

Good morning Chair, members of the committee;

My name is Alli Sayre and I'm a resident of SE Portland. I write to you this morning in support of SB 571. My initial inclination was to make the argument that you should move this bill forward with a do pass recommendation because sometimes juries get it wrong and there are innocent people in prison, but I realized by making that argument I would be basically saying people who are guilty of a crime shouldn't be allowed to vote. That's simply not my belief. All citizens should be able to participate in our democracy. Whether someone has or hasn't committed a terrible crime to me has no bearing of whether they should be able to have a voice in how our country is run. It's simply fear-mongering illogical nonsense to postulate that by allowing incarcerated individuals to vote they will somehow vote to make crime legal or something.

The only reason the US has a significant prison population that far outstrips all other countries in the world is because non-incarcerated individuals have voted time and time again for politicians and policies that are "tough on crime". While our prison population has exploded, violent crime numbers have tanked. There is no connection between the two- our policies are simply creating more prisoners, not preventing crime. If people are truly worried that incarcerated people make up a significant voting block maybe we need to reexamine why so many people are incarcerated in the first place and work to ameliorate those conditions.

Until then, we can take a small step in the right direction with SB 571. Please move this bill forward with a do-pass recommendation. Thank you for your time.