

March 30, 2021

Dear Senators,

We support passage of SB 191, the ***Earning Good Time Bill***, that is seeking to bring about positive changes in Oregon's prisons through reform of Measure 11.

Our family supports criminal justice reform.

We believe Jim Schifferer could very well be the poster inmate who received one of the harshest sentences in Marion County.

On January 19, 2012, my brother, Jim Schifferer, and son to Gerda Schifferer, was arrested on his family farm. Jim was a non-violent, first-time offender, who had never been in trouble with the law prior to this date.

Jim received a harsh 50 year sentence for sexual crimes against his two daughters. For years, our family has been fighting for Jim to get the complete truth exposed about the crimes he allegedly committed.

Jim's case is a long and complicated cycle of events that were never revealed after his arrest. He was convinced to plead guilty to all crimes presented by the prosecution. His inexperienced criminal defense attorney persuaded Jim to not have a trial. Jim's attorney did no investigative work. Jim had no trial and no jury. No witnesses were allowed to be heard with oral or written testimony. No one in our family was allowed to speak at any of the hearings. There was no bail and no offer of any type of settlement agreement.

Our family was denied justice on all fronts.

It has been over a year now since we have been able to visit Jim at EOIC due to numerous covid 19 lockdowns. Our last in-person visit was in late February 2020.

Prior to the outbreak of the covid pandemic, we would sit in the waiting room at EOIC, waiting to be called to go through the many steps before we could visit Jim. At every visit, we witnessed a world of hurt in pained faces of loved ones who will never give up fighting for those incarcerated behind bars. Many family members travel hundreds of miles to see their loved ones. Many have limited funds and resources. Many will do whatever it takes to seize opportunities to have that visit that provides a small beacon of hope and sunshine in a dark world.

We feel like prisoners in the waiting room at EOCI. We feel like we are being judged by prison staff. We feel cheated when our family provides funds to Jim, and the DOC deducts monies from his account for victims we do not know. Jim's daughters received \$230,000.00 through the financial resources of his parents, the late Carl Schifferer, and Gerda Schifferer, who is now 86 years old.

Our family is being punished over and over again for the crimes and behaviors of others. This is not right. This is not fair. This is not justice. There is something very wrong here, and change needs to happen.

Measure 11, the "***One Strike You're Out***" initiative, has proven to be a costly, ineffective law, with no credible evidence and proof that mandatory minimum sentences reduce crimes. We believe judges have lost all sense of purpose and power, as prosecutors dominate court proceedings and dictate the future of those being charged of crimes. Punishment and justice are not the same.

Judges are losing power and control. We fear the future of judges is at risk, as they may fall by the wayside and become an unnecessary and obsolete cog in the wheels of justice.

Everyone deserves a second chance. SB 191 will offer an impetus for inmates to prove that they have paid their debt to society. This bill will give hope to inmates for staying the course and changing their lives so they can be contributing members of society.

We can all become better people. We can all work together to strive to make the world a kinder, more compassionate place for everyone.

Jim Schifferer, along with many other inmates, deserves consideration for sentence reduction.

Our family urges you to stay the course, lead the way, and fight for what's right.

We thank you for your positive advocacy work to reform Measure 11 with the passage of SB 191. Please support the passage of this life-changing bill.

"Never stop believing that fighting for what's right is worth it." (Hillary Clinton, 2016)

"You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view...until you climb inside of his skin and walk around in it." (Atticus Finch, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, by Harper Lee)

Respectfully Submitted,

Doris Harvey, Philomath

Gerda Schifferer, Turner

