

Greetings:

I am writing to you to urge you to revise the proposed new regulations for the Parole Board. The proposed regulations merely codify current practice, while adding weak provisions that allow inclusion of the candidate's Risk Assessment and Case Plan, if they happen to be available. It is my opinion that a candidate's Risk Assessment and Case Plan should be required and be the main criteria for determining whether a candidate can be released.

Our justice system should not be one of revenge upon those who have committed crimes, but one of rehabilitation and returning people to society as functional members. People, especially young people brought up in bad environments, make mistakes. While I believe that they should be held accountable for their actions, I do not believe that they should suffer for the rest of their lives. As a religious person, I believe in forgiveness and second chances. Those who have served the minimum time required, demonstrated that they have changed, that they are not a danger to the community, and are ready to make a new start on their lives, should be given the chance and the support to do so. To do otherwise is the mark of an uncivilized society. We need to be better than that.

This is why I believe that adopting these proposed regulations as they currently stand will do nothing to make the parole system in New York State more fair and our communities safer. Using the candidate's Risk Assessment and Case Plan as the main criteria for release will achieve both of these goals.

Sincerely,

Margaret E. Hendrickson
Albany, NY