

Gordon Perry  
Warren  
LD 178

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

My name is Gordon Perry #30067. I'm a resident of the Maine State Prison in Warren and I'm writing to you today so I can support LD 178 - An Act To Support Reentry and Reintegration into the Community.

I feel like I have my own unique story that may be of some value to you and the decisions you make regarding parole. I will try not to bore you with the likely normal speech from these testimonials on paper and in person you normally receive like on the lack of recidivism after so many years incarcerated or once you reach a certain age or the cost benefits to parole. There are a ton of facts you hear and know already; therefore, I'd like to tell you my story and where I've been and where I am now.

The reason being is I'm someone no one ever thought could succeed in here or out there, but 7+ years disciplinary report free as well as, a even longer time frame in which nothing of significance regarding my behavior might just prove I've beaten all the odds, and if I can succeed, then anyone could possibly succeed if given the right opportunities to do so and with the new age prison reform practices, Maine has been leading the charge in showing countless success stories of varying degrees. There is hope for residents' success upon release. If this process had taken shape 15 years ago, my record would be even better but there was a ton of corruption in the past and I did years in segregation for doing absolutely nothing wrong, for example during a random pod shake down, I was living with another resident and the officer found a piece of a cable cord in our vent which was harmless. Yeah right, not in those days. I did two years in segregation for an escape tool or a dangerous weapon and they actually got away with that, believe it or not! But that being said, those days are over, and people like you help make decisions that help make practices like abuse of power much more difficult by focusing on rehabilitation so people can get ready for the streets and to better themselves.

If you would like to see who is writing this, you can simply look on the MDOC website for the prison and see my picture as they talk about the change in segregation policy. The picture was taken by PBS Frontline when they did the documentary on solitary confinement. I am leaning on the door with my arm on the window and head resting on my arm.

I'm currently serving a natural life sentence with no possibility of parole out of N.H. and have come to Maine through the interstate compact program back in 1997 and it hasn't always been a smooth ride for me here at M.S.P. I've actually done several years in segregation on and off again over the years, struggling along the way at times, but sometimes even getting wrongfully placed in segregation for up to two years at a time like I mentioned earlier. But that was the times of past when segregation was a place to hide someone out for all kinds of reasons with very little structure as far as a rhyme or reason for the prison's decisions on this type of punishment – or as I describe as torture. I must say I learned very little during that time of my life. I only started to hate the people that were making all the decisions creating a very angry person inside of myself, luckily I by the grace of God fought through all the bad times and now I have been doing the new way of prison life here at MSP like enrolling in the college program here for multiple semesters. I have also been training service dogs for disabled vets for the past year and change. I have also done many programs as well, but what I really think my true passion in life is would have to be helping others. I have done lots of mentoring here over the years and people tend to hear my story, see my change and believe they can do the same.

I'm not doing this letter for myself, and although I may not have a chance at parole, I see countless other individuals that have started off in similar circumstances as my own and they could be a huge asset to the community in so many different areas that you will be able to utilize in the community to make Maine a better place to live and that's just the facts. As most of you already realize I'm sure, and after all the preaching I do about trying to help people on a daily basis trying to do my role as a changed individual I would not be doing all I can had I not sent you my feelings.

I appreciate your time and effort regarding parole. Now it's time to make your state better by getting parole, I hope, for everyone's sake.

Thank you

Gordon Perry #30067