

Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs

HB21-1209 Parole Eligibility For Youthful Offenders

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

| Name, Position, Representing | Typed Text of Testimony |
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| Julie Rada For Self | <p data-bbox="565 375 1409 443">I write to you today from Denver (80218) expressing my support for HB21-1209.</p> <p data-bbox="565 489 1468 669">In my full time job, I teach arts education in prisons across the state of Colorado. I have done this work for well over seven years in three states. I also sit on the board for Mirror Image Arts, an organization that works in the juvenile justice system and has a mission to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline.</p> <p data-bbox="565 716 1463 1010">From my experience, I can attest that people convicted as young people who've been serving time are the cream-of-the-crop inside our prisons. They are the leaders who are building community and compassionate support systems inside. They may have caused harm as young people when developmentally they did not possess the executive functioning to make smart decisions or to think through the consequences of their actions (can't we all relate?), but now, they are upstanding, community-minded people who only wish to give back to their communities.</p> <p data-bbox="565 1056 1455 1194">Incarcerating these people is fiscally unwise. There is a high cost to incarceration when these folks have a lot of gifts which they could continue to build a thriving Colorado economy and arts/culture scene. I welcome any of these people as neighbors and friends.</p> <p data-bbox="565 1241 1438 1421">I urge you to listen with open minds to today's testimony and to move this bill out of committee. I want you to know that your constituents—this constituent—would support this move toward equity and justice. Now is the time in which we can transform systematic failures in the system and make a more just world.</p> <p data-bbox="565 1467 1105 1497">Thank you for your time and consideration.</p> |