

Philip Clark
Warren
LD 178

Dear Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee

My name is Philip Clark, and I am writing in support of LD 178 from Warren.

I would like to address parole and the possibility of it being granted in my case. I realize that parole is something that needs to be earned through self-improvement and rehabilitation. As of the moment, the state does not offer any incentive for bettering oneself or working towards rehabilitation for long-term convictions. In my own case, the best case scenario for release before parole was being considered would be a release when I was somewhere in my 80s, at which point I would probably commit a petty crime to get myself reincarcerated.

With the possibility of earning parole, my whole perspective changes and encourages me to seek programs to earn a parole release some day. I have already applied to take NCCER classes so that I could join the program that constructs houses for Habitat for Humanity. I chose that program because I have been building houses for 30-plus years and thought my experience would benefit other inmates also in the program. Unfortunately, I was not chosen to participate as the class apparently only holds eight students. There are other classes and programs I can apply myself to, such as intro to computer, math, geometry, etc. to brush up on. In short, I have not been doing any of these things because of the feelings of hopelessness toward ever being able to apply them. The passing of this bill would change that for myself and numerous other inmates.

If granted parole, I feel that I could contribute to my community by teaching some of the skills that are in serious short supply to a younger community so that the trades do not completely die in generations to come. I worry about this a lot. I also feel that I could find the support groups to become part of and share my experiences and the effects of some of the negative attitudes and actions I have that contributed to my arrest and conviction.

Thank you for your hard work to pass this bill and for taking the time to read this testimony.