



IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU!

**Leading
a New Culture
of Accountability
in Justice**



It Could Happen To You

OUR MISSION

We are Dedicated to Serving the Needs of the Falsely Accused

- Increase the public's awareness of the many forms of Prosecutorial Misconduct in which there are no consequences.
- Establish a transparent, independent Commission on Prosecutorial Conduct in every state in America.
- Monitor legislation and share news pertinent to the judicial and law-enforcement systems.
- Promote reforms that encourage alternatives to incarceration in every sector of the criminal justice system.
- Educate and mobilize citizens to demand that public policy be altered to better protect the rights of the innocent.
- Serve as a source of invaluable support, resources, and information for those wrongly accused and convicted.

Our Tenets and Our Strategy

- You could be wrongfully prosecuted or wrongfully convicted.
- You are innocent until proven guilty.
- You are legally entitled to all evidence in the prosecutor's possession at arraignment.
- Wrongful prosecutions and convictions threaten the community at large allowing the true perpetrator to stay on the streets and commit other crimes.
- There must be consequences for prosecutors when they knowingly break their own rules.

OUR VICTORIES

The New York State Commission on Prosecutorial Conduct

The Nation's First Commission on Prosecutorial Conduct

In 2014, everyone who knew anything about capital politics in Albany, New York told **It Could Happen To You** – don't waste your time on a Commission on Prosecutorial Conduct. It will ever happen. They were wrong. **It Could Happen To You** fought and won.

In June 2018, the New York State Republican Senate and Democratic Assembly overwhelming passed legislation calling for the establishment of the New York State Commission on Prosecutorial Conduct. In September 2018, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo signed the bill into law.

Now the public has a place to go to file a complaint if they believe a prosecutor is breaking their own rules of conduct. The Commission has the power to investigate alleged misconduct and serve as a deterrent to the prosecutorial misconduct that has been the cause of thousands of wrongful convictions across America.

The New York State Discovery For Justice Reform Act

New York State once had one of the nation's most antiquated criminal discovery laws. Prosecutors often failed to turn over to the accused and their defense attorneys' copies of police reports, witness statements and exculpatory information. They were "blindfolded."

The **It Could Happen To You** Freedom Tour addressed forums across New York. Participants were shocked to learn that should they be accused; they may have to fight for these documents.

In 2019, **It Could Happen To You** worked with the NY State Repeal The Blindfold Coalition to secure passage of legislation requiring prosecutors to turn over all discovery in their possession at arraignment and all additional information no later than 15 days after arraignment.

New York State is now a leader in protecting the rights of the accused to all the information that may be used against them.

OUR THREE-YEAR GOALS

Next Generation Criminal Justice Reform Agenda 2020-2022

- 1. Establish A New Culture of Accountability for Prosecutors**
 - Advance Development of the New York State Commission on Prosecutorial Conduct
 - Provide supporting research, strategic guidance and public education necessary to implement State Commissions on Prosecutorial Conduct in 6 targeted states including California, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut
- 2. Establish Automatic Expungement of Criminal Records for the Wrongfully Convicted in the State of Pennsylvania**
- 3. Implement and Manage Campaigns to Provide Just Compensation for the Wrongfully Convicted in the States of Pennsylvania, California, and Connecticut**
- 4. Transform Prisons from Unproductive Cells to Productive Schools**
 - Advocate for expansion of the New York State Work Release Program.
 - Promote increased in-prison educational programs enabling all of the incarcerated to begin securing certified skill certificates and college degrees while incarcerated.
 - Increase the inmate labor minimum wage.
- 5. Support Campaigns to Raise the State Age for Adult Incarceration to 25 Years Old**
- 6. Initiate Dialogue at the National and State Level on Term Limits for District Attorneys**
- 7. Promote Legislation Establishing Term Limits for District Attorneys in Two Targeted States.**
- 8. Support Statewide Discovery and Bail Reform Campaigns**

Learn more about It Could Happen To You:
Itcouldhappen2you.org

ABOUT US

Our History

After being falsely accused and wrongfully prosecuted Bill Bastuk vowed to funnel his experience into positive action. Hence, **It Could Happen To You** was formed.

“No resident or visitor of the United States should ever be subject to this broken system of justice. Rest assured that **It Could Happen To You** will battle for long overdue oversight and reform.” – Bill Bastuk.

Who We Are

It Could Happen To You is a national non-traditional criminal justice reform coalition standing up to the most powerful players in the criminal justice system. We are men and woman of all races and all ages from every geographic and political spectrum.

We bring together the wrongfully prosecuted, the wrongfully convicted and their families and friends. We bring together elected officials, criminal and civil rights defenders, community organizations, faith leaders, unions, business leaders and many more average citizens. We stand with those organizations that have long fought for common sense criminal justice reform.



Bill Bastuk, Chair and Executive Director, **It Could Happen To You**

It Could Happen To You fights passionately and fearlessly at the national and state level for long overdue Change in America's Aging Criminal Justice Institutions. Whether it be changing the office of the prosecutor, the prisons that confine over-prosecuted inmates or fighting

for compensation for exonerees who spent years behind bars and then are tossed out on the streets as though nothing went wrong. No challenge or new idea is too big for **It Could Happen To You**.

DONATE

Donate and Help Us Carry Out Change

Those who oppose changing the culture of America's criminal justice system have access to a wealth of resources. **It Could Happen To You** needs to stand toe to toe with those who want to maintain the criminal justice status quo-and even turn back the clock of time.

Please join our fight and donate whatever you can today either on-line at

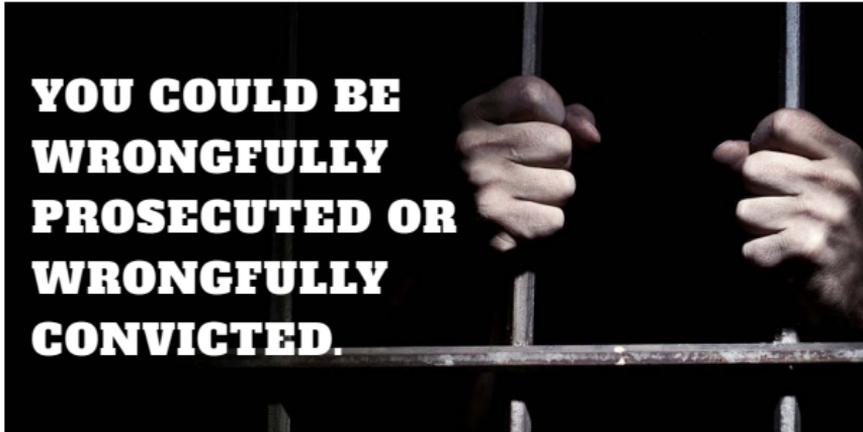
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and click Donate or Mail a donation to

It Could Happen To You

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**YOU COULD BE
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PROSECUTED OR
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CONVICTED.**

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It Could Happen to You is a 501-C3 non-profit organization.