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On Behalf Of: James O Minner
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure: SB320

My son is a first-time measure 11 and was sentenced to 116 months at age 20 and has 56 months to go, since being in custody he has begun a plumbing program at SRCC and has dreams of getting out and being a contributing member of society. He has been a model prisoner and worked his way to a level 1 and as maintained that status for a couple of years. He has a son who is 7, who is not allowed to visit due to his age as well as a younger brother age 11. He has not seen either since being in custody., which is very hard on a child to not see his father for nearly 10 years of his life, he will be almost a stranger and will need to build a new relationship with him. James has also had 8 family members pass away since being in custody, his grandmother, great grandmother, great grandfather, 2 uncles, 2 cousins, and an aunt. He has not been able to properly grieve with his family, nor attend any funerals, he can only get a phone call to be notified. I could not imagine the pain he must have been in to just get the devastating news and not be able to have family to mourn with, but instead have to maintain a hardened persona as to not appear weak in the harshest of environments.

I, his mother, have also been battling Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma for 5 years now doing treatments of radiation, 2 chemotherapy attempts and 4 years of immunotherapy, being my 11-year-old, autistic sons sole care provider, I am concerned what would happen if something were to happen to me and James were not able to help his younger brother. I am my sons link to the outside, aside from his grandparents on his father's side, who are elderly, and his grandfather has recently been diagnosed with cancer. My son longs to be with his family and feels like he has been sentenced not only to the confines of a prison but sentenced to be alone and have no family left upon his release. After the 56 months he will be age 30 and will have spent his entire young adult life in SRCC.

We, as a community are supposed to help people. The measure 11 is not doing that, it simply applies a time for someone to sit and get no rehabilitation whatsoever. How can anyone, especially the government believe that this is the right way to treat people and expect a person to be a productive member of society when they are treated as an animal. When you imprison a dog, show it no affection, just toss food in a room for it, how can you expect it to just know how to be a good dog?

I understand that certain people are beyond rehabilitation, but how can you figure that out unless you try first, most people deserve a chance to prove themselves. I feel my son can be a productive member of society and has far beyond learned his lesson. He understands there are stipulations placed upon him at his time of release and he has made every effort he can, inside the prison to prove he wants to succeed and do better for himself, his son, and his family. He graduated high school and did

great at most things he tried while growing up. He had the disadvantage of having a separated home with parents living in different states, adjusting to each household each time custody was transferred, he ended up hanging out with the wrong crowd and getting into trouble and he fully understands the impact of that and has changed his ways. He gets very emotional when he talks about the length of time left on his sentence and feels, as do I, the State of Oregon's Measure 11 should be revised to be fair to the people who are covered under it and giving them same entitlement to apply for good time, when being a first-time offender. If there were a reduction in his sentence, he would not be 30 years old when released, he would be able to spend time with his son, and family he has remaining.

I am pleading to send this to congress to vote in the right direction for not only my son, but other first-time offenders convicted. This is an antiquated law and should be revised to be more current and give them a chance at normalcy.

Darlene Cogle