

March 18, 2024

My name is John English and I am writing this letter in support of the Second Chance Legislation.

The Second Chance Legislation is a needed legislation that would give a second chance to those most deserving of it.

The passing of this legislation would not mean that every person in prison will receive their freedom from prison. These people would have to earn it by doing the right things in prison and of course a Judge would have the final say-so.

As for me personally, I spent 2/3's of my life in prison for committing a crime as an 18 year old. I was arrested in May of 1983, and released from prison on November 21, 2023. I went in at 18 years of age and was released at 59 years of age. I had completed many, many classes and self-help groups to rehabilitate myself. However, I could never get the Parole Board's attention. You see, my sentence was a non-paroleable life sentence which subjected me to "file reviews." I did 40 years in prison before being resentenced as a Juvenile under the Michigan Supreme Court's ruling in People v. Parks. And for me, freedom was very hard after serving all those years. Society had changed so very much, so fast paced. It took me several months to get adjusted. Some things are still challenging for me.

I only brought that up, because there are many, many people in the Michigan Department of Corrections who have served 30, 40 or 50 years. Who have also completed many self-help classes, rehabilitated themselves and have "aged out" of criminal ways of thinking. Many of these people are Grandfathers, Great Grandfathers, or in the women's facilities, Grandmothers and Great grandmothers. There are people locked up who are very deserving of a "second chance."

It should be noted that when you look back at the very first wave of juveniles who were released (several hundred) via United States Supreme Court precedent (Miller v. Alabama), they are still out in society.

We can also look more recently at those juveniles who have been released under the Michigan Supreme Court's rulings in People v. Parks, People v. Stovall and People v. Poole. None of these people have went back to prison either. Because these people have "aged out of crime and the criminal way of thinking."

Obviously, the Second Chance Legislation has nothing to do with the release of juveniles. But the point I want to make is this, those juveniles who have been released had significant amounts of years in, just like those who would be affected by the passing of the Second Chance Legislation. Your own statistics show that individuals who have served significant amounts of time have the lowest recidivism rates and are less likely to become repeat offenders.

Lets face it, our prison population is getting older and more expensive due to aging prisoners who are no longer a threat to society because they have aged out of crime.

People will argue that the public's safety will be at risk if this legislation is passed. Remember, not a single juvenile offender who was released due to either U.S. Supreme Court precedent or more recently, Michigan Supreme Court precedent has been returned for a violent crime. And EVERY single juvenile offender that was freed, was serving for the worst possible crime anyone could ever be convicted of and that was First degree murder.

Currently, the Michigan Department of Corrections releases prisoners who have served 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, even 9 and 10 years. These prisoners usually come back several times due to not having served a lengthy sentence and some of their crimes have graduated to more serious crimes. These are the ones those people need to be arguing about "public safety."

This not coming from an individual who doesn't know what he is speaking on, I have 40 years of prison experience. I have rubbed elbows with these guys. I would rather have the

guy who has served 20, 30, 40 or 50 years living next to me than these guys who have done 10 years or less.

Therefore, I ask that you please take this opportunity and seriously consider the legislation before you and pass it. Look at the statistics, they speak for themselves.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to voice my approval of this legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. John English

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