

Testimony by Michael Washington, DIN: 16A1986
New York State Senate Committee on Crime Victims, Crime & Correction Hearing on how
the Elder Parole and Fair & Timely Parole Bills Will Improve Parole Release Laws &
Public Safety in NY State.

I write in support of both the Elder Parole and Fair & Timely Parole bills as this type of criminal justice reform is long overdue in a heavily democratic N.Y. State.

Fair and Timely Parole:

This bill is monumental. The change in the language of the bill would give a liberty interest in being released on parole. This is not a “get out of jail free card” law. It would however codify a well-needed check on the separation of powers. In the past, Governor Pataki was able to stop all parole by executive order during his entire tenure as governor of New York. That was an abuse of power that was really politically motivated to spur an industrial prison complex that strictly benefited the communities where prisons are located.

Elder Parole:

This bill is compassion-based. We all know that when you are approaching “sixty” you are not in the best of health anymore. Your medical needs begin to multiply exponentially. Medical care in prison is virtually nonexistent. The cost is too great. In sum, the elder population simply suffer from medical neglect until they die.

We need to change the trend towards changing this system and these bills are a good start.

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