

Dustin Carpenter
Warren
LD 178

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

My name is Dustin Carpenter and I am writing in support of LD 178.

I have spent a significant amount of my life incarcerated. Unlike many others, I have had several chances to correct my behavior. I have been to prison four times in two states, including twice in Alabama and twice in Maine. I do not believe that I deserve parole, although I would love to get out. The following may be a controversial account of my beliefs concerning parole; however, I feel they are grounded in an experiential rationale, rather than one of sympathy.

As stated above, I have had chance after chance to correct my behavior. The longest amount of time I've spent incarcerated was my last prison sentence where I did 49 months on a 5-year partial suspension of a 12-year sentence. 4 years is a long time, but I feel that I wouldn't have been less likely to recidivate had I done the whole 12-year sentence all at once! In total, I have spent around 9 years of my adult life incarcerated, and when the sentence is over, I will have spent a total of 12 years.

I believe parole is very important to people with large sentences. Parole is great for people who have loved ones dying, or whose families are falling apart so that they can get out and try to be present and make a difference. From experience, however, my life has shown that when these types of situations present themselves, I am more likely to relapse and begin yet another downward spiral towards incarceration. These types of events act as triggers for people with substance abuse disorders. My belief is that parole shouldn't be offered to anyone who has served less than 10 consecutive years incarcerated. In this way, parole would be much more effective.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration. My hopes are that parole gets started here and is retroactive for certain individuals. There are many people here that deserve second chances. Again, thank you for your time.