

PLEASE READ

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

George A. Zaichenko

#21377628

I am George A. Zaichenko, a 24-year-old male in custody of ODOC currently serving a 10-year sentence at Oregon State Correctional Institution. I was a senior in high school when I started to hang out with a bad crowd of friends, started to party, which included drugs and alcohol. The closer I got to graduate the more I was partying. Once I graduated I was working for the summer until starting my next level of education at Portland State University. All summer I pretty much would work during the day and party at night. In the time of these events I started meeting and hanging out with worse and worse people; gang members, drug dealers and low lifers. I started to believe I was cool and what not. In all reality I was a young and dumb teenager blind to the cold reality behind all the bad stuff going on. I was 18 years old and had just started going to Portland State when I had committed the worst and most shameful mistake in my life. On October 14th myself and three other teens committed a robbery on a local drug dealer. There were five people in the house so I got a robbery in the first degree for each person. Wishing to take this horrible day back can't even closely compare to how I actually feel about it. I literally can't believe that I did it. What was I thinking? I wasn't, at all. When I started to think about what I was doing, it was already too late. During the actual event I realized it was nothing what you see in movies, read or hear about. It was a horrible feeling that I will regret feeling for the rest of my life. In that moment I realized what I was doing and instantly knew that life was not for me, I did not want to be "cool" anymore; but unfortunately it was too late. Now I am more than half way through my 10-year sentence asking you for a second chance. I have NEVER been in any trouble with the law of any kind before this horrible crime nor does my family have any kind of criminal history what so ever. I did so much in the community including solo perform "Oh Holy Night" in the State Capitol every holiday season 2013-2015. I did well in school and held a good job as far back as I can remember. I grew up in a wonderful family who is here for me every step of the way because they know I was a young and dumb 18-year old who had

no idea about the horrible harsh reality behind a criminals lifestyle. I have not once been in any kind of trouble since coming to prison. Not once. I have been taking correspondence college courses, doing yoga classes and part of a couple church groups. I also have worked in the Heating Ventilation and Air-Conditioning shop for my first three years when I transferred to the Electrical shop and now am half way through an Electrical program to get my electrical journeyman license. I stay away from all the prison politics and drama that goes around me. I stay positive and give every day my best and my full efforts in my job. Even though some days may be more difficult than others. I am around trouble makers all day long, people that don't care to get in trouble and they get out before me and come right back. When I am keeping my head down and staying 100% out of trouble I still have to do my full time. How is that fair? It's not. I have never been in trouble before and after my crime. I didn't even know what measure 11 was until I was in jail. I admitted to my crime as soon as I was arrested. And I watch all these people around me that grew up in the life of crime, who know and grew up knowing how to fight the system come in, do a little bit of time, get out, and then I see them back in 6 months. I just need that chance to prove and show that I was truly a kid who really messed up and will never ever mess up again. I need to get out and be with my family and work as an electrician and be an excellent member of society.

Thank you for your time

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "George Arthur Zaichenko". The signature is fluid and somewhat stylized, with a large initial "G" and a long, sweeping underline.

George Arthur Zaichenko #21377628