

Anthony Pickens
2605 State St
Salem, OR 97310

April 6, 2019

Senate Committee on Judiciary
Salem, Oregon

RE: Senate Bill 1008

Senator Prozanski and Committee,

My name is Anthony Pickens and I have been incarcerated since 1997 for a murder that I committed at the age of 15 years old and while involved with gangs. I was sentenced to 25 years to life with a four year upward departure for not testifying against the adults involved. I have taken responsibility for my offense and done my best to make sure that once I am released from the physical custody of the Department of Corrections, I am able to be successful and have rehabilitated myself enough to enter society as a contributing member of society.

Since being incarcerated I have grown and matured into a humble man that understands the consequences of my actions and how those actions affect others. I am currently positioned to organize a Peace Keeping certification program and have been able to participate in mentoring youth that come inside who are struggling with the environment that I once struggled with.

With the passing of SB 1008 there is a recognition that minors are irrevocably different than adults and have a at a different ability for rehabilitation. If you, the Senate Committee, believes that is true then why should that start just with minors who commit the same offenses after 2020? Everyone who committed their offenses as minors should have the opportunity to show change and reformation.

Furthermore, making the bill retroactive does not guarantee any of us to be released, even conditionally; however, it will give those of us, who were minors when wet came into prison who have been doing everything in our power to transform and rehabilitate, the opportunity for hope and the same chance those who pass the bill recognize that youth after 2020 deserve.

There are individuals like me, convicted as minors, who have been affected by Ballot Measure 11 and who seek to give back to the community and build a stronger future for our youth, regardless of their mistakes.

Please support our future and the adults that have been adversely affected by Ballot Measure 11 since the inception and give those of us who have done the work the opportunity to have some part of our adulthood outside of prison. We want to make a difference and we need you all to make SB 1008 retroactive, so we have a chance at life.

Sincerely,

Anthony O. Pickens