

Tamara GRIGSBY

State Representative
18th Assembly District

April 23, 2007

Alfonso Graham, Chairman
Wisconsin Parole Commission
3099 East Washington Avenue
Madison, WI 53707-7960

Dear Chairman Graham:

As you know from our numerous telephone conversations, I have many concerns regarding the standards, or more appropriately, the lack thereof, the Parole Commission uses in determining parole eligibility. After carefully reviewing the Parole Procedures contained in the Wisconsin Administrative Code, I am confident that as Chairman of the Parole Commission you have the authority to make some of the changes we have talked about at great length.

Two provisions in particular that I would request that you address within the Administrative Rules process are PAC 1.06 (5) and PAC 1.06 (7). PAC 1.06 (5) states:

Representation by legal counsel during the interview shall not be permitted. Correspondence from legal counsel shall be accepted, however, and made part of the record. A spokesperson for the inmate should be allowed only in cases of severe speech impediment, where the inmate suffers a severe physical disability which impedes oral communication, or in cases where the inmate's primary language is not English and the individual lacks adequate fluency to represent himself or herself.

I am requesting rule PAC 1.06 (5) be changed to allow an inmate to have 2-3 representatives of their choice at their hearing including but not limited to legal counsel, family members, advocates, and/or spokespersons. This arrangement will be beneficial to both the inmate and the Parole Commission, especially if parole is being denied and the inmate needs a better understanding of the steps needed to obtain release. Having an advocate present may also help the Commissioner to better understand the support services the inmate will have available to him upon release.

Secondly, I am requesting that PAC 1.06(7) be recreated to develop specific criteria which the Parole Commission must consider when reviewing an inmate's eligibility for parole by the use of a scoring system or risk assessment tool.

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3) A Measurement Instrument designed to systematically assess an inmates' suitability for release;

4) Risk assessment and offense severity measurement that function as two of the core components of the SDM model.

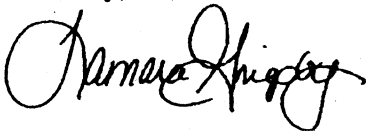
This model serves to protect the community, while at the same time, providing the inmate with clear guidelines to follow to ensure their own suitability for release and a successful transition into the community. Likewise if an inmate does not meet the requirements of these provisions, or concerns remain about the risk they pose to the community, the inmate and their family will have a clear indication of the steps necessary to achieve parole status.

I am certain that after you have had a chance to review this model, you will agree that this change will be beneficial for the Parole Commission as well. If you need any further information about this model, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to a prompt written response as to your willingness to immediately pursue the change I requested to PAC 1.06 (5), relating to inmate representation at parole hearings.

Furthermore, while the changes to PAC 1.06 (7), relating to the Structured Decision Making model, may take longer to develop, I am anxious to learn of your readiness to begin working on the changes necessary to implement this model in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,



Tamara Grigsby
State Representative
18th Assembly District

TDG/pmu

Enclosure