

April 29, 2021

To Whom It Concerns,

There is no worse sentence that can be given to a human being than that of Life Without Parole (LWOP), it's a living death sentence that implies an individual is incapable of ever changing.

LWOP is one of few sentences that fails to cultivate hope or goodness within. Hope is one of the most influential positive energies that is capable of guiding a person towards making positive decisions. A person without hope has no will or desire to change because there is no fundamental reason to.

In the past, LWOPs have been excluded from multiple laws enacted especially within the last decade which were intended to incentivize and encourage prisoner rehabilitation. One such example is how LWOPs have been denied being viewed as youth offenders; those who committed a crime while under 26 years of age. Not because of the individual person; rather it's the sentence in and of itself. The ridiculous theory applicable is that a typical lifer murderer (25 to life, 15 to life, etc) who committed a murder while under 26 can be seen by a youth offender hearing; however, someone such as myself, can not simply because of an LWOP sentence. Hypothetically, the moment I get my sentence commuted or resentenced from LWOP to life term, I'm immediately recognized as a youth offender. I'M THE SAME PERSON! My brain at 19 years old wasn't any more mature than another 19 year old lifer. I displayed all the hallmarks of youth and therefore should be afforded the same consideration, an opportunity that allows for any person under 26, regardless of sentence, to appear before a panel of experts and have all relevant factors applied.

There currently are 5200 LWOPs in CDCR and many of us are, in spite of having little realistic chance of freedom, still manage to not only simply follow the rules

and regulations, but have went beyond extraordinary means to demonstrate remorse, rehabilitation, and an asset to society as a whole. Many of us are leaders and role models in the prison, in the self-help community, and created programs which have helped changed countless prisoners lives.

Providing an LWOP no hope means you are de-incentivizing a persons potential to change. Prisons should not be geriatric institutions, but places that provides all prisoners the same opportunities regardless of sentence, crime, or statistic. Prisons should be places that gives prisoners opportunities he/she never realized before; education, work skills, parenting skills, counseling.

The chance of an LWOP prisoner getting his sentence commuted is highly unlikely as its politicized. The Governors commutation process is nothing more than a lottery, especially for those who are truly deserving of such a gift. There is no oversight. There is no systematic process being used. If a person has political connections or is in a current subclass of people; only then will the doors of restorative justice and hope swing wide open.

I, like so many of my fellow LWOPers are worthy of being not only commuted, but released from prison. Our Californic elected leaders will never know such truths while residing in their state Capitol offices. Come see for yourselves who we are. Talk to us. Hear our stories, the stories of our trials and triumphs, from bad to good.

For too long has focus on crime policies and prison construction went on without remotely changing the mode of the criminal mindset. Obviously, it's time to do something else. It's time to bring hope to every single prisoners

Every human at some point in their lives made mistakes. Some minor, others major. Quite possibly there are things considered criminal you did and were never caught. To err is to be human. We make mistakes. A parent will forgive a child when misbehaved. Friends forgive friends. Don't continue harboring hatred and resentment for a wrong from which a person did

multiple decades ago. I'm not saying you must forget, but allow healing and restorative justice to take root and remove the discriminatory obstacles that LWOPs face.

I believe LWOP is a living death sentence which must be abolished. It serves as no deterrent to stop crime and it's costing Californians far more to warehouse LWOPs than to rehabilitate them.

I am one voice out of thousands that seek to create real change and hope this letter will be a motivating factor in your decisions.

In service

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