

Comment Report

HF 377

A bill for an act related to a commutation of sentence request from a class of felon sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole, establishing a life imprisonment review committee to make recommendations in the case of a minimum custody level applicant who has served at least twenty-five years in prison, with reconsideration of a sentence upon the governor's request or inaction, and providing expedited review in the case of an applicant's terminal illness and incapacitation.

Subcommittee Members: Hite-CH, Bohannon, Kaufmann

Date: 02/15/2021

Time: 11:00 AM

Location: House Lounge 1

Name: RHONDA MCCABE

Comment: As a CASA, I have written as well as reviewed many documents. I've read accusations and I've read confirmations and yet, inaccuracies continue to plague our Courts on both. One of the biggest achievements in my CASA career is when I see the parent(s) working diligently to make a wrong mistake right. I see them taking parenting classes; I see them going through AA and NA classes; I see them separating themselves from toxic family members; I see them changing jobs so that they can accommodate the return of their child(ren); and I see them change before my very eyes and truly appreciate the opportunity that is given to them through DHS as well as a CASA Advocate to do so. As I review Bill HF377, I can't help but reflect on my CASA experiences. This Bill states in part, "This bill provides a realistic, intensive look into the rehabilitation of people currently serving Life With Out Parole sentences in Iowa upon their application for commutation. This bill allows for a committee, selected for their knowledge in areas of human behavior, prison behavior, work ethic, values and compassion, social appropriateness, ability to take directions, respect for authority, family/social ties and support, and overall character qualities, to do deep research into the inmates behavior, treatment accomplishments, psychological attitudes and changes, mental health issues, social appropriate values and his/her ability to be selfsupporting should s/he be granted commutation." Just as I witness parent(s) working diligently to regain their child(ren), I also know that those currently serving Life Without Parole sentences are doing the same to regain their independence. When is it time for them to reintroduce themselves as a rehabilitated inmate? Now is that time. I support this bill.

Name: Kevin Poss

Comment: Thank you for taking the time to review this 2nd Chance for lifers bill. As a law abiding citizen of this state I believe people need to be punished for crimes they commit. As a deacon in the Catholic Church I also believe in redemption, forgiveness and mercy. There are people currently in our prison system who have committed horrible crimes and have paid a big price....spending 25, 30, 40 and more years incarcerated who have been sufficiently punished and have shown they are remorseful and have been rehabilitated by their actions while behind bars. Some of these people are the most amazing individuals and would not only not be a threat to society but would be a very positive and productive member of society where they give back and no longer take from Iowans through the cost of incarceration. This bill is good for Iowa. Dr. Kevin Poss

Name: Angie S.

Comment: I am writing in support of Lifer Commutation Review. I am the daughter in law of a

former corrections facility guard and have heard first hand how difficult it is for lifers' sentences to be commuted. The current system of allowing parole applications every ten years leaves inmates who have been rehabilitated and ready to contribute positively in their community waiting longer than necessary to begin their next steps. Families who are managing the loss of financial as well as emotional support could be eased of this burden in a more timely manner. The child who has to wait 10 years to have the opportunity of parental involvement is a motherless or fatherless child. The hope that 3 years versus 10 years brings an inmate could be the motivation to become the best versions of themselves as soon as possible. I believe the parole system is there to do their job and determine if an inmate is fit for commutation. Please let's give these inmates greater opportunity to let the prison system work for them. Please let's aim toward some relief to the prison system that is over crowded and so costly to maintain.

Name: Stormy Poss

Comment: I am in favor of HF377. I have heard the phrase "Life means Life in Iowa" but that is not true "Life means Death in Iowa" For those that are against the Death Penalty, we still have it in Iowa it is called LWOP, "The Hidden Death Penalty" This bill does not release anyone from prison. It simply focuses narrowly on the strongest candidates for commutation through a stringent, consideration of 20 relevant factors and reviewed by a panel of experts in their fields. The commutation process has always existed in Iowa but it is not being used as an effective tool to right size our prisons. Studies have shown that people age out of crime and this overincarcerates individuals that are rehabilitated and the least likely to reoffend. Our tax dollars should be spent on programs designed to prevent crime. I urge you to vote for this legislation.

Name: Mary Stevens

Comment: Thank you for sincerely pondering bill HF377 . I urge you to vote in favor of this bill. I have 3 nephews and a niece adopted from Lithuania who spent their early years of life in a dysfunctional home and orphanage. My sister and her husband adopted these children, all from the same parents, when they were age 11 down to age 4. I have heard their stories. They have spent much time on counseling and helping these children to be the best citizens they can be. The youngest boy, now about 25, has been in jail a number of times. I have heard of his setbacks but I see him trying to achieve. Having a normal, loving childhood, its hard for me, and perhaps most of us, to fathom the pain these children have in their past. But I have seen what a loving approach can do for troubled kids. Time is a healer. After 25 in prison, I think there should be a review of a convicted person. Who of us has not had a change of heart in 25 years? Time changes things. Please, let us give these lifers who have had good behavior over 25 years, another look Thank you for your time

Name: Carla Augustine

Comment: The HF 377 bill just simply makes sense for all parties involved. It will help in rehabilitation and giving the prisoners that have a life a sentence a goal to do good and be good. Right now lifers do not have a life sentence but a death sentence. These lifers have aged out of there crime and statistic indicated the recidivism rate is nonexistent. The prisons are overcrowded and wasting Iowa tax dollars! The current system is broken and it's time for the change to benefit all parties involved.

Name: Deacon Dan Goebel

Comment: Thank you for sincerely considering bill HF377. I urge you to vote in favor of this bill. I believe there is a process set up to evaluate criminals who have served a just sentence and have turned their life around. Those who have done so and are truly sorry can be/have been tremendous witnesses in the public eye. Thank you for your consideration!

Name: Deb Schmidt

Comment: I feel like this bill gives the the top lifers a chance to half a 2nd chsnce. We own 3

business and pay a lot of taxes. I would like to see a reformed prisoner pay taxes. We have been involved with 2 lifers and 1 lives in Garner now and has his own business.

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Name: Sue hutchins

Comment: This bill will provide greatly assist Iowa's Parole Board by providing them with crucial information for their decision making process regarding LWOP commutations. Additionally, it provides a clear pathway and guidelines for the offenders and the BOP.

Name: Tim Diesburg

Comment: I am in favor of this bill. I worked at the Anamosa State Penitentiary as a correctional officer for 6 1/2 years and an Iowa Prison Industries trainer/supervisor for over 27 years, and 3 years as the Iowa Department of Corrections Registered Apprenticeship Coordinator. I worked with many lifers throughout the years. During that time I worked with them 8 hours a day 5 days a week for many years. I had the unique opportunity to see many people doing life grow up from young kids to mature adults. Many gaining their Registered Apprenticeship Journeyman, gain higher education such as, college degrees including masters degrees and PHD. This bill releases no one, but rather gives the commutation process better structure and step by step procedures to follow. This bill is an excellent tool that gives the decision makers important information that is well investigated and well documented. In final it is the right ethical thing to do and adds that important layer for victims/families rights, offenders, and the public to insure we are releasing the right people.

Name: Tammy Diesburg

Comment: I worked for Iowa Prison Industries for 35 1/2 year. I support Bill HF377. I believe that some of the lifers that have proved themselves while they have been incarcerated, should be given a second chance.

Name: Faye Geiman

Comment: My son was incarcerated for 18 years. He lived with a lot of lifers. He is now out in the general public and paying taxes. He was very much reformed in prison. He found out that the Lord loves him unconditionally and was very sorry for his crime. While in prison he met a lot of lifers and seen how there life was very much reformed since they were put in prison. They were a great example and a model to be the man he is today. I believe our system is broken. I do not believe in the death penalty but I do believe in a 2nd chance for the lifers that can show they are a model citizen. I hope this bill improves the criminal justice system. I do not believe that Life means life!!!!

Name: Andi Blume

Comment: My nephew has been incarcerated 36 years and serving life without parole. I think it is time that we give these individuals the opportunity to go before a separate lifer review board. They are the perfect place for him to show his rehabilitation. He is a changed man. Please vote for HF377 bill.

Name: Donna Thompson

Comment: I am asking you to vote for HR377. I have a dear friend who is a lifer and been incarcerated for 30 years. In those 30 years he has made a lot of changes in his lifer. I feel this bill would be giving lifers without parole a real chance. I pray that you would seriously consider this bill. Thank you for your time. I have faith and confidence in your decision. God Bless You

Name: Holly Spence-Blosch

Comment: This bill goes to great lengths to identify and support only those individuals whose release would be truly in the interest of justice. The parole board denies for one reason only and that is the nature of the crime and an inmate cannot undue the nature of the crime but given the chance they can give back to society instead of taking from it. I urge you to vote for HF377.

Name: Brian Carter

Comment: I am Rev. Brian Carter, retired pastor and Team Leader for the Legislative Advocacy Team of the Iowa Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. We a, as re declared IN FAVOR OF HF377. The United Methodist Church is guided by THE SOCIAL PRINCIPLES approved by the General Conference of the United Methodist Church, a world wide Christian denomination of 14 million members. We are led by these Social Principles Paragraph 164.H Criminal and Restorative Justice as follows:In the love of Christ, who came to save those who are lost and vulnerable, we urge the creation of a genuinely ew system for the care and restoration of victims, offenders, criminal justice officials, and the community as a whole. Restorative justice grows out of biblical authority, which emphasizes a right relationship with God, self, and community. When such relationships are violated or broken through crime, opportunities are created to make things right. Most criminal justice systems around the world are retributive. These retributive justice systems profess to hold the offender accountable to the state and use punishment as the equalizing tool for accountability. In contrast, restorative justice seeks to hold the offender accountable to the victimized . , and to the disrupted community. Through God's transforming power, restorative justice seeks to repair the damage, right the wrong, and bring healing to all involved, including the victim, the offender, the families, and the community. In the case of offenders serving life sentences without parole, the only way restorative justice may restore relationships, is if the offender is given an opportunity to be paroled. Then he or she may seek the full restoration which is life affirming, receive forgiveness, offer to right the wrong committed, and seek reconciliation with the victims. It is recognizing that through God people are changed and become saved as new people. It recognizes the God given value of every person even those who committed terrible crimes.

Name: Jayson Speaks

Comment: Many people serving Life Without Parole sentences have rehabilitated themselves on their own, are sorry for what they did, and would be law abiding citizens if given the chance to be free again. It is our duty as their fellow human beings to support giving our trusted public officials the discretion to evaluate and recommend parole for these men and women. Just as we would want a second chance, and would hope others would look into who we are and what we have done since making a mistake, we should support this bill that gives lawmakers the chance to do the same thing. You have rare opportunities to truly make a change in this world... make this one of them and support this bill.

Name: Wayne Herman

Comment: Wayne H.I wholeheartedly support HF377 because it is a step in the right direction. I only wish that the time were 70% of the twenty five years rather than the full twenty five. I am very familiar with two lifers in Iowa. I feel rather strongly that the state provides very minimal attorney representation for those accused of serious felonies. The result is that we have some incarcerated for life because of overly aggressive prosecution along with very poor representation. One lifer I know very well since he was my student years ago. We communicate very often. In fact, I received a letter from him today. If he were to have the opportunity to visit our home I would not even consider moving the gun we have. Both his former pastor and a law enforcement officer told me that they could not say they would have acted differently had they been in his situation. His attorney at the time of the trial called all of us who were to be witnesses the night before we were to appear. Only the accused would take the

stand he told us. But the next morning the attorney told the accused that it was not in his interest to take the stand. When the judge indicated that the Defense should present its case the attorney said that the defense rests. With no defense at all the accused was sentenced to life without parole within two hours of deliberation. To me that is injustice not justice. But we, as taxpayers, will pay for him to be in prison until he dies unless there are radical changes in our so called system of justice. Please pass HF377 but also consider amending it to 70 percent of 25 years.

Name: Joy Merrill

Comment: For 25 years I was a correctional officer, unit director, and supervisor at the women's prison. As such I worked with several Lifers, some who have served for 39 years! Much can be said about the negative aspects of that! It is my professional and personal opinion that those who may be deemed appropriate for release consideration, would be the BEST risks you could take! I'd bet my LIFE on it!!

Name: Ashley Anderson

Comment: My name is Ashley and I am the Lead Service Dog Trainer for Paws & Effect. We have been working with one of the correctional facilities here in Iowa for almost 6 years now. The inmates, specifically lifers, raise and train our purposebred Labradors. I am in favor of HF377 as I have worked alongside of those incarcerated with life sentences and have seen the amazing work they have done, the knowledge they have gained and the copious amount of volunteer work they have given back to the community. I believe everyone deserves a second chance and this bill would offer it to those who truly do deserve it. Please vote in favor of HF377.

Name: Dorothy Whiston

Comment: I have been volunteering in several Iowa prisons and working with returning citizens since the early 2000's (and was even once a "volunteer of the year" at IMCC). Along the way, I've met several people with sentences of life without parole who no longer need to be in prison. These people take full responsibility for the horrendous crimes they committed, have worked hard to rehabilitate themselves, are no threat to public safety, and would be an asset to their communities should they be released. Many of them committed their crimes under the age of 25, which we now know is the age the human brain reaches maturity. It is unconscionable they we do not now offer these people a timely and effective avenue to be considered for parole. It is also a huge waste of taxpayers' money both in terms of the cost of incarceration and in terms of the longterm medical care, including things like kidney dialysis, we must pay for (and that private insurance or the federal government would cover if they were released). Please pass HF 377 for the sake of justice and fiscal responsibility. Thank you.

Name: Loretta Wilkins

Comment: I believe that all people deserve a second chance. My son went to prison at 18. He was arrested at 17 as a person of interest. He was held until he was 18, a month and 4 days later and given Life without possibility of parole. At that time he was under the influence of older people. He is a difference person now. He has given His Life to the Lord. He is featured in the book Bleak Walls Bright Minds. Please sign this Bill for my son Omar Wilkins and others who deserve a second chance. Thank you

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Name: Myra Wagehoft

Comment: I have listen to a lot of information with regard to lifers. I have had the opportunity to read Bleak Walls, Bright Minds. The introduction to lifers and there very limited possibility for commutation was eye opening and thought provoking. I ask that the committee continue the bill that offers lifers a second chance for a review of their status under the terms of this new bill.

Name: Garry Hendricks

Comment: We are a nation of laws and as such have grappled with this question since the founding . . . what to do with those that violate or break our laws. I believe we need to be tough on crime, as any civilized society cannot survive amidst lawlessness and chaos. I also believe our JudeoChristian principles that is the foundation of this great nation, calls on each of us to be stronger yet, with forgiveness and second chances. The Bible tells us in 1John 4:20 If anyone saysI love GOD, but keeps on hating his brother, he is a liar. For if we dont love our brother who is standing right there in front of us, How can we say we love GOD whom we have never seen. Yes we are talking about real human beings that have done some horrible things. I am currently mentoring a young man that started his journey in the prison system at age 19 and after almost two years in the court system was delivered a life without parole sentence. Is he the same man he was more than 12 years ago? The answer is no. How does one so young build a future when there is none? We can do better and must try for whatever we do to the least among us we do to all. Our approach to LWOP is the same, heavy on punishment and very lite on rehabilitation. If we are serious about real rehabilitation, HF 377 deserves our most ardent consideration. For in this bill we are declaring that we believe in second chances and that we do love our brother standing right in front of us. May GOD grant each of the legislators the wisdom to discern and heart to feel what is right for all of the people they represent.

Name: Bud Theus

Comment: Honestly I feel some lifers without parole do deserve a second chance especially the ones that was convicted of a crime as a teenager its funny how on one hand as a society we say a person is to young to drink even smoke but on the other hand we can say he you or old enough to get a life sentence without the possibility of parole so if you saying a teen mind is to young to make a sound judgment in putting toxins into the body that teen I also should be considered to young to have made a detrimental decision that can take they life and freedom away in one moment. So I feel lifers should have a chance to demonstrate a change within themselves a maturity for the lack of a better word showing that we all make stupid mistakes and decisions and they all varies and most of the time we all enjoy the luxury of three words A Second Chance so why not lifers as well Thank You for your time.

Name: CURE OF IOWA Iowa Justice Action Network

Comment: As VP of Iowa CURE and CoChair of the Iowa Justice Action Network, I urge you to pass HF377. We, as organizations, are in support of this legislation having studied the bill in several workshops/webinars.The bill would provide a way for those men and women who are serving LWOP to demonstrate their rehabilitation and the changes they have made in their thinking and in their behavior. These people would then be evaluated, based on rehabilitation, and the recommendation for or against commutation would be based on those changes. The Nature of The Crime will always be the reason s/he is incarcerated. This bill will assure their rehabilitation, since incarceration, be a major consideration.

Name: Lee Schott

Comment: I am in favor of HF377 because I have seen the character and behavior of many lifers who merit a real chance at life beyond prison. Life without parole in Iowa has always included the possibility of commutation, but in recent years the "safety valve" that commutation was intended to offer has been broken. This bill offers minimum custody status lifers who have served at least 25 years a process that will make commutation a real possibility. It creates timelines and an indepth examination of

their circumstances before and after their incarceration, focused on justice, rehabilitation, and real assessment of risks and opportunities. It's time to end the punitive "throw away the key" mentality toward these human beings. We call it a correctional system because we believe in positive, meaningful change. Please vote in favor of HF377.

Name: Mandi Kuehl

Comment: I am asking you to vote for HR377. I have seen the prison system for many years as I have a family member in prison. I believe in punishing those who have committed crimes but I also believe in rehabilitation and recognizing when it has happened. Those who have been serving life sentences but have also worked hard to make changes and a quality life for themselves while in prison, deserve the chance to have their sentence reviewed.

Name: Maya Ben-Shahar

Comment: I am a social work student and filmmaker, and I have been coproducing a documentary JustUs, awarded \$25,000 by the Iowa Dep. of Cultural Affairs' Greenlight Grant. We look at the "success stories" people who have spent a long time in prison for serious crimes, and yet who are contributing positively to their communities and using their experiences to prevent others from going to prison. Making this movie has been like doing ontheground research on what works and what doesn't when it comes to rehabilitation and reentry. And time and time again I hear that lifers are the ones who mentor, support, and heal other prisoners to the point where they can reenter successfully. My coproducer, Ced Theus, is one of these men, and over the years of our friendship I have seen how illogical it is to expend state resources keeping him incarcerated it is not only unjust and unnecessary, but actually counterproductive from a public safety perspective, since if free he would have a positive, farreaching impact in his family and community. Sentence commutation would have been a realistic option for him in a less polarized society, but we all know that politics leave the governor virtually immobilized on that front. I believe that creating a Lifer Review Board is a smart, bipartisan way to save resources and strengthen communities hardesthit by incarceration.

Name: Ron Pile

Comment: I wholeheartedly support this bill. As a prison volunteer, I have seen lifers who have spent 30+ years in prison for crimes committed as young men, who would make upstanding citizens if only given a second chance. It is a waste of human potential not to mention taxpayer money to keep people locked up for the rest of their lives. People can and do mature and change. Please give these people a chance to live outside the bars. Thank you.

Name: Brittany Poss

Comment: Thank you in advance for your consideration of this bill. I believe that in order to be better, you have to do better. Where is the motivation when there is no hope for redemption as a person is sentenced life without parole? Law abiding citizens in good conscience have a moral and ethical obligation not to incarcerate beyond reasonable punishment. My hope is that this bill can change the mindset that a prison can be more than incarceration, rather a place for rehabilitation. As we evolve as a nation, so should our standards of decency. A person who is no longer the man or woman who entered prison should have a second chance to rejoin society as the person they have worked hard to become.

Name: sharelle moranville

Comment: I am in favor of HF 377 and encourage you to consider it. For seven years in the late 80s and early 90s, I acted as guardian ad litem and Court Appointed Special Advocate for five children who were of interest to the court because they had been abused, abandoned, or neglected. Four of the five children had incarcerated or

previously incarcerated parents. Before Covid, I was a volunteer at Iowa Correctional Institute for Women, and am eager to return. I have also worked with teams that help people leaving prison reintegrate into life outside the fence. A thing I have learned from these experiences: rehabilitation can happen. To close the door with only the slimmest chance of parole (as with the current commutation practice) feels wasteful of potential and wasteful of taxpayer dollars. Please vote for HF 377. Thank you.

Name: Rev.Beth Harbaugh

Comment: If Bill HF 377 is passed it will allow people who have done terrible things to become healers through their witness of how they have learned another way. New life is available to all through GRACE. Let us all move toward this light together, with amazing possibilities.

Name: Jeanie Smith

Comment: It is long past time that we create a sensible path for those incarcerated for life without parole to be freed. This legislation provides that path. I have worked with a number of "lifers" at the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women in Mitchellville over the past 8 years. Many of these women are productive, caring, hardworking. If we have strong guidelines for this process, I believe that we can give people a second chance they deserve.

Name: Amiola Canin

Comment: The Iowa Lifer Review Bill can give a second chance to reformed individuals who have proven themselves ready to return to society. Many of these people committed crimes when they were very young. They've served decades in prison, and they have worked incredibly hard to reform themselves. They've studied and prayed. Many of them have become mentors to other prisoners. They and their loved ones deserve another chance to make a life together, and after a process of careful scrutiny the Lifer Review Board can give them that chance. The Lifer Review Bill is also a great opportunity to show that Iowa Republicans and Democrats can work together on humane, bipartisan legislation. Therefore, I urge you in the strongest possible terms to make sure this bill gets a full hearing on the floor of the Iowa House of Representatives.

Name: Belinda Gardner

Comment: I support this bill because it is essential to Criminal Justice Reform and ending Mass Incarceration in this country. There are so many injustices and disparities associated to these long sentences, everyone deserves a second chance especially anyone 25 and younger. People age out and as we all know they can become productive, law abiding citizens giving back to the community in so many valuable ways. The lock them up and throw away the key mentality has to change. We are not our worst mistake or decision. We serve a loving and forgiving God, should we be any less forgiving? God forbid...I support this bill. Thank You for your time and favorable passage of this bill. Warmly, Belinda Gardner

Name: paul spence

Comment: To whom it may concern: I am writing about bill HF 377. When I think of reform in our prison system, I think of the hopeless and these are lifers without parole. This bill looks at an individual after serving 25 years and what they have done or not done while incarcerated. I believe it merits sentencing reform guidelines, in my mind. I would hope you will move to advance this type of reform. Not all lifers are qualified for this action. Many lifers have changed and it shows through the work they have accomplished while being locked up, with the knowledge they will not be released. They have chosen the better part of the life they now serve. If this does not show more to their character than their crime, then reform is just another word. Thank you, Paul P. Spence

Name: Brandon Chahine

Comment: People go through huge personality changes within 5 years, men don't have a fully developed executive functioning brain till about age 25 research in neurology tells us all of these FACTS about the brain. Undeniable truths about how the brain changes and isn't fully developed until the age of 25. Yet the criminal justice system continues to ignore these facts in order to make money from young individuals caught most of the time in their teens committing a crime and never get to see the light of day because a single mistake. The law needs to catch up to the science when it comes to people's lives and loved ones in Iowa. WE need many changes in Iowa when it comes to the Life without Parole as its been to many years where are politicians that we have voted for have done nothing for our prison and those whom have changed and deserve a second chance. We except them to change, do well, get an education make something of them selves but we don't let them have another chance in society??

Name: Abby Chahine

Comment: The Iowa Law is very behind when it comes to lifers getting a second chance, my dad Ed Nassif is one that has changed over the years and has done so much to get a second chance. If you go talk to these lifers you will see many are not the same as they used to be 25 30 years ago. This is not just a sentence for me its a sentence for my mom, brothers, and family members. The brain is not fully developed till 25 backed by many Doctors. Iowa needs to change like other states giving second chances for lifers. Please change the Iowa Bill and go talk to those lifers who would do good on the streets, some better then what are on the streets walking around. Thank you and I hope you will consider changing how the prison can change for our loved ones like my dad ED Nassif.

Name: Deb Streff

Comment: I have worked with men and women who are incarcerated. I support parole for lifers who meet specified conditions.

Name: Blair Greiman

Comment: I would like to encourage lawmakers to consider this bill. After serving 35 years of a life sentence, I was released because of changes in the laws regarding juvenile life sentences. We underwent a thorough vetting process to insure that we were fit for release. I would encourage the legislature to consider extending this process to at least some of the nonjuvenile lifers. Though not juveniles at the time of their crimes, many were quite young and some have matured over the course of several decades of incarceration into decent people who are sorry for the mistakes of their youth, have learned to care about the people around them and make positive contributions to their prison communities daily. Since my release in 2017, my hometown of Garner has been very good to me and I am so grateful for the opportunity to live and work and finish my life here rather than prison. I know many other lifers who would embrace such a second chance with similar gratitude and live accordingly. Thank you, Blair Greiman

Name: Elli Nassif

Comment: Thank You for listening and hearing our loved ones cries. I believe we all need to pay for our crimes but when is enough? We must ask our selves. We stopped at the juvenile bill at 18 and why? Science did say brains are not fully developed till 25 Dr. Mark Cunningham, Clinical and Forensic Psychologist) Dr. Laurence Steinberg have testified in many high profile cases. We have many lifers that have changed over the years that got life with out parole that deserve another chance. No one is making an excuse for their crime not even them they are asking/we if they have done the right thing in 25 years why not look at giving them a chance to do good in society. Why did we stop at 18 years old. My husband Ed Nassif is one that did a crime at 21 and has much pain from what he has caused many but knowing him for 35 years he is not

the same person and many that also know him say he is not the same person. WE don't look at our past and that's why we call it a passed so we can heal and move forward. I support this bill and letting you all know that Iowa needs to do what others states are doing and passing a Bill like the Durbin Bill, Hancock Bill that Chuck Grassley helped with. Iowa needs change with the support of Dr. Mark Cunningham who testified that the brain is still developing until the age of 25 years old shows they to should be given life with parole like the juveniles received. MOVE THE LINES UP TO AGE 24 YEARS OLD WHEN THE CRIME WAS COMMITTED. life with out is unconstitutional see US Supreme court judge Sotomayor : in U.S. vs. Campbell , life with out parole is unconstitutional and it should be reviewed as such. Research is not based on specific individual, but rather cohorts of individuals of different ages and some longitudinal research that says 21 year old's in fact do not have complete brain development. Thank You

Name: Laura Oliver

Comment: I write to urge you to support HF377. Offering the hope of commutation and restoration is a stronger incentive for rehabilitation than shutting the door on a persons life.

Name: Jean Basinger

Comment: I have been working for reform of the Iowa Criminal Justice system for several decades. In the process I have come to know many of the lifers in our system. I know that a number of them have rehabilitated themselves and would be outstanding members of their society. They need to have the opportunity to be paroled. We know they committed a serious crime at one point in their lives because of this fact they need to be held responsible, but putting them in prison for life makes no sense. It is extremely expense and needs to be addressed. Let's give them the opportunity to be paroled and to lead productive lives in society.

Name: Paul Witmer

Comment: I support this bill and the work of this group that has the best interests of all Iowans in mind, assist to the parole board and justice for incarcerated people. It is worth consideration and eventual pass.

Name: Peter Nothnagle

Comment: None of us should be permanently identified by the single worst thing we have ever done. This bill has been carefully crafted to identify people who can be trusted to become responsible citizens and allow them to rejoin their families, their communities, and the workforce.