

September 24, 2024

Hello, my name is Sabrina Taylor. I am a 43 year old Black, Queer sexual assault survivor. I served 14 months in prison for wire fraud from January 27, 2023 to April 1, 2024. Prior to my sentencing and incarceration, I was a long term cocaine addict and was lucky enough to be able to get clean and start to change my life. I didn't fight my charges, I plead guilty and I worked with my legal team to reach out to those harmed by my actions so that, regardless of the outcome, I could hold myself accountable for my actions and attempt to do what I could to help those I harmed, heal. I learned in recovery and, subsequently, therapy, that I chose to numb myself with drugs because I had ignored my own pain for so long. Learning about how trauma and violence manifest in our bodies and minds made me think deeply about my own actions and how they affected others as well as of our current criminal justice system helps those who have been harmed move forward on their lives and if those who have harmed others come out the other side as people who can also move on.

And I can tell you, there is nothing remotely restorative about what our prisons offer, especially the prison I was incarcerated at - FCI Dublin. As someone who has years of education and professional experience working in mental health and social services, it is still hard for me to put into words how horrifyingly flawed our prison system is for those inside its bars. Not only does our current system invite, protect and promote sexual predators and those who would enable and protect them as they prey on women behind bars but our current system allows those who are holding women behind bars to punish anyone who comes forward to report that they have been assaulted. There is NO mental health care in the federal prison system. There is not medical care in the federal prison system. So on top of trying to make it through all the harsh realities of prison, you are denied any access to care. I was sexually assaulted as a child by a family friend and then assaulted by a stranger while in my 20's and I was made very aware of the issues in the federal prison system before my sentencing and how FCI Dublin was called "the rape club." My attorney brought forth these concerns at my sentencing and I was sent directly into custody regardless. I met woman after woman at FCI Dublin who were assaulted while in custody at Dublin and waited...and waited....until it happened to me. That's all I could do. And after it happened, I knew I couldn't report it until my release because I witnessed friends report their assaults and end up in the SHU.

FCI Dublin is every facility in the BOP. The only difference is that we were blessed with support and luck. And now Dublin has been closed and women who are my friends and sisters have been sent to other facilities where they are facing the same horror. This is unacceptable and I plead with you to change this. To help hold the people and institutions who harmed us accountable. We have all made horrible decisions and harmed others but going to prison was our punishment, not sexual assault or medical neglect or the horrific living conditions.

Thank you,

Sabrina Taylor