



November 2022
**NH COMMUNITY
BAIL FUND**
Decarcerate America

Greetings friends. As we approach the holiday season, we're thinking of all the people who will miss special days with their families and friends because they're stuck behind bars.

In October, we paid bails for **14 people**. Several of them were held on drug possession charges, even though this is a nonviolent offense. We know that jail is not a good place for people dealing with substance use disorders to get the help they need.

Also last month, several folks from the Bail Fund and other community members met with the **new superintendent of Valley Street Jail** in Manchester, Joseph Costanzo. We're pleased that he's promising to improve some aspects of the jail, which has a long history of bad conditions. We'll be watching closely to see how things progress.

While we get most of our referrals for people who need help from public defenders, this month we got one from a woman whose fiancé was incarcerated at Valley Street Jail. She explained that, due to a misunderstanding with his probation officer, he thought that a warrant for a previous issue had been cleared, but it was actually still outstanding. He ended up being arrested for violation of probation and held on \$1,000. As a single mother of three, she was unable to pay the bail. We were happy to be able to get him out of jail and help reunite them.

With the next session of the state legislature coming up, we're watching to see **what kinds of bills** may affect pretrial detention and other aspects of the criminal legal system. This month, many Legislative Service Requests (LSRs) will be filed, marking the first step toward a new law. We encourage you to sign up for State House Watch, the newsletter produced by our friends at the American Friends Service Committee to keep abreast of these and other important issues: <https://tinyurl.com/6xh69k9h>

This next part may sound like a broken record, but we really need **more volunteers** to help pay bails, provide rides, and help in other ways. We are a very small all-volunteer team, and we struggle to help everyone we can. We could especially use more folks in **Manchester and Concord**, and we're also hoping to develop more of a presence outside of Hillsborough and Merrimack Counties. If you're interested in finding out more, please write to us at info@uuactionnh.org.

And we can always use financial help too! You can donate online at tinyurl.com/ypdazk9k. To donate by mail, please make a check payable to UUANH with "Bail Fund" in the memo line. Mail checks to PO Box 3862, Manchester NH 03105.

And, last, **if someone you know is in jail** and can't afford bail, please contact bailreferral@googlegroups.com!

With gratitude for all your help and support,
The NH Community Bail Fund team: Andy, Curt, Jessica, Livia, Paul, and Sarah