

Michael Harriman
Warren
LD 178

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

My name is Michael R Herriman and I am writing in support of LD 178.

First and foremost, I would like to thank the committee for working tirelessly on the parole bill. Parole is something that should be earned. I would like to take this time to inform you of some of the things in programs that I have done since being incarcerated.

Since the start of my stay, I have taken many programs such as Houses of Healing (13 times). Every time I have taken it, I've learned something new about myself and the pain I held inside from the trauma I have been through. I can honestly work on and help myself get past so I can heal and become a better man and all the rules I have to hold in life as a free man. I knew that my childhood was hard, but I never knew I had these problems deep inside, pushed down to be forgotten. This pain had caused so many issues and self-worth problems such as my drug addiction, anger problems, personality issues, and self-esteem problems. After learning these things about myself, I reached out and began taking other programs offered in this prison (Maine State prison in Warren, Maine) such as anger management, long distance dads, program, and drug addiction program.

At the moment, I'm currently taking the program for trauma and so far - other than the Houses of Healing program - this is helping me the most in showing me that the abuse I went through as a child was not my fault. From the ages of three to seven, I was raped by my father and I constantly told my mother but her own drug addiction blinded her on believing me until one day she came home and found me crying naked with a broken beer bottle neck broken off into my "backside." I have gone through a lot of physical and emotional abuse most of my life. I never knew how to deal with the pain of my life and finally I learned how I was here in prison. I was offered the proper healing courses in this prison and it gave me the time and space to allow myself the healing I denied myself all my life.

I have become a better and different man and I take full responsibility for the serious crime I committed against not only my victim (or victims), but also their family, friends, my family, and all the other people in the community that have been affected by the things I have done. I feel terrible about what I have done and I hope that my statement is sufficient enough to show change is possible. Real change: to change a person who has had a damaged childhood and found help and kindness and now waits to finally show the world that I finally am a valuable member to society.

Thank you very much for taking the time out of your day to read this heartfelt testimony. may Allah bless you and your loved ones.