

Testimony By: Edwin Grant, DIN: 08A1436

**Before: The New York State Senate Committee on Crime Victims,
Crime & Correction Hearing on how the Elder Parole and Fair & Timely Parole Bill will
improve Parole release laws and public safety in New York.**

My name is Edwin Grant. I am a 38 year-old African American man from Brooklyn, New York. At the age of 21, I was sentenced to 55-years in 2006. December 10th marks the 16th year of my incarceration.

I am writing this statement because I learned that a senate hearing is being held in regards to two bills: The Elder Bill and the Fair & Timely Parole bills.

I am hoping that my words help this panel understand how our communities will benefit from the passing of these bills. First, I would like to point out the well documented statistics that states: People who serve 10 or more years in prison chances of being rearrested for a new felony is less than one percent.

Second, the majority of individuals who get arrested and sentenced to lengthy prison sentences are young men and women between the ages of 18 and 25 years old. The science tells us that at these ages, young people's brains are not fully developed in order for them to make logical decisions.

Third, it costs over \$50,000 to keep one individual incarcerated for a year in the New York State prison. However, statistics shows that individuals aged 55 and older are less likely to commit another crime upon their release from prison. A lot of elders have served 20 or more years in prison and are suffering from chronic medical conditions, costing taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars annually in medical expenses. If released, these medical expenses and the responsibilities will shift to family members and free up funds that can be used to fix our aging infrastructure and develop more affordable housing that the people of the State of New York need.

Finally, with the passing of these bills, incarcerated people who benefit from them will serve as assets to their families and home communities. They'll serve as mentors to the young men and women in their respective communities. Many of these Elders have a wealth of knowledge gained through education and their life experience which they can use to promote the idea that education and hard work is the path to success. Further, and perhaps most importantly, they can teach non-violence conflict resolution to the misguided youth in our community.

In closing, I thank you for your time and hope that you take my words into consideration when making your decision to pass these bills.

Respectfully,
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