

**State of
Washington
House of
Representatives**



April 27, 2012

Mr. David Boerner, Commission Chair
Sentencing Guidelines Commission
P.O. Box 43113
Olympia, WA 98504-3113

Dear Mr. Boerner,

As you are aware, during the 2012 regular legislative session, the House of Representatives' Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Committee heard a bill which proposed the creation of a citizen's custody review board authorized to release certain offenders who have served 20 years or more of their sentence.

Under this piece of legislation, House Bill 2521, a board consisting of five members, including a retired judge, two former or current peace officers, and one former offender, will have exclusive authority to determine whether certain offenders who have served over twenty years of their sentence may be released into the community subject to specified conditions. Once released, the offender would not be under the custody of the Department of Corrections, but instead be supervised by a local citizen's reentry coalition and monitored, via review of monthly progress reports, by the board.

It is our understanding that the purpose of this bill was twofold: to limit the diversion of resources from other public services to the long term incarceration of low-risk individuals and to allow individuals who have demonstrated their rehabilitation and their willingness and ability to successfully reintegrate into the community a chance to reenter society.

During your testimony before the Committee on this bill, you made the generous offer, on behalf of the Sentencing Guidelines Commission, to assist the Committee in a more thorough consideration of the issues raised by this piece of legislation than was possible during the legislative session. Now that interim is upon us, and the Committee is able to give these issues the attention they deserve, I hope to have your experience and expertise, and that of the other members of the Commission, to inform and advise us.

On behalf of the Committee, I am requesting the assistance of the Sentencing Guidelines Commission in reviewing the proposed legislation. As part of your review, we would appreciate your comments on the attached bill and your thoughts as to any challenges or conflicts that you see, were the State of Washington to consider establishing this type of board or otherwise implementing an early- release process for offenders in long-term

confinement.

On June 7, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., the Committee will be meeting to discuss, among other issues, the creation of a citizen's custody review board and the establishment of additional conditions under which certain offenders may be able to be released into the community. Your presence and participation at this meeting would be greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact my office or Sarah Koster, counsel to the Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Committee, at (360) 786-7303.

Sincerely,

/s/

State Representative Christopher Hurst
31st Legislative District
Chair, Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness Committee