

Show mercy to prisoners who changed

By Newsday Readers · Newsday · 2 min

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The New York State Assembly chamber as members meet on the opening day of the 2021 legislative session at the state Capitol in Albany on Jan. 6, 2021. Credit: AP/Hans Pennink

I believe all people deserve respect, care and dignity. Prisoners, especially older prisoners serving long sentences and those who have managed to change their lives, are especially deserving of consideration. I therefore support any action to help prisoners serving long sentences achieve freedom and return to their families and communities. To this end, I suggest Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo appoint new commissioners to the state Board of Parole so it reaches its statutory full membership of 19, professionals who share values of mercy, redemption and rehabilitation. I also call on our state senators and Assembly members to support two bills before our legislature: The Fair and Timely Parole Act would instruct the parole board to consider how prisoners have changed and not just the nature of their original offense. I believe it is inherently unfair to judge people for the remainder of their lives by the one worst thing they ever did years before. The Elder Parole Bill would allow the parole board to consider paroling prisoners 55 and older. Older prisoners are much less likely to commit further offenses, and the money keeping them in prison could be put to better use elsewhere.

Barry Nobel,

Oyster Bay

Bill would improve state voter turnout

State Senate bill S1048, now in committee, would end the 10-day advance voter registration requirement in New York. This bill would go a long way toward giving everyone equal opportunities to exercise their right to vote. Unfortunately, many New Yorkers don't vote because they are unaware of how or when to register. Readily available voting information and resources, such as translation services and transportation, are lacking. This bill would make same-day registration legal, with individuals able to register and vote at the same time. The previously disenfranchised would have one simple process. Supporters of the bill can contact their state senator to learn his or her position and make their own support known. We all deserve the right to vote and have our voices heard.

Jamie DelPrete,

Amityville

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