

February 18, 2021

To whom it may concern:

My name is Anthony [REDACTED] I am 39 years-old and have been incarcerated for the last 23 years. I came to prison as a first time juvenile offender and have never had the opportunity to vote. I write today in support of SB 571 and HB 2366 that would restore voting rights for incarcerated individuals.

For many incarcerated people, the restoration of voting rights implies that the right to vote was formerly given to Adults In Custody before being taken away for criminal acts. For myself and many members of my community, that assertion is false. The majority of people in prison committed their crime as juveniles or emerging adults (18-24). As someone who was 16 years-old when I made the worst decision of my life, my incarceration has precluded me from any civic engagement or ability to effect positive change in policies that would benefit young adults whose life may be headed down a similar trajectory as mine. With my life experiences being raised in a criminological environment, around gangs and with an incarcerated father, I felt I had a lot to offer in policy decisions that would prevent youth from becoming involved with the justice system and would protect the community from victimization, however, had never had the opportunity to voice my concerns and solutions.

That was, until 2018 when a small group of my juvenile offender peers (who are now in their 30's and 40's) were fortunate enough to engage with lawmakers about the need to pass SB 1008 for young offenders. This was the first time in my life that I felt my experiences and voice mattered. During our discussions, the Public Safety Advisor to Governor Brown thanked us for our contribution and said something to me that I had never been told. He told us that we *are all* Oregonians and that we matter. That was the first time in my life that I truly felt like an Oregonian and a valued member of this state.

There is tremendous power in feeling like part of a community. For someone like myself, who was already on a path of civic engagement, it further strengthened my commitment to community service. Imagine then, how this feeling may strengthen community bonds for other people in prison and contribute to a rehabilitative process of reconnecting to society? I want others in prison to feel what I felt when Governor Browns Public Safety Advisor called me an Oregonian, because I know if they do, Oregon will create an inclusive state that turns once marginalized individuals into community service activists , who for the first time in their life feel included, and have something to prove.

I know there is a concern among some who cannot stomach the idea of certain prisoners being allowed to vote because of the crimes they have committed. While I understand that concern, I would like to point out that some people who have committed very serious offenses are already allowed to vote from State Hospitals and there has never been any problem with that.

There are people in prison who have committed very serious offenses, this is a fact. However, there are also people in the community who may have voted last November that have committed equally horrible offenses but were never arrested. Would we exclude people in the community from voting because some of their neighbors may have committed a horrible crime but have managed to elude detection? If not, then why deny the vote to thousands of people in prison whose neighbor was caught for the same crime? There are many people free to live in the community who have committed horrendous acts and maintain their access to the ballot box.

Limiting the right to vote to people we *think* are worthy would turn citizenship into something that is earned by civic virtue, which delegitimizes democracy and sets Oregon down a path where equality and access to the ballot are determined by those in power and distributed to those deemed civically virtuous.

The idea that certain people are not morally fit to vote is an ancient relic out of date with modern notions of democracy. It wasn't long ago that Black, Asian, Native People and women were denied the right to vote on this same basis. If that logic were still currently applied, many men and women in the legislature would not hold office today.

Thank you for your time and consideration, I implore you to pass these bills and make Oregon an inclusive state that truly values democratic values and the humanity of others.

Sincerely,



Anthony

OSCI  
3405 Deer Park Drive SE  
Salem, OR 97310

17 February 2021

re: SB571 and HB 2366

Dear Oregon Senate and House Legislators,

I've been incarcerated in Oregon for over 20 years. Because I came to prison before I was 18 I have never had the right to vote. During my time inside I have seen numerous people come into prison and lose the right to vote while inside. Most of these people are young (ages 14-25) and the majority of these young people are not engaged in the political process nor do they understand it or the profound impact it has on their own lives, their families and their local community. However, many of those who do become rehabilitated and become healthy and safe people over the course of their incarceration tend to become more socially and politically aware. That is, there is a correlation between rehabilitation and political engagement within a democratic system.

The Declaration of Independence states, "we hold these truths to be self-evident" that human rights (including the right to vote) are endowed by the nature of man and woman's creation and they are *inalienable*, meaning that these rights don't derive from force, nor are they granted by a transitory ruler. Rather, Democracy recognizes *the divine right of the ruled, rather than the ruler*. While many leaders, as stewards of Democracy, have often fallen short in their responsibility to fulfill the purity of the founders' words, we can improve our democracy by excluding fewer people, including people like me who are incarcerated from an inalienable right.

Many incarcerated folks come to understand that voting is not only a right— *it is a responsibility*. Giving incarcerated people the right to vote will not only give them a right, but gives them a responsibility to have agency within their community. Offering incarcerated people the right to vote will aid DOC's rehabilitative goals.

Opponents to prisoner voting rights may point out specific offenders who have committed the most horrific crimes and argue that society should not give these people the right to vote because of how extreme their offences are. When this is certainly a compelling emotional argument, it is important to point out that the vast majority of incarcerated people are not represented by the most extreme criminal cases and to deny thousands of people (the vast majority of them who will be released) a chance to become civically responsibly while in custody is not a well thought out reason to deny them a chance to be part of society. That while their incarceration is a punishment for their criminal actions, they are still a citizen and they thus still have a responsibility to be socially responsible person before and *especially* upon their release.

Giving incarcerated persons the right to vote not only provides prisoners more incentive to be responsible citizens who have a place and a reason to be invested in a democratic society, it speaks to who Oregon is as a bastion of democratic principles, that in Oregon

we are striving to make a more perfect democracy. Oregon should work to expand democracy and providing citizens who are incarcerated access to the ballot is an easy and common sense (while also bold) way to uphold the principles our nation and state was founded upon.

Thank your for your time and consideration.

- [REDACTED]

I am writing this letter because I am testifying in favor of Senate bill 571 and House bill 2366. I have been incarcerated since I was a teenager and I am now almost 30. I came to DOC from OYA and the two environments are very different from each other. OYA builds you up and invests in you as a person and teaches you to be a positive member of society. DOC says that they try to do this but in my experience they fall very short of that mark.

If I had my right to vote restored to me it would go a very long way toward making me feel like a person with a voice who is still in some way a member of society. In an environment like this that would be a really amazing thing. When I was younger I was never taught about voting and I didn't have the mentality to care. Now that I am older and I follow what is going on in the world around me, it can be very frustrating to not have any ability to make a difference. Being able to vote would give people a chance to relieve some of that frustration. Studies show that when incarcerated individuals are treated like people, they are far more likely to make the choices that will lead to rehabilitation and reduce the rate of recidivism. I think that restoring the voting rights of incarcerated individuals would be a major step in the right direction for prison reform and making Oregon a more progressive place. Thank you for hearing us and considering what we have to say.

Sincerely, James [REDACTED]

*James [REDACTED]*

17 February 2021

re: SB571 and HB 2366

Dear Oregon Senate and House Legislators,

My name is Seth [REDACTED] and I am currently an incarcerated person. I am writing this in support of proposed legislation pertaining to voting rights for incarcerated individuals. Giving currently incarcerated persons the right to vote is yet another huge step that can be taken by our courageous law makers to help normalize those who are incarcerated. The first goal of incarceration should be the successful reintegration of those who are incarcerated back into society. Giving incarcerated people the right to vote would be a big help to those of us inside because it helps to give us a feeling of community with the free world. It gives us a sense of civic engagement, and therefore a sense of responsibility for that society.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Seth' followed by a long, sweeping flourish.

Seth [REDACTED]

I'm writing to implore for support with SB

Speaking as a person who has been incarcerated since he was 17 years old in Oregon's adult department of corrections I give faith that by extending the choice to exercise the right to vote to citizens who are provisionally confined to correctional facilities could have a humanizing and inclusive effect, which could combat feelings of being extremely disenfranchised and estranged from society and perchance contribute to a reduced recidivism rate.

I understand that citizens/people are sent to prison as "punishment" for transgressions against the state or persons but we aren't all incorrigible lunatics hell bent on terrorizing society; we are sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, aunts and uncles, grandparents, neighbors, and ultimately we are struggling Oregonians. The vast majority of us will return to our respective communities at some point, hopefully as "healthier" not merely punished individuals with a molded mentality of being perpetually condemned. I believe most people who committed criminal offenses serious enough to be sent to prison where at the end of their ropes, in the worst place they'd ever been, intoxicated and made terribly tragic decisions that will essentially burden them for the rest of their lives, stigmatized and bound to be the only people who can be legally outright discriminated against. This continued judgment outside of prison only serves to further ostracize struggling community members trying to successfully reintegrate back into society. I feel that by simply reclaiming or offered the right to choose to vote, or not, on issues that affect our communities while incarcerated would go a long ways to combating feelings that we aren't just alienated members of the community but making them feel like they're a part of something greater than themselves, which could serve as a rehabilitative catalyst in some small way. Additionally, compared to the potentially good it could have on some of the individuals in here what's the down side or worst that could happen, democrats, republican, conservative, liberal, or progressive policies get a few more votes in respective communities?

Thank you for your consideration.  
Sincerely,

Truitt

To Whom It May Concern,

I Mikkal [REDACTED] do hereby testify in favor of SB571 & HB2366. These 2 bills are important to me because I would like my voice to be heard on issues that concern me. To me, I feel that having the ability to vote is very important to rehabilitation, as this would grant us the chance to connect us to our communities that we may feel disconnected from. I also feel that it is important to democracy as a whole because, if a specific class of people is not being heard from, and those laws are most affecting that specific class, then you are only hearing from a portion of a population and not the ones concerned the most. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Mikkal [REDACTED]  
3405 Deer Park Dr. SE  
Salem, OR 97310



**I Jeff [REDACTED] testify in favor of SB571 & HB2366.**

For me, it is very important to vote and express my opinion on who should be representing my values, beliefs and concerns. It means that my humanity is recognized, for me to be able to vote and be an example to others on how to positively affect change. Voting is a key to implementing the necessary changes and I feel like I can provide input from another perspective that may not have been visible from someone who has not been in my shoes.

As I rehabilitate myself and strive to become a valuable member of society, voting is essential. The people need to have a voice in the process or the process would not represent the people, but only a select few. I am a part of society no matter where I may reside, but the immediate society can affect the larger society as I advocate for change or rights. To become a functioning member of society and a contributor, I must take part in the rehabilitative process that causes me to grow. Roughly 98% of all AIC's will be released back into society one day, and to dehumanize them and submit to exclusion is not conducive to the rehabilitation process that should be taking place in all AIC's lives.

To be a Democracy, means for the power to be invested in the people and my exclusion would silence a percentage of the people. In essence, silencing Adults In Custody (AIC's) is eliminating a portion of the people's voice, and when change is enacted; the change may adversely affect those excluded from the process.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate being able to share my voice!

Sincerely,

*Jeff*  
Jeff [REDACTED]

3405 Deer Park Dr. SE.  
Salem, Or. 97310

To Whom It May Concern:

In regards to House Bill 2366 and Senate Bill 571.

Voting is a fundamental right and something that allows for you to have a voice in your Government Local, State and Federal. It allows you to help facilitate change and give back, without that right your ability is stripped away, and as an AIC who is looking for a way to give back to the community that you have harmed it can be a crucial piece.

Sincerely

Richard [REDACTED]

Hawkin [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

What would it mean to me to be able to vote from prison?

To answer this question shortly, I would feel that by being able to vote I have value in my society. That despite my past decisions I have not been utterly thrown away as an Oregonian or an American, which is often what being in here can feel like. I would like to hope that having learned from making some bad decisions in my life that the ability to vote can be one small part of contributing to being a better part of my community at large and making a better future for all Oregonians.

February 16, 2021'

Senate Bill 571 & House Bill 2366

To whom it may concern,

Coming upon the citizens of Oregon soon is the vote to allow prisoners the *right to vote*. Specifically Senate Bill 571 and House Bill 2366. I write today in support of these two historic bills, not only because I am currently incarcerated and clearly see the value in this liberty, but also because I am still a citizen with a vested interest in the State of Oregon where I reside.

Being I am a citizen and contributor to the State of Oregon and the United States of America—which upon my incarceration I do not believe my citizenship was revoked—voting is a right granted by this standing and is an obvious reason amongst many why it should be allowable for all citizens no matter their residential placement.

Further, the authority to vote is a major part of what gives citizens the feeling of participating in the process of government and being a part of something (imagine that sentiment being extended to those condemned). This something I took for granted until my incarceration unfortunately—too busy with life and career I suppose could be an excuse. Which one thing being incarcerated has taught me is the value in voting, and this by recognizing the many thoughtful and inquisitive minds that are resting behind bars whom have something valuable to say, as well whom give careful thought to Measures, Bills & beyond and how participating affects society in many ways.

Furthermore how not allowing certain citizens of a specific group the born right of participating delivers an added sense of hopelessness and lack of voice—something that does not seem to coincide with rehabilitation.

Thus one would think it may be a positive ingredient to add for those incarcerated as part of their rehabilitation—this knowing we are all a part of society and it's decisions. Also re-entry into society, as often when you are educated on a matter at hand you may re-act differently, this with a better understanding of the world—you are still included in.

After all when you contribute to something, you feel a part of it, and therefore you may care more about it and others affected by it.

In closing, we need to consider how many decisions of the past may have been counterproductive and gave cause to segregation. Once we understand this, we may see the error in our ways and give way to an initiative of more inclusionary measures—like voting, and true rehabilitation.

Sincerely,

Casey [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Inmate at OSCI

16 February, 2021

To whom it may concern:

My name is Eloy [REDACTED] and I currently reside at Oregon State Correctional Institution. This letter is being written in regards to my support of House Bill 2366 and Senate Bill 571. The ability for my vote to count would not only make me feel unified with my country but would also give me a sense of responsibility and duty to become an upstanding citizen. The passing of these bills would tremendously improve the reintegration process for Adults in Custody. Our basic human rights, like voting, have been taken and have shunned us from our communities. Rehabilitation within the prison system starts with being treated equally by society outside of the prison system.

The privilege of voting would not only impact my rehabilitation but would help me feel a sense of inclusion within my country and community as well. Inclusion into society makes me want to become a part of the change for the better. Feeling like my voice can be heard would motivate me to reintegrate without feeling like an outsider. Many Adults in Custody feel like they are useless and just a hindrance to society. House Bill 2366 and Senate Bill 571 could change the lives of many of those incarcerated by just allowing us to have a basic human right and a voice again.

Sincerely,

Eloy [REDACTED]

February 16, 2021

Mr. Jeffery [REDACTED]  
President  
Weusi-Umoja  
3405 Deer Park Dr. SE  
Salem, Oregon 97310



RE: House Bill 2366, and Senate Bill 571

To Whom It May Concern,

First off, let me say thank you for the opportunity to use my voice towards being an America Citizen housed in ODOC by addressing House Bill 2366, and Senate Bill 571. These bills are a long time coming for the disenfranchised people inside of prisons in the State of Oregon. With this type of oppression of voting rights towards a group of people that are incarcerated and paying their debt back to society. They shouldn't lose their citizenship or the protection of Oregon's State Constitution, or the United States Constitution. This opportunity to use my voice and help those with self-rehabilitating restraints will help us feel like real citizens of the State of Oregon. These bills will offer the disenfranchised citizens the opportunity that they did not even offer disenfranchised citizens back in 1859, or intended to offer. These exclusions for disenfranchised (Prisoners AIC) to vote teaches this group of Oregon Citizens that they are not part of Oregon belief on rehabilitation, or Citizenship of the State Oregon.

Both of these Bills will also show a group of Oregon Citizens that they aren't forgotten. It also gives worth to disenfranchised people (Prisoners AIC) when they need it the most. As I write this response to these Bills I feel the pain of my fore fathers, mothers, and other citizens that weren't allowed to participate to vote as citizens or even considered to be able to vote as slaves or disenfranchised people. Now, about 161 years after Felony Disenfranchisement was written into the Oregon Constitution, as someone that feels like a slave myself, I still feel privileged to be writing in support of these Bills. Having been told for so many years that my vote will not count, it feels gratifying to be considered for this opportunity as a Citizen of this great State of Oregon. This is also the first step back into Citizenship, and finding self-worth with a purpose in life to fight to become a full citizen in a country that has never treated me like a citizen. This will show me how much this country loves me, as I have always loved it. As one of the disenfranchised people inside of a prison, I can say I have always loved this Country but this country has never loved me back!

Thank you again for this opportunity to use my voice, and to start to feel like a Citizen of the State of Oregon.

Mr. Jeffery [REDACTED]

*Jeffery*  
President [REDACTED]

RE: The right to vote

To Whom It May Concern

I am writing to voice my opinion regarding prisoner rights. Looking into the reasons our right to vote was first taken, and the basis for its removal, it is obvious that as with many archaic laws still in existence, it must be reviewed for relevance and possible bias & racist exclusionism. Be that as it may, we, as a country claim to fight for equal rights and justice. For all. If we wish to move forward, out of our own dark history, we must bring everyone with us.

The reasons I have heard put forth for not allowing prisoners the right to vote, now, should be what is under question, rather than the reinstatement of those the rights. ODOC cited an increase to the overall workload of their mailroom. Another claimed that if prisoners were given the right to vote, chaos would ensue. Chaos like what befell us when supporters of President Trump converged on the State Capitol? Criminal as that action was, it was carried out by members of society, not prisoners. What logical reasoning can be stated for excluding prisoners the right to vote? People who, for the most part, will one day become active members of society. Will their judgment suddenly become clear again and chaos be averted, voting as free members of society?

Our current prison system could do with some serious scrutiny. Some would like to think that prison is something that exists outside of society. The fact remains that the vast majority of all prisoners will return to society. As such, teaching them how to be productive members of that society should be high on the list of concerns. Voting, education, learning a trade; learning how to be responsible citizens, all go hand-in-hand. How can you expect prisoners to reintegrate into a society that doesn't support that reintegration? If we are all to be held accountable for our actions, ignoring prisoners until they are release isn't the wisest course of action. Being responsible includes responsible decision-making. Where do you want that to start?





①

Liam [REDACTED]

Oregon State Correctional Institution  
3405 Deer Park Dr. SE  
Salem Oregon 97310

February 18, 2021

Dear Ma'am and Sir's :

I have been incarcerated for 26 years — since I was 19 years old. I know that because of my crimes I have committed and the harm I have caused the community there are those who believe that alone should deny me the right to vote.

My crimes, however, do not define me. There is more to my story and why voting is important to my life as a prisoner. My crimes deprived me of my right to liberty. There is no iron curtain between me and the outside world. Regardless of my status as a prisoner we are all interconnected.

I have two daughters. My oldest daughter is a Social Worker. She has been a student at Indiana State and Purdue University. She's a registered Democrat and staunch progressive.

My youngest daughter is a successful business woman in Central Oregon. She owns two very successful businesses. She is a Registered Republican and staunch conservative.

My daughters mother is the Executive



5

Director of a three county wide Drug and Alcohol and Mental Health treatment organization. She sits on Boards for the state and has influenced Bills presented to the legislature. She is a registered Republican and conservative.

As a prisoner, I am permitted to register to vote but cannot actually vote. In 2019 I registered to vote for the first time in my life. (See Attachment No. 1, November 4, 2019 letter in response to registration inquiry). Since I registered to vote I have received candidate information from officials running from office. (See Attachment No. 2, Elier).

While I was able to register, I wasn't able to vote. I am a registered Independent. I believe in voting for policy not party or personality.

I would like the opportunity to vote because it means being able to engage with my daughters and weigh in on issues that keep my family safe and their community - which is also my community - prosperous. I want my oldest daughter to have laws enacted that make her job as a social worker more effective and safer. I want laws enacted that allow my youngest daughters businesses to prosper even further.

The ability to vote and engage with my children and family about what my vote will

③

mean to them is not just beneficial to my rehabilitation but it helps to build family ties that turn people back out into society better than when they came in.

I encourage you to reform prisoner voting rights. It's not just about our rights, it's about our family and communities right to have us participate in the process.

Thank you,

◁ 

I AM WRITING IN SUPPORT OF SB571 AND HB2366. I FEEL THE RIGHT TO VOTE SHOULD BE RESTORED TO OREGON'S INCARCERATED CITIZENS. WHEN OREGON WAS A YOUNGER STATE, INMATES WHO COMMITTED CERTAIN CLASSES OF CRIMES WERE ALLOWED THE VOTE WHILE OTHERS WERE NOT. CRIMINALS INCARCERATED DUE TO WHAT THE OREGON LEGISLATURE TERMED 'WHITE CRIMES' SUCH AS MURDER OR ASSAULT KEPT THE RIGHT. INMATES INCARCERATED DUE TO 'BLACK CRIMES' SUCH AS THEFT OR ROBBERY BECAME DISENFRANCHISED. THIS IS NOT ONLY AN OVERTLY RACIST EXAMPLE OF OUR STATE LEGISLATURE'S MOTIVATIONS, BUT ALSO, THESE CLASSIFICATIONS OF WHITE OR BLACK CRIMES INTIMATE THE CRIMES OF PEOPLE OF COLOR WERE SNEAKY OR COWARDLY. WHITE CRIMES WERE IMPLIED AS DIRECT, CONFRONTIVE, EVEN HONEST. TO DEFER INDICTMENTS OF ITS RACIST LAWS OREGON DISENFRANCHISED ALL PRISONERS WHILE INCREASINGLY IMPRISONING THE POOR AND PEOPLE OF COLOR, MAINTAINING THE VERY SAME OUTCOMES.

EVERY EVIDENCE-BASED BEST PRACTICE IN EVERY INDUSTRY HAS FOUND IF A DEMOGRAPHIC POPULATION IS EXPERIENCING AN OBSTACLE, THE MOST EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION MUST BE SOURCED FROM THAT SUBJECT POPULATION. INMATES COME FROM COMMUNITIES WITH UNIQUE SOCIAL FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO CRIMINALITY. EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, MENTAL HEALTH HOME OWNERSHIP, ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE, AND MORE ARE SOCIAL FACTORS PRISONERS HAVE HIGHLY INFORMED AND EXPERIENTIAL KNOWLEDGE OF. TRENDS SUGGEST PRISONERS' KNOWLEDGE WOULD BE BEST INFORMED OF ANY VOTER IN HELPING INFORM LAWS ADDRESSING SOCIAL FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO CRIMINALITY. THE GOVERNMENT AND OFFICES OF THE STATE OF OREGON WERE ESTABLISHED THROUGH INTENDED GENOCIDE. PLEASE HONOR THE VICTIMS OF YOUR OFFICE AND VOTE TO REMEDY THE DISENFRANCHISEMENT OF OREGON'S PRISONERS *Earl Vonn* 2/16/21

SECRETARY OF STATE  
SHEMIA FAGAN

RE: VOTING FELONS

DEAR SECRETARY FAGAN,

MY NAME IS [REDACTED] "JOEY" [REDACTED] AND I HAVE BEEN IN THE ADULT PRISON SYSTEM SINCE THE AGE OF 16 FOR CRIMES I COMMITTED IN 1996. I HAVE SPENT THE BETTER PART OF THE LAST TWO DECADES MATURING, GROWING, AND TRYING TO MAKE UP FOR SOMETHING I CAN NEVER TRULY MAKE UP FOR. I CANNOT TAKE BACK MY PAST, BUT I WILL SPEND THE REST OF MY LIFE IMPROVING MYSELF, AS WELL AS THOSE AROUND ME, WHEREVER I MAY BE.

TO BE CLEAR, I AM NOT CLAIMING THAT I "DESERVE" TO HAVE MY RIGHT TO VOTE RESTORED, BUT I AM REQUESTING THAT YOU CONSIDER HELPING ME (AND OTHERS) REGAIN THAT RIGHT WHICH IS SO ESSENTIAL TO THE COMMUNITIES IN THE STATE OF OREGON.

I HAVE BEEN HERE AT THE OREGON STATE CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION SINCE THE AGE OF 17 AND MY RECORD REFLECTS MY GROWTH AND ATTEMPTS TO BETTER MYSELF OVER THE LAST 25 YEARS. WHILE THIS DOES NOT TAKE BACK WHAT I DID, I BELIEVE AT THE LEAST, IT REVEALS I CANNOT BE ENTIRELY DEFINED BY MY CRIME.

(1)

THAT BEING SAID I HOPE TO BE RETURNING TO MY HOMETOWN COMMUNITY SOON (COLUMBIA COUNTY) WHERE I WILL BE A PRODUCTIVE MEMBER AND CONTINUE MY PROGRESS TOWARDS GIVING BACK. TO ME, VOTING WITH THAT COMMUNITY WOULD BE A DUTY AND OBLIGATION I HOPE I GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO FULFILL.



I RECOGNIZE THERE ARE MANY WHO BELIEVE I WILL NEVER DESERVE ANYTHING BECAUSE OF MY PAST AND I TOO STRUGGLE WITH THIS REALITY AT TIMES, BUT I AM REQUESTING YOUR SUPPORT THAT RIGHT OR THE RESTORATION OF IT AS PART OF THE PROCESS OF MOVING FORWARD. THE BROKEN KID I WAS WHEN I COMMITTED MY CRIMES IS NOT THE MAN I AM TODAY AND IT'S THE MAN I AM TODAY WHO IS MAKING THIS REQUEST. I AM AND HAVE BEEN TRYING FOR YEARS TO DO ALL I NEED TO DO TO BE PART OF THE COMMUNITY I TOOK SO MUCH FROM. BEING ABLE TO VOTE SEEMS A SMALL STEP TOWARDS NORMALIZATION. BEING ABLE TO VOTE IS SOMETHING I SEE AS A GIFT THIS STATE DOES TOGETHER AS A LARGER COMMUNITY. BEING ABLE TO VOTE WOULD HELP ME FEEL LIKE I BELONG AGAIN.

I RECOGNIZE I SQUANDERED THAT GIFT EARLY IN LIFE. IN FACT, PRIOR TO MY EVEN BEING ELIGIBLE TO VOTE I HAD BEEN IN PRISON FOR OVER A YEAR, 10 MONTHS OF THAT IN SOLITARY ISOLATION SIMPLY BECAUSE OF MY AGE. YET I RECOGNIZE THAT MY SUCCESS GOING FORWARD IS IMPORTANT TO THIS STATE AND I FIND THAT HAVING A DUTY SUCH AS VOTING WOULD GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS THAT SUCCESS.

I DO NOT ENVY YOUR POSITION AS A LEADER WHO MUST MAKE DECISIONS SUCH AS THIS, BUT I DO HOPE YOU RECOGNIZE THE MAN I AM TODAY IS NOT MY PAST CRIMES. THE MAN I AM TODAY IS AN

OREGONIAN, AN OREGONIAN WHO WILL SPEND THE REST OF MY  
LIFE TRYING TO PROVE TO PEOPLE LIKE YOU THAT I AM MATURED,  
I AM REHABILITATED, AND I AM WORTH SOMETHING TO THIS STATE.  
I APOLOGIZE AND FEEL ASHAMED THAT MY PAST ACTIONS HAVE  
PUT YOU AND OTHERS IN A SITUATION LIKE THIS, FOR WHAT IT'S  
WORTH. I APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE YOU AND YOUR  
STAFF READ MY REQUEST.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME, SMILE

  
JOEY   
3405 DEER PARK DRIVE SE  
SALMON, OR 97310

PS - I RESPECT ANY DECISION YOU ULTIMATELY MAKE AND IF  
ANYONE HAS ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT ME AND MY VIEWS ON THIS  
TOPIC WHICH MIGHT HELP IN ANY WAY, FEEL FREE TO CONTACT  
ME.

2-17-2021

I am 35 Year's old and I have been locked up since I was 17. I am doing a Life sentence and have never been able to vote. I have always been beholden to Adults and their laws, YET, I have had no voice in These laws. AS a Prisoner, I understand I gave up MY right to Society, YET, I am still a United States Citizen, and more importantly, an Oregonian.

Voting rights are tantamount to a Democracy, and as a citizen, whether I am in Prison or not, MY vote should be counted. It is valued and important to feel included and to feel as if I belong. I Truly hope Oregon Passes any Bill That would allow Oregon Prisoners the ability and right to vote. AS a Progressive measure I fully believe Oregon needs to move away from the harshness of old archaic laws such as ex-communication, and exclusionary laws. I hope you all will listen and find in your hearts and minds the right thing to do. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter in support of voting rights for Prisoners.

Sincerely,  
Andrew [REDACTED]

The opportunity to vote is BIG for me, because we have the voice to elect the leaders we want and continue or discontinue laws and rules that are out dated while also showing that democracy works. We are expected to be rehabilitated with no means of rehabilitation offered being able to vote is a step in the right direction for justice reform it gives hope to AFCS such as myself who have never voted but have been incarcerated day for day with no incentive to work towards a better future other than wanting to become better for yourself

My name is Elijah [REDACTED] and I endorse  
SB 571 & HB 2366



February 17, 2021

To whom it may concern;

I write this letter to you today in support of HB 2366 & SB 571. As a member of this state I hold the responsibility to fellow Oregonians in the support for the states best candidates.

I write in support of the Bills that would make it a reality: to be heard, to choose, to help support elect those who are good for the state. I truly support this Bills because they represent the beliefs that are current: people/citizens/humans are imprisoned, encouraging community is better than the alternative, and sharing responsibility makes everyone involved accountable.

I think that the inclusion of all communities of the state gives a greater view of its members. And in turn allows Oregon to better hear and see where its resources are and where they need to go.

Thank you for your time & effort.

Rector,  
O.S.C.I.

To Whom It May Concern,

I hereby testify in favor of SB 571 & HB 2366. I strongly believe in us as inmates being able to have voting rights. I feel voting is a human right, if that makes sense to you. We are already paying our debt to society for what ever crime we committed or allegedly committed. I do not think we should lose our chance to voice our opinion in any big or even small decisions that are being made inside & outside of prison. Being able to vote & voice an opinion would make every person doing time feel like they still have a chance at being a productive member of society, being able to start making the right decisions before re-entering the real world. Voting rights will give everyone in prison hope that they can still do the right thing, that the world is sure changing & we get to be a part of that change.

- Sincerely

Jose

2/17/21

I Brad Ballantyne support SB 571 and  
HB 2366. I believe it's our constitutional right  
to be able to vote for whomever we wish. Even  
though we're ~~still~~ locked up, we're still Americans.

Thank You

Brad 

February 18, 2021

To whom it may concern:

I would like to express my support and encourage the passage of SB571 and/or HB2366, both bills relating to the extending of voting rights to those held within Oregon's prisons.

I am 45 years old, and have been incarcerated since the age of 16. I have never been an adult in the free world, and therefore have never had the right to vote. I also have never thought of myself as a "citizen" of Oregon — that is, not until a little over a year ago, when I and several others in my prison had the opportunity to meet with a number of state legislators. I remember how they referred to us prisoners as fellow Oregon citizens, which was a revelation to me. It made me feel more valued as a person, and more engaged in ideas about society's best interests.

By extending voting rights to Oregon's citizens within prison, I believe you will be inviting them to consider more deeply their participation in society. You would be demonstrating the supposition that Oregon's prisoners are also fellow Oregonians, who have value and a shared stake in Oregon's success.

Thank you for your consideration and support of these bills.

Sincerely,  
Todd [REDACTED]

I, Tyler [REDACTED], testify in favor of SB 571 & SB 2366.

It is important for me to vote because I feel everyone deserves to have a voice. Whether you are incarcerated or not we all live in these communities and cities. We all deserve to have a voice that pertains to how we live, and what influences the way we live. If second chances are deserved and earned then re-establishing your voice should be to, no matter where you're at.

Rehabilitation is supposed to be the main focus in the prison system. Voting rights for AIC's can certainly help this fact in massive ways. Society is often painted a picture of what prison is like. They know what they're told and shown. In which they vote on things about prison reform or criminal justice reform they really know nothing about. With AIC voting rights this will let votes count from people who live it and actually know truly what's going on through first hand experience. That's how to expand and improve actually rehabilitation rather than extend sentences and waste taxpayers money, that they work hard for.

2-17-2021

I testify in favor of SB 571 and HB 2366. I became incarcerated at the age of seventeen for a horrendous crime. During that period of my life, I had deluded myself into believing the only community I could ever belong to was the same one I was raised with: Drug addicts and drug dealers. When I became incarcerated I still pursued a similar lifestyle for the first two years of incarceration. It wasn't until I personally decided to face the shame of my crime and had mentors to support me that I really changed my ambitions. The mentors I had in Maclaren Youth Correctional Facility urged me to get sober and enter college so I could contribute to society. They had confidence in my basic humanity, which is in no way unique to just me. They knew that if they gave me unconditional compassion and treated me like I was part of a pro-social community, it would touch my humanity. I later worked for a dog shelter inside Maclaren called Project POOCH that gave me even further sense of belonging to a pro-social community.

Being given the chance to vote like a free citizen is necessary to improve rehabilitation for Adults In Custody (AICs). As a society we are all accountable to showing AICs or people that struggle with mental health in general that they are more than welcome to abandon an Anti-social community for a pro-social one. This should be part of the Department of Corrections mission statement, since the organization's essential purpose is to keep the community safe in the long run. It's all similar to when the mentors of my own life helped me change my community. If we tell all AICs that we as a society care about their human needs and their opinion as a voter, there's a better chance

They'll abandon their anti-social community.  
In my opinion, unconditional compassion is the  
highest virtue that defines the core of one's  
humanity. By disenfranchising AICs their right  
to vote, we are also forsaking our own  
humanity. This isn't about being soft on crime,  
it's simply the right thing to do.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Sincerely,

Cayce [REDACTED]

Cayce [REDACTED]

3405 Deer Park Dr SE

Salem, OR 97310

To my fellow American citizens,

The right to vote, the right to add to our shared future, is a powerful and fundamental quality of living in this country. Democracy is hinged on having its citizens educated about the issues being discussed so that we can make our decisions collectively, ~~while~~ still adding in our individual thoughts. Therefore, I ask you to listen, to perhaps learn, how vital the right to vote is for us labeled as prisoners.

The process of the justice system and mass incarceration holds many topics for discussion, but the question I think most of us ask is, 'why do we imprison criminals?' Growing up, I wondered this often. Only now do I truly understand. In many ways, we are incarcerated as an act of punishment, but also as an act of complacency. We are removed from sight and mind of society, but this doesn't change criminals, it only further outcasts them into the role of outcast, delinquent, and felon. This is even harder for youth, who we as a country often imprison the same as adults, ignoring the 'why' they committed a crime, and thus ignoring them as potentially functioning members of society.

There is a better way. Through hard work dedicated to rehabilitation many of us turn what is a secluded and unsupportive sentence into a time for self-discovery, self-improvement, and education. For the majority, this act is not only difficult, but almost outright discouraged. through



aws and bills passed by our fellow Americans, without us. The rules for everything change before we are able to add our opinions, and for those who arrive in the system young and love much older, the society they left could be drastically different. We become helpless to affect our world, and are further pushed from the society we are supposed to reenter upon our releases.

For this, and many more reasons than I have room to list currently, I have written this. My hopes are not that I will make you give ~~us~~ the right to vote once more, but that you will see that giving us this right, you'll be opening the door to welcoming home fellow citizens, fellow Americans, who could offer more to our society than the 'outcast' role provides. Bill SB 571 and HB2366 are that chance. I implore you, my fellow Americans, to see the power you hold, and how important it is for every citizen to share, not own.

Working to change everyday,  
the unbreakable,

- Jordan

