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February 13, 2015

Representative Cathy Tilton
Alaska State Capitol Room 411
120 4th Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Representative Tilton:

I am writing to express our organization's support for HB 93, pertaining to the duties of probation officers and conditions of parole.

As you know, Partners for Progress is committed to the goal of assisting former offenders become productive lawful members of the community, thereby protecting the public from repeat crime and reducing the soaring costs of incarceration. We have learned through experience – and this has been confirmed by national research – that, for most people reentering the community from prison, securing and keeping employment is essential to achieving this goal.

The Partners Reentry Center that we operate is now serving about 50 clients a day. We emphasize employment, making that a condition of temporary housing and other assistance. To help reentrants overcome the stigma of their criminal records and fulfill the requirement for employment imposed by ourselves and by the Department of Corrections, we have worked with employers in Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley and significantly increased the number of them who are willing to give people a second chance. DOC probation officers have assisted us in this effort.

Since the requirements of HB 93 are conditioned on consistency with other terms of probation, we hope DOC will view the bill as a reflection of their best practices. It is a fact that many who are on probation work at jobs that do not have flexible hours. Often former offenders' means of transportation are quite limited, making it difficult and times-taking to travel to and from required appointments.

Thank you for introducing HB 93. If enacted, we believe it will positively impact the lives of people who are working to become contributing citizens to our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Janet McCabe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Janet McCabe
Chair, Partners for Progress
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