

# Pros and cons of prison privatization essay

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Privatization of prisons is one of much debated issues in the United States of America. People have different opinions on this issue. Some believe that prisons should be privatized while others argue that privatizations of prisons questions the capacity of the state. A number of prisons have been privatized in in different parts of America and supporters and opponents of prison privatizations see their effect differently. This paper intends to discuss the issue of prison privatizations and pros and cons of this issue along with presenting a succinct analysis of this subject.

Prisons are an essential component of criminal justice system. Criminal minded people, who are found maladroit to live in a society with other normal people, are sent into prisons. Prisons are usually maintained by state but a new debate on this subject has changed the whole scenario. Now people ask why criminals should be kept in prisons on expenses of taxpayers. These people say that maintaining prison is a costly affair and state should take some alternative steps in order to reduce taxpayers' money that is spent on prisons (Price & Morris).

Supporters of prison privatization argue that state run prisons cost too much while the same task can be done by private prison operators in a comparatively lesser cost. A number of private prison companies have emerged since various governments have decided to privatize the operation of prisons. These companies have proved that they operate prisons in lesser cost without compromising with any aspect of prison operation. Opponents of prison privatization say that private companies manage their operation cost by providing inferior food, medical and other services (Price & Morris). Supporters of prison privatization say that prison privatization helps inmates

in improving their behavior. Though prisoners are kept in private prisons but they realize that they are in rehabilitation process instead of state prisons that are fearful. In private prisons, a number of creative activities are organized that help prisoners in improving. Opponents of prison privatization believe that private prisons have emerged as a new shelter of corruption and criminal activities. Since prison managers are in profit making venture, they do not pay much attention on prisoners and even do not hesitate from giving them undue favors by taking money from prisoners (Gilbert & Schichor).

If prisons are privatized, there are high probabilities that government officials will be extremely dependable on private companies. Private companies may offer low bid in order to grab the contract in the beginning but they may raise the cost once government has become dependable upon them. Government officials will have to coordinate with private companies on different issues that are related to prison security and management. Such a situation may create a new kind of liaison between government authorities and criminals with exclusive intervention of private prison operators (Austin et al.).

Private companies work for money. What if these companies do not get ample prisoners and declare themselves bankrupt. Ultimately they will have to take assistance of government and their relevance would be ceased.

Private companies do not realize their role and responsibilities of strengthening criminal justice like state run prisons do. Private companies care about their profit and their materialistic approach can create hindrances in the criminal justice at any juncture.

Various reports suggest that private prisons succeed in managing prisons at

a lower cost because they cut cost of education, skill management, sports, food and sometimes even health related costs. If this is how cost is managed by private prison managers then there is no need of privatizing prisons. We should never forget that these prisoners are part of our society and society have a duty to improve their behavior instead of depriving them of their needs as well as rights. Society cannot escape from the moral duty that it has towards people who are sent behind the bars due to their criminal acts (Gilbert & Schichor).

Privatization of prisons is an issue that involves legal, social, ethical and economic issues. Criminal justice system arranges for prisons and sends criminals into prison if it is required. This is the duty of the state to ensure safety, health and all other aspects of prisoners. State has to ensure smooth operation of prisons even if they are privatized. Privatizing prisons requires a thorough analysis of the company and prisoners.

Having observed an overview and succinct analysis of the abovementioned subject, this paper concludes that privatization of prisons is a complicated issue. There are various pros and cons of this issue and it needs to be debated in a serious manner in order to find a concrete solution. There are people who support privatization of prisons for different reasons while others oppose privatization of prisons for other different reasons. Both of them have their arguments and none of these arguments can be discarded. Privatization of prisons should be done after a thorough discussion among all stakeholders of criminal justice, policy makers and eminent persons of society.

## **Works Cited**

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