

March, 21, 2021

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in regards to SB/191 and the effects of it being applied retroactively.

Firstly, I'd like to address the issues of overcrowding, ODC is closing 3 ~~minimum~~ prisons with roughly 800 beds in the next 18 months or so. If SB/191 is not made retroactive, it would take 56 months to even see the first release of ~ offender who collects good time on a mensural whilst making it retroactive would see hundreds, even thousands of offenders up for release within that ~~next~~ ^{next} ~~same~~ ³ ~~to~~ ^{years} ~~month~~ period of the aforementioned shut down.

Then there is the issue of morale. Not just for the inmates, but the staff as well. For us incarcerated, it is hard to stay out of trouble. Avoiding criminal activity in a small area filled with nothing but criminals seems rightfully impossible. Yet many of us strive to do so even knowing there is no reward. Imagine the impact good time would have on inmate on inmate violence, extortions, and gang activities. Many of us fall into the politics and violence because there is a deep seeded sense of hopelessness. God, but, no matter what you get treated the same. You give us something to lose, and many will hold on to it with all that we have. True, some will still not be the same, but they won't see the early release. The staff see this as well. They see how the man who desperately wants to change is assigned the same fruitless fate as the man whose only aspiration is to be a better criminal. The job is hard enough on them. Corrections officers have one of the highest ^{occupational} suicide rates. They need hope just as much as we do.

Often overlooked, is our families. The ones who pay exorbitant amounts of money just to talk to us on the phone, who carry the burdens of our mistakes and the heavy handed sentences mandated by a failed and dated "tough on crime bill" that treats first time offenders as harshly as lifetime criminals. The mothers that cry at night, the heartbroken fathers, the children whose only memories of daddy is through the phone. While it was our choices that made these pains, as so let it be our choices in ^{love} ~~love~~ that ^{we} ~~we~~ make them proud when we get to say "I'm coming home, I've changed my ways so I could see you again."

Finally, my personal story. I'm a 28 year old first time offender serving a 100 month sentence for Assault & unlawful use of a weapon. Please do not think that I don't understand the severity of my actions or their need to be justly ^{replied} penalized. I am also a single father to a beautiful daughter named, righteously, Cerazim. She is my pride and joy, she truly is my heart. Sadly, I've never got to spend any real time with her. Her mother never told me she was pregnant. We broke up and 18 months later I get a picture text message with a baby girl that said "This is yours". It was her first birthday, I was turned upside down. I demanded to see her but was informed her birth mother no longer has her. Gave her up for adoption. I was devastated, ~~travelling~~ All this not 4 weeks after learning that my best friend lost his battle with schizophrenia shortly after diagnosis ^{and} he took his own life. For the next 16 months I spiraled into a deep dark depression. Alcohol consumed me, suicide was attempted, ^{visits closed} ~~contact~~ and finally one night it all came down on me and caused me to make the four ~~clashed~~ choices I made that landed me here. But since that night I've really tried to better myself, I took advantage of BH's Services in county, I've enrolled and completed programs, both work related and educational, I've not once been to the "hole", I have no major DR's on my record. I have truly made a full recovery from my troubles and have only bettered myself since. Enough so that the family that adopted my daughter has given me contact with her and allowed me to be in her life and ~~I have vowed to never let anything else keep us apart.~~ I also have an 85 year old grandmother who is recovering from a massive stroke. Me and her have always had a special bond. I call her twice a week. Although I get out in 2024, I fear I won't see her again. My parents are in their 60's and my siblings are fighting their own battles with depression, unaided by my absence. If SB/HL was made retrospective, I could save ¹⁶ months and be ^{released} ~~home~~ Christmas eve, 2022. ^{Christmas gift} ~~Present~~ Please, give this gift to my family, and the thousands of other families affected by measure 11. and

a first time offender and received 8 years and then some. Even though the oregon sentencing guide would have put me at 65 months with good time, measure 11 added 35 months and took my good time. If I were able to collect good time, I'd save 20 months and my release date would become December 24th, 2022. Please give me the chance to give my daughter, as well as the rest of my family, this christmas gift.

Please, do the right thing and make SB 191 retroactive and bring hope for the hopeless and ease the pain of our families, your citizens. Thank you for your time and your consideration.

Regards,
walker owen Henneke