

Dear Member of the Public Safety Committee,

My name is Jacquelyn Berreth and I am writing to you today from an outside standpoint on MRRA. It was brought to my attention that you are going to be discussing a few possible changes to MRRA which I would like to send my views on as someone who is looking at things from a different perspective than those passing the bills. Other states have established inmates to serve half or even a quarter of their sentence so I think it's great that Minnesota is opening the door for our loved ones to work towards coming home sooner. I do believe that giving them something to work towards helps give them hope and incentive to be on their best behavior. I agree that not everyone should be allowed to get half time as their crimes are beyond humane and prove they do not work in society. I understand that it would be very difficult and time consuming to look into each case, but I feel each case is different and each person should be allowed the opportunity to have their individual case reviewed before cutting them off from this opportunity. I was told that the MRRA might be reduced to nonviolent charges only and I am hoping people will look into each case to see if there actually was violence. My husband's case is classified as homicide but it was not violent in any way. Seeing that charge from the outside would make him seem to be a terrible person but in all reality if one person takes the time to look into his case they would notice it was not violent nor intentional. Him and his friends were drug addicts together and my husband sold a pill to his friend which later caused his death. This was his best friend who had even sold him pills in the past so this could have been the other way around. It was a terrible sickness that led to a terrible accident. My husband is over 3 years sober/rehabilitated and now dealing with all of this 3 years later, after starting a family and getting himself to be an "outstanding citizen". I just hope that people like my husband WILL NOT get this opportunity taken from them as he is only in prison out of pure punishment and not for rehabilitation. I believe the MRRA has greatness that can come out of it so with everything in me I hope this is all executed. It is giving inmates something to work towards and something to be on their best behavior for. This is all in one giving hope to everyone, saving money, increasing safety as it is forcing inmates to better themselves. I have my own opinions on who should really get it but I know that doesn't really matter at the end of the day but I just hope this will be personalized to each case. If someone has been to prison multiple times and has proved they are not capable of getting their life together then they should have a harder time getting out early whereas first time offenders should be given a chance to prove themselves again, depending on the severity of their case. I'm aware you get blown up with emails on a daily basis and everyone is speaking up for their loved one as I am because at the end of the day all I want is for someone to see who my husband really is and that he doesn't belong in there so I want/need him home as soon as possible. It's scary thinking about having this opportunity taken away from him even before he is really given the time of day. He was told worse case he would get work release and that did not happen so we are just hoping to get him home as soon as possible. I would love to help in any way and offer a view from a different standpoint so reach out whenever. Thank you for your time. I really do hope some of what I said is taken into consideration.

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Jacquelyn Berreth