

To: Next Up,

2-24-21

My name is Phillip Bates and I am a long-term inmate at the Snake River Correctional Institution. I am writing to express support for the proposed Oregon law that would restore the right to vote to incarcerated citizens.

I believe that voting should be morally obligatory for every individual wanting to be productive members of society. Guiding inmates to be productive members of society should be what the Department of Corrections is all about,

In addition, the Oregon Department of Corrections has been attempting to model itself after the Norway prison system. The Norway prison system has been proven to reduce recidivism. One of the main goals of the Norway system is to instill "normalization and humanization" in its inmates. Allowing Oregon inmates to vote would go a long way toward normalization. Normal citizens should vote.

Years ago, I went completely out of my way to put myself on the "non-active" voter registry as an inmate. That is how much the principle means to me. To switch to becoming an active voter would mean the world to me. Allowing me to vote would tell me that I am worth something.

Thank you for considering my thoughts and feelings on this issue.

Sincerely,

Phil Bates

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