

Florida Gubernatorial Candidate Evelyn Castillo-Bach Announces Bold Prison Reform Agenda

Restoring Balance: A Vision for Prison Reform Supporting Both Officers and Inmates.

PEMBROKE PINES, FL, UNITED STATES, July 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Evelyn Castillo-Bach, candidate for Governor of Florida, announced today a comprehensive prison reform policy based on her 25 years of observing the Florida Department of Corrections and listening to the voices of Florida families who have contacted her campaign.

"People First, Not Politics is not a slogan. It is a commitment to listen to people who have been ignored," stated Castillo-Bach. Recently, families with loved ones incarcerated have contacted her campaign and urged her to address publicly her position on prison reform. "Like them, I understand where they are coming from and what they are saying," stated Castillo-Bach. Her son, Mitchell Finlay, has been incarcerated for 25 years, serving what his family and attorneys characterize as an illegal life sentence after he rejected a five-year plea deal. Castillo-Bach credits Mitchell's insider view for expanding her understanding of prison reality from both the inmate and officer perspective.

"I see prison reform as two prongs: the correctional officers who work inside and the inmates who live inside," stated Castillo-Bach. "One is incarcerated; the other goes home at the end of their shift. Both need support. I empathize with all the demands that families have communicated to me because I feel as they do. I also understand the officers' experiences as they have conveyed them to me."

Core Reforms Under My Leadership:

- INDEPENDENT OVERSIGHT AND TRANSPARENCY



Gubernatorial Candidate Evelyn Castillo-Bach



I see prison reform as two prongs: the correctional officers who work inside and the inmates who live inside. Both need support."

Evelyn Castillo-Bach

As Governor, Castillo-Bach is committed to establishing an independent oversight body completely separate from FDC itself. Additionally, her administration will support stronger transparency requirements for use-of-force incidents, deaths in custody, grievances, medical neglect complaints, and staff misconduct allegations.

- HEAT MITIGATION AND HUMANE CONDITIONS

Her administration will support air conditioning so prisons

are not dangerously hot. Both correctional staff and inmates suffer under extreme heat conditions.

- MEDICAL, MENTAL HEALTH, AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT

Her administration will support improving access to medical care, mental health care, and substance abuse treatment for all incarcerated individuals.

- REDUCING THE 85% RULE TO 50%

Castillo-Bach calls for the Florida Legislature to reduce the minimum sentence served requirement from [85% to 50% for all individuals with a release date](#). This would be automatic except for those who do not maintain good behavior. They will not benefit from this and could end up serving between 85% and 100% of their sentence. Her own son would not benefit from this reform because he does not have a release date. "I am advocating for this because it incentivizes rehabilitation, it is fiscally responsible, and it is also humane," stated Castillo-Bach.

- VETERANS

Castillo-Bach accepts criticism that she may be the first governor to prioritize removing veterans from Florida state prisons and placing them into special medical facilities where they may heal. "Incarcerated veterans suffering from service-related trauma leading to criminal acts belong in medical facilities with psychological help, not in prison where their conditions worsen and where they face abandonment," stated Castillo-Bach.

- CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS: PAY, TRAINING, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Castillo-Bach is the only gubernatorial candidate to make correctional officer pay a top priority. She supports a starting pay of [\\$40 per hour and up](#) based on experience for all correctional officers, sergeants at \$50 per hour and higher, and an upgraded pay package for lieutenants, captains, majors, colonels, assistant wardens, and wardens. Her administration will support increased training, improved staffing levels, and new procedures that elevate performance standards. Officers need to be supplied with advanced personal security tools and high-tech security tools. She supports simplifying and digitalizing all daily paperwork and reports. Redesigned security uniforms will be stylish and cool for Florida's hot weather. At the same time, she supports zero tolerance for inmate abuse by staff. Body cameras with audio must be activated anytime an officer interacts with a prisoner. Solitary confinement needs to be

dramatically limited and reserved only for cases of violence against officers or other inmates. It should never be used as a punitive measure. "Each one of you deserves to earn enough to support your families without depending on overtime. You deserve a life outside those prison walls, you deserve safe working conditions and the proper tools for your security and for your efficiency, and you deserve respect for the work that you do," stated Castillo-Bach.

- EDUCATION, REHABILITATION, AND REENTRY

Her administration will support vocational training, higher education, and life skills programs at all Florida institutions. She supports expanding reentry services so returning citizens have a real chance to succeed.

- VENDOR REFORM

Her administration will support terminating contracts with current vendors providing food service, phone service, and canteen goods, and seek new vendors that supply nutritious and sufficient meals, low-cost phone access for families, and healthy canteen options at reasonable, marketplace prices.

- DRUG CONTRABAND

Her administration will convene an oversight panel to evaluate and recommend how to eradicate drug trafficking inside Florida prisons.

- LEADERSHIP AT THE TOP

"I will appoint a Secretary of Corrections who understands the system from the ground level. As Governor, I will select a Secretary who will not treat prison conditions as an out-of-sight, out-of-mind issue," stated Castillo-Bach.

- NOT SOFT ON CRIME

This is not about being soft on crime. It is about being smart, accountable, balanced, and humane. Castillo-Bach supports being tough on repeat offenders, especially violent repeat offenders. Those who commit violence inside or outside prison must face full consequences and extended sentences.

- FLORIDA FAMILIES

Florida families are paying attention. They are organizing. They are asking questions. And they are looking for a governor who will listen and act.

The last day to register or change party affiliation to vote in the August 18 primary is July 20, 2026. Castillo-Bach's name appears first on the Democratic Party ballot.

About Evelyn Castillo-Bach: She is a long-time Independent voter running as a Democrat for Governor of Florida in 2026. Currently, she is the Executive Director of Balanced Justice Network. Her campaign is built on the motto People First, Not Politics and three pillars: Health, Home, Freedom.

Evelyn Castillo-Bach Campaign For Governor of Florida 2026

Evelyn Castillo-Bach Campaign for Governor of Florida 2026

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[YouTube](#)

[TikTok](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/925410211>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.