

October 31, 2016

Kathleen Kiley
Counsel to the Board of Parole
Dept. of Corrections and Community Supervision
1220 Washington Ave Building 2
Albany, NY 12226

Dear Ms. Kiley,

I am writing to urge you to help change the rules governing the criteria for releasing inmates who are eligible for parole.

Currently (and historically) the Parole Board denies parole to far too many applicants. Many, if not most, are denied because of the "nature of the crime". The inmate can never change the nature of the crime, the only thing he can change is himself. Rehabilitation is possible and that should be the standard for determining parole.

I have a personal interest in this matter because I know someone currently at Green Haven, who has been denied by the Parole Board once already despite pages and pages of evidence that reflect years of effort at rehabilitation. His crime was 2nd degree murder. He was 17/18 at the time and a drug user. He is now 35 years old and has spent his entire adult life behind bars. His first couple of years were rough and after attempts at suicide decided he wanted to live and change his life. He stopped doing drugs and enrolled in every program he could find. He became a facilitator and helped others with their problems. He continues to do so to this day. Yet despite all he has done to rehabilitate himself and despite all of the certificates and letters of promised employment and help on the outside he was denied parole on the basis of the nature of the crime.

I am suggesting that the Parole Board put more emphasis in its proposed rules on whether there is demonstrable evidence of rehabilitation, and if there is, should vote for release. If not, the Board should state clearly what is lacking in the inmates rehabilitation process and suggest what steps/programs he should pursue before his next parole board hearing. This gives the person hope that he can do something to change himself, a goal to work towards. There is absolutely nothing he can do if he is only being denied because of the nature of the crime.

Please help change the proposed rules so that they actually reflect that rehabilitation is possible and that those deserving of parole actually can attain it.

Very Sincerely yours,

Annette Ross