Benjamin Jealous

Former Guantanamo prisoner says:

"So whichever presidential administration, I think torture is as American as apple pie."

--Moazzam Begg

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LAS FAMILIAS MERCEN ESTAR UNIDAS

*** * * Black Lives Matter * * ***

SOME AIR CONDITIONING MANDATED

Of Texas' more than 100 state prisons and jails, nearly 75% are uncooled in their housing areas. There are only 32,000 air conditioned cells. And almost two dozen prisoners died from heat stroke in the last two decades, where temperatures routinely exceeded 100 F. degrees. Starting in 2014, prisoners, as a class action. in the Pack Unit brought suit against the prison system in federal court. In 2017, the federal judge ruled "deliberate indifference" to the harm the state prison system was causing prisoners and ordered the state to place the medically vulnerable in air conditioned units.

More than a thousand prisoners were deemed vulnerable--like elderly and those with heart conditions--and were moved to air conditioned prisons. And then a settlement was agreed to which includes air-conditioning the Pack Unit permanently. And ensures the more than 1,300 prisoners who are part of the class-action lawsuit stay in air-conditioned prisons and jails throughout their incarceration. The prison system has installed temporary air conditioning at the Pack Unit this year to cover the next two summers.

Prison Reform Strategy Bills Underway

I. Sentencing Reform & Corrections Act
"to improve fairness in sentencing of low-level, nonviolent offenders by changing mandatory minimum requirements"

II. First Step Act
"would offer individualized recidivism-reduction plans to all people incarcerated in federal prisons, and increase access to vocational training, educational support and substance abuse and mental health resources."

NO Separating Immigrant Moms & Kids

Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) intends to introduce a bill that would end the Trump administration's practice of separating newly arrived young immigrant children from their parents. Her plan is in opposition to attorney general Jeff Session's May statement that: "If you are smuggling a child, then we will prosecute you, and that child may be separated from you, as required by law."

More than 10,800 migrant children were in federal custody as of May 31, up 21% since the end of April. They are in DHHS shelters which are already 95% full. Officials say they are preparing to add thousands of additional beds.