

1986

RESOLUTION: INEQUALITY IN SENTENCING IN THE CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL SYSTEM

WHEREAS, God calls us to care for and to minister to the prisoner (Matthew 25:39, 44);
and

WHEREAS, Scripture repeatedly calls us to fairness in our dealings with God's people; and

WHEREAS, Persons in Connecticut who commit virtually the same offense and have similar backgrounds are routinely sentenced to prison for drastically different periods of time for no perceptible reason; and

WHEREAS, The severity of sentencing is not consistent with the severity of the crimes committed; and

WHEREAS, Such inequality in sentencing fosters discontent and hatred in some prisoners who have been unjustly sentenced; and

WHEREAS, The states of Minnesota, Washington, and Michigan have guidelines for sentencing which demonstrate that greater fairness is possible;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates to the 119th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference instruct the Department of Church and Society and its Criminal Justice Committee to:

1. Study disparity in sentencing in the Connecticut judicial system;
2. Circulate the results of their study to the churches of the Conference;
3. Report the results of their study to the 120th Annual Meeting; and
4. Be encouraged to lobby for justice in any legislation related to disparity in sentencing in Connecticut during the 1987 session of the Connecticut General Assembly and, if necessary, ensuing sessions.