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After being sentenced to a prison term of 9.5 years or 114 months. I understand the gravity of incarceration long term. When I arrived, I decided to do everything I could to change. which involved paying out of pocket for college classes, Volunteering in the church, and making it to work every day whether the pay was 12.5 cents an hour or two dollars an hour.

I did not know about work ethics, I did not know how much it meant to other prisoners and the community to volunteer inside, and I didn't know what the benefits were going to be when I started college classes.

Now, I do though. Now I know that getting up and working pays off. I know that being smart with my time pays dividends and so does the time I gave to the Lord and the people who were lost coming back.

This idea HF 2349 resonates with me. When I think back to my first attendance at a father support group created by lifers inside. I listened to the stories of the men in a circle about there experiences with being fathers and when the talking piece came to me... I said, "I wish I had just one of these meetings when I was 17 a new father with no mentor... my whole life would be different."

The time I spent in the Department of corrections truly elevated me in life. And gave me a chance to work on myself. I found a space to surround myself with mentors who did not lie.

This bill will give anyone in this State the same opportunity I had.

Following the Direction of the New Democratic Administration, this will give people who don't have the family support, money, or comprehension afforded to me, the opportunity for early release that I got... I ended my stay with three years inn, An intense boot camp, and a year of house arrest and am thankful and proud of who I am today.

When I talk about this proposal this makes sense...

Why would we as a community allow the current disadvantaging negligence to continue.

Empirically we:

Send someone to jail for example, 15 years, wait until the 14.5 mark before we put them in a treatment for drugs and alcohol.

With this bill we will have them do the treatment right away! With the purpose of making them able to take the values from that treatment and share those values with other prisoners for the rest of the time.

This is common sense reform. A way to reduce the number of people in prison. Please consider this legislation. So the individual can fix what got them there.

Help communities get their sons and daughters home faster. With better skills to go out and work and parent better.

This keeps the streets safe and provides more accountability to at risk youth.

Thank you for your time and consideration.