

September 2022



NH COMMUNITY BAIL FUND

Decarcerate America

Happy fall! We had another busy month in August, and, as folks return from summer vacations, we're excited for more chances to make connections with allies around the state.

Over the past month, we got **16 people** free. As a small, all-volunteer group, we certainly kept busy paying bails and providing rides from jail. We continue to see relatively high bails being set for minor offenses, despite the fact that the legislature passed bail reform in 2018 that was supposed to minimize the use of money bail.

On August 7, we were fortunate enough to be invited to present a summer church service at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua. We really appreciated the chance to share things we've learned, and the congregation was so supportive of our work. If you're interested in having members of the bail fund **speak at your church or organization**, please contact us at info@uuactionnh.org.

One of the neighbors we bailed out this month was held on just \$100. What had he done? Back in 2020, he allegedly "trespassed" on the property of a fast food place and had a small amount of marijuana on him when he was arrested. He was apparently held on money bail because he'd missed court dates since then. One of the big arguments for money bail is that it stops people from "skipping court." But that really ignores the reasons people sometimes don't make their court dates. In this man's case, he's been experiencing homelessness and has severe dementia. The idea that he should be in Valley Street Jail as a result is mind-boggling, especially when his alleged "crimes" were things that housed people would never be arrested for to begin with.

We continue to look for **more volunteers** to help with our work across the state and especially in the **Manchester area**. This could look like occasionally paying a bail or giving someone a ride, or helping out in other ways like fundraising and publicity. If you'd like to learn more, please reach out to info@uuactionnh.org. And if you'd like to support our work financially, 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. We are eager to help!

Sincerely,
The NH Community Bail Fund team: Andy, Curt, Jessica, Livia, Paul, and Sarah