

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of Senate Judiciary Committee:

I am an attorney, a parent, and a native Oregonian. I believe that in a functioning society, we should be held accountable for our actions. I also believe that children have a special place in society and we have a duty to support them and their unique capacity for change.

I strongly support SB 968, which would eliminate life without parole for youth by ensuring that anyone convicted of a crime when they are under eighteen years old receives a chance for parole after fifteen years. This would bring us in line with constitutional law, our increasing understanding of brain science, and most of the world.

Children can change and we should support and encourage them in becoming healthy members of society. Those who no longer pose a threat should have the opportunity for release rather than serve their entire lives behind bars.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I hope you support SB 968.

Warmly,

Kimberly Mason
Portland, Oregon