

A mother's perspective in support of SB191:

My son accepted a plea deal of 25 years upon the advice of his attorney to "avoid over one hundred years in prison" which I now believe was a scare tactic to keep his attorney paid and so the attorney would not have to spend days in court defending my son. For this we paid \$40,000. I now find that most Measure 11 inmates have gone through the same process in trying to avoid huge sentences. The result of this is that the offender is not allowed to explain any extenuating circumstances during sentencing and the judge is not allowed to use his judgment about the offender in determining the sentence. In other words, we don't even need judges.

"The Bill of Rights in Oregon's original 1857 constitution specifically described the state's commitment to rehabilitation. It stated: "Laws for the punishment of crime shall be founded on the principles of reformation, and not of vindictive justice" (Oregon Blue Book, 2010)." (1) Unfortunately this was challenged by a politician (Kevin Mannix) who pursued tough on crime measures represented by the ballot measures of 1994, including Measure 11. Language of "gang" and "drug" scare tactics were used by this nation wide political movement to "warehouse" inmates and cut programs for rehabilitation. Included in this was a shift away from rehabilitation proposed by Measure 26, a 1996 ballot measure that sought to change the original language in the 1857 constitution ... in favor of more punitive ideals: 'Laws for the punishment of crime shall be founded on these principles: protection of society, personal responsibility, accountability for one's actions and reformation.' Sixty-seven percent of Oregon voters approved (CVU, 2010c). During the next five years 11 new corrections-related measures were presented to the voters. Almost every single one passed and they generally challenged any principles of rehabilitation ." (1)

The "wise" choice for society is to rehabilitate inmates who will, for the most part, re-enter society. With funding cuts for programs and simply "warehousing" offenders we are sending them back out into society with no change of attitude to become productive members of society. We need to put programs back in place to rehabilitate them and give them some incentive to participate in the programs, such as "good time" so when they are released they have a chance of becoming a positive addition to society.

Now, with the pandemic, most inmates have been celled-in for over a year with no work, no programs, no yard time and no visits. They have lived with the constant threat of illness and death for themselves and friends. Many now suffer from PTSD and "long haulers" side effects. The prison system does not have the funds or doctors needed to treat these sick inmates. My son is one of these inmates and has been suffering since August 2020 with no access to testing or doctors to treat him. Will he survive? I honestly don't know. I do know that in 17 years he has rehabilitated himself and deserves a second look from a judge who can evaluate what he has done with his time and determine whether or not he is ready to reenter society.

Thank you for considering my thoughts.

Diane Masuo, mother of inmate #11775109 SRCI

(1) UNTANGLING PRISON EXPANSION IN OREGON: POLITICAL NARRATIVES AND POLICY OUTCOMES by SARAH DIANE CATE A THESIS Presented to the Department of Political Science and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts June 2010