

P.O. Box 1000  
Bedford Hills Correctional Facility  
Bedford Hills N.Y. 10507  
October 25, 2016

Kathleen M. Kiley, Counsel to the Board of Parole  
Department of Corrections and Community Supervisor  
1220 Washington Avenue, Building 2  
Albany, New York 12226

Dear Kiley:

My name is Roslyn D. Smith. I am an inmate at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility for women. I am one of the longest women serving time in New York State. The reason I am writing this letter to you is concerning the proposed parole board regulations.

Throughout my thirty-seven years of incarceration, I have witnessed far too many of my peers deprived of release at parole hearings in an arbitrary and inconsistent manner. Many who the board gave hits to repetitively. Each hit is two years (some with the accumulation of three or more hits resulting in six to up to 20 years added to their sentences). Many of these hits were for the nature of their crimes, a factor that can never change. The majority of women who received these hits were not judged on the degree of rehabilitation, readiness to return to society or public safety factors.

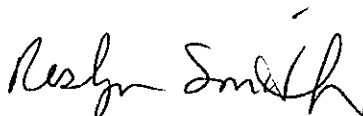
John Mackenzie is a prime example of exactly what repeated hits can and will do to a person's psyche. The board denied Mr. Mackenzie's parole ten (10) times, an accumulation of twenty years of hits added to his sentence. He took his own life because of these hits, which caused a sense of hopelessness and despair in his life. He fought until he had no more fight in him despite the courts ruling that held the Parole board in contempt and it still refused to release him. Did anyone look at his impeccable prison record? Did they look at his low risk assessment? Did they look at how he transformed? These are questions that we need answers to. This man ~~was~~ should have been released a long time ago. It is a shame that this man and countless other men and women that are low risk of endangering public safety and are suitable for release have been denied parole.

There is a number of board Commissioners, Walter Smith, Lisa Beth Elovich, Kevin Ludlow and James B. Ferguson, still sitting that resists attempts to move into a more forward looking and evidence based process. These Commissioners have proven incapable of affording fair hearings and therefore they should no be allowed to serve in that capacity. The regulations that are being proposed , do not have the force of language, which would compel Parole Commissioners of their type to shift the manner in which they make release decisions and ordinarily do business.

There has to be a change in decision-making where Commissioners are fair and wise in their power over the lives of people who have served their time in the best possible way and are ready and able to enter society as productive citizens. This paradigm of sever punishment has to change.” Mercy bears greater fruit than strict justice”. Abe Lincoln.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roslyn Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Roslyn Smith #80G0173-Fiske Housing Unit

cc: Mr. John Koury, Director  
NYS Senate ARRC  
845A Legislative Office Building  
Albany, New York 12227

Mr. Mujahid Farid  
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