

Scott A. Walker #12060
Goose Creek Correctional Center
22301 west Alsop Road
Wasilla, AK 99654

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To: Senator Jesse Bjorkman
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Hello, my name is Scott Walker. I have been incarcerated since June 11, 1981, when I had just turned 19. Over the last 43 years I have witnessed first-hand the many changes that have occurred within the Alaska Legislature, Courts, and Dept. of Corrections concerning criminology.

I am writing in support of S.B. 176, and hope that my testimony and input may help. The essence of my letter is to bring back rehabilitation and redemption to State politics. I personally struggle with loss of hope due to the Parole Board's inability to take rehabilitation into account.

Our Alaska Constitution supports the ideology of a second chance in the form of discretionary parole, it also fuels this idea by making rehabilitation a "right".

Before I get into my personal history I would like to share some thoughts on Parole.

I understand that releasing inmates with violent crime convictions early is unsavory. However, it is statistically proven that recidivism is extremely low for offenders who served 15+ years straight. There is also a financial outlook. Currently, the P.B. is automatically giving 10 year continuances for violent crimes. This means an automatic cost of approx. 60,000 x 10 yrs = 600,000 dollars for each 10 year continuance. If paroles are completely denied there will be additional costs for the always increasing aged prison population. Also, when you take away hope you increase the propensity for an individual to not rehabilitate.

I was originally charged and then acquitted of 2 counts of murder. I am convicted of 2 counts of Kidnapping, 1st degree Rob, burglary, and theft. I am serving a composite sentence of 89 yrs.

In 2012 I was eligible for discretionary parole. My Parole Officer endorsed my release, along with other correctional professionals. See Attached: Pg. 9 Parole Progress Report, and letters from Dennis Perry, and Kristie Willean.

The P.B. declined my parole officer's recommendation and issued me a 10 yr continuance. See EX 1, pg.1 With pre-conditions that I complete Substance abuse Treatment, Pre-release, Victime Impact, and recommended that I attain a psychological evaluation.[I feel inclined to interject that I had attempted to complete 2 of these classes up to 5 years before the 2012 hearing but S.C.C.C. did not offer them, at that time, unless they were Court or P.B. ordered or if you were within a year of release, and Victim Impact was not offered at all.]

In the 2012 P.B. summary there was no substantial reason for a 10 year continuance, other than wanting me to continue formal programming. (EX 1, pg. 2-3).

I filed a reconsideration on Sept. 10, 2012 (EX 1, pg.4-6)with a psych-eval. See attached by Larry Maile Alaska licensed (#AA0392)

The P.B. responded by reducing my continuance from 10 years to 8years.(EX 1 pg. 7-8)

I wrote back, thanking the P.B. for the reduction, but asking them for clarification on the reasoning for the now 8 years continuance.(EX 1, pg. 9)

They denied my request and gave a vague referal to the serverity of the crime. (EX 1, pg10)

I filed a Post-conviction relief contending the P.B. did not comply with law under A.S. 33.16.130c to which the State conceded. (EX 1, pg. 15-18) Judge Saxby, ordered the P.B. to adequately explain it's reason(s) for not granting discretionary parole (EX 1, pg19). The P.B. complied with the court's order on January 7, 2014(EX 1, pg.20-21)

The P.B.'s initial 2012 summary did not address the reason for my continuance. Twice I asked specifically for the reasoning. It was not until court ordered did the P.B. come back with their 'now' most commonly used go to for everyone's 10 year continuances, that it would diminish the severity of the crime (33.16.100(a)(4))

On JULY 14, 2020 I went in front of the P.B. for my continuation hearing. Since the 2012 hearing I had completed the pre-conditions LSSAT, Victim Impact, Pre-Release, and obtained the psych-eval. Additionally, I completed: Thought patterns for a sucessful career 16 weeks, 48 week offender program, Changing Offender Behavior, SAMHSA's Anger Management, NCRG;Work-keys, Parenting, UAF DEVM-60 Pre-Algebra, UAF HIST F-100 Western Civ, UAF HLTH F-203 Science of Nutrition, LSU Math1021 Advanced Alebra, NCCer Construction Site safety Orientation, NCCER Applied Construction Math,NCCER core curriculum and beginner Piano.

I have maintained employment as Education Tutor (6.5 yrs), Orientation Designer and Facilitator (9 months), Custodian for Admin, records, and Intake for (4.5 yrs), Voluntarily Co-facilitated a Mindfulness Yoga Class (2 yrs). Additionally, I continually mentor and aid others with anything within my capability.

Other than my completion of the pre-conditions and other aforementioned accomplishments, an incident report from 2013 (for having medication that was prescribed to me), and the additional (10 reduced to 8 years) served, no new information was presented to the P.B. that had not already been considered by the initial hearing on Sept 10, 2012. (EX 1, pg.22-25)

I felt slighted by my G.C.C.C. Parole Officer assigned to my continuation hearing. I had never seen her before and who only saw me for 2 ten minute sessions before my hearing. She basically would not discuss my case, saying she would only go by what she felt the P.B. would do.

I invite you to look at the perspectives of other Correction Officials who had contact with me over decades. One was Claire Sullivan (She has a Master's in psychology, worked Army Intelligence before Corrections, retired as Deputy Commissioner of AK DOC), Who I had about 20 hours interaction with prior to my initial hearing. Bryan Brandenburg (Prior Director AK DOC), John Sundeen (Prior head of Mental Health of GCCC), and Rebecca Scales (prior mental health clinician) Please see their attached Letters.

After doing my 10 reduced to 8 years, the 2020 Board told me to do the remainder of my sentence due to the severity of the crime. When I received my paperwork it said, "Parole Denied-serve the remainder of the sentence", then below, Other: May re-apply in 10 years (EX 1, pg. 26-28)

I understand the magnitude of my crime. I would give anything to undo all the horrible damage done. But Alas, that is not possible. I understand the desire to try to assuage pain by inflicting pain.

But does that really work? My Victims have all the right to hate. Although, I always pray that they could forgive, not for me, but for them.

Our Federal and State constitutions concerning criminality are supposed to be based on reformation and redemption. This was/is brought forth by Christian principles. I would like to hope that we as a State and Nation can stay steady on this thought process.

In the P.B.'s 2020 summary they stated that I have a good life in prison. I challenge, is there such a thing as prison is a good life?

Senate Bill 176 should be passed in order to give those who are truly remorseful, and earn credibility as a contributing Non-criminal member of society a second chance. And to get this chance while they are still capable of taking care of themselves upon release.

Thank You for your Time and consideration

Sincerely,


Scott A. Walker