

Wisconsin's Legacy of Gubernatorial Clemency
Through Commutation of Sentence for Imprisoned Petitioners

Prepared by Harlan Richards

This report describes the history and tradition of granting clemency to incarcerated petitioners in Wisconsin and provides commutation of sentence data from five previous governors.

Since Wisconsin's inception in 1848, governors have liberally granted clemency to imprisoned petitioners. When the death penalty was replaced with life in prison in Wisconsin over 150 years ago, the only way convicted murderers could be released from prison was by pardoning them. Governors routinely pardoned lifers after serving an average of five years.¹ The creation of a parole system in Wisconsin did not stop governors from granting commutation of sentences for prisoners. Before the Mass Incarceration Movement hijacked Wisconsin's criminal justice system in 1987, governors were still routinely granting commutation of sentences to imprisoned citizens.

Attached to this report is a list of prisoners who were granted commutation of sentence while still imprisoned from 1969 to 1986². Governors Warren Knowles, Patrick Lucey, Martin Schrieber, Lee Dreyfus and Tony Earl all commuted the sentences of numerous prisoners. The reason for granting the bulk of these commutations was to permit a prisoner to become eligible for parole (and then released on parole) at an earlier date than allowed by statute³.

Note 1: This data is available in the biannual reports of Waupun State Prison from the 1800s. These reports are held in the State Historical Society archives (askarchives@wisconsinhistory.org).

Note 2: Governor Tommy Thompson took office in 1987 espousing a "get tough on crime" agenda which was the birth of the Mass Incarceration Movement in Wisconsin.

Note 3: Previously, prisoners were eligible for release on parole after serving one year - except for persons convicted of 1st or 2nd degree murder. 1st degree murder required serving 11 years, 3 months while 2nd degree murder required serving 5 years before reaching parole eligibility.

When Governor Thompson took office in 1987, one of his first acts was to bar prisoners from petitioning for clemency. That restriction has become entrenched in gubernatorial clemency guidelines. The only way a prisoner can now seek a commutation of sentence is to file a form requesting permission to file for clemency. To the best of this author's knowledge, no prisoner has succeeded in establishing the extraordinary circumstances necessary to overcome this restriction. Each governor since 1987 has supported the Mass Incarceration Movement and refrained from granting any prisoner a commutation of sentence. Governor Scott Walker took it one step further and refused to accept a petition for clemency from anyone.

The adherence to the doctrines of the Mass Incarceration Movement by Wisconsin governors has led to historical levels of imprisonment and monitoring of citizens through probation, parole and extended supervision.

Wisconsin Corrections Data - Approximate Totals
Wisconsin Blue Book 2011-12

Year	1970	1980	1990	2000
Imprisoned	2900	3200	6200	19000
On Supervision	8900	20000	30000	64000

In 1990, Governor Thompson commissioned a "Ten Year Plan" for the Department of Corrections which projected that the Wisconsin prison population would soar to 20,000. It became a self-fulfilling prophecy accomplished by imprisoning more citizens for longer periods based on eliminating release on parole and enacting harsher sentencing laws.

The data on persons serving life sentences in Wisconsin demonstrates the effect the Mass Incarceration Movement had on how much time they served. Four graphs are attached to this report: Number of Lifers With 20+ Consecutive Years Incarcerated (as of May 2009), Time Served by Persons with Life Sentences Who Are Still Incarcerated In Wisconsin (May 2017, showing number of lifers with 30 or 40 consecutive years served), Time Served to Release for Persons Serving Life Sentences in Wisconsin (May 2017) and Average Time Served/Number of Persons Released for Persons Serving Life Sentences in Wisconsin (May 2017). This data begins at 1980 or 81 and goes up through the date of preparation.

In 1980, only two lifers had served more than 20 years in prison and no lifer had served 30 years in prison. By 2009, there were 255 lifers who had served over 20 years in prison. In 1990, there was only one lifer who had served more than 30 years in prison; by 2017, there were 136. In 2000, there was only one lifer who had served over 40 years in prison; by 2017, there were 23.

The refusal to grant commutation of sentence to incarcerated lifers contributed to this decades-long warehousing which is still going on. Data on how much time lifers served to release on parole in the early 1980s is scarce because so few lifers reached parole eligibility without being granted commutation of sentence before that. In 1981 and 1982, two lifers were released in each year, all of them having served less than 4 years. In 2002, not one lifer was released on parole in spite of hundreds of lifers being eligible. By May 2017, the average time served to release on parole was almost 30 years. Many lifers are still languishing in prison with more than 30 years served.

Before the Mass Incarceration Movement, Wisconsin governors understood that merely because a citizen committed a crime, it did not make him or her irredeemable or in need of endless incarceration to "protect the public" (persons convicted of murder historically have the lowest recidivism rates - in the single digits - yet are the ones who suffer most from the Mass Incarceration Movement).

The attached list of prisoners granted commutation of sentence shows that frequently the sole basis for granting commutation was the conduct of the petitioner after coming to prison. However, current parole and security classification policies give little or no weight to institution conduct or achievements for persons serving long sentences.

Governor Tony Evers is in a position to put an end to the Mass Incarceration Movement in Wisconsin by restoring the right to petition for clemency to incarcerated citizens. Billions of dollars have been wasted on unnecessary warehousing of prisoners since Governor Thompson brought the Mass Incarceration Movement to Wisconsin.

Governor Evers is urged to restore the policy of granting commutation of sentence to imprisoned citizens.

Clemency In Wisconsin From 1969 to 1986 Granted by
Governors Warren Knowles, Patrick Lucey, Martin Schrieber,
Lee Dreyfus and Tony Earl

This list comprises those individuals who received commutation
of sentence while still incarcerated to facilitate early release

The data includes name, offense, sentence, date of offense and
reason for commutation of sentence
and time served before commutation

Jan. 1969 to Jan. 1971 - Governor Warren Knowles - 61 clemencies

McKenzie Davis (age 61) 1st deg. murder/life/June 1965/(<5 years)
"based on his age, the time span between the offense and his
conviction, and an exemplary record while incarcerated"

Randolph Kirk DeMoe - burglary (13 counts)/"three terms of one year,
consecutive, and ten terms of one year, concurrent, concurrent to
previous sentence"/Feb. 1968/(1 year)
"was commuted to thirteen terms of three years, concurrent, on the
basis of his satisfactory prison adjustment and in order for
him to appear before the Parole Board at an earlier date"

Tilmon Greer - 1st deg. murder/life/July 1964/(<6 years)
commuted to 35 years "based on factors surrounding the offense
and his conviction and his excellent record while incarcerated"

George Paul Reimers (age 52) 1st deg. murder/life/April 1964/(<7 years)
commuted "to a term of thirty years based on the circumstances
surrounding the offense and his exceptional effort at rehabili-
tation while incarcerated"

Wilfredo Rosario (age 22) burglary (two counts)/"ten years and five
years, consecutive/March 1968/(<2 years)
"commutation of sentence making both sentences concurrent instead
of consecutive [] based on the recommendation that he begin
appearances before the Parole Board at an earlier date"

John J. Sadowski (age 20) burglary, five counts/ two years on each
of the three counts, concurrent, two years, consecutive, and two years,
consecutive (total of six years)/April 1968/(<2 years)
"commuted to a term of two years on each of the 4 counts,
concurrent, and 2 years on one count, consecutive, on the basis
that his youth, lack of previous criminal activity and exemplary
prison record all indicate that earlier appearances before the
Parole Board would aid in the rehabilitation process"

Lloyd Rice - 1st. deg. murder/life/June 1976/(<5 years)
"commutation of sentence to 50 years based upon his excellent adjustment while incarcerated"

James R. Schultz - 1st deg. murder/life/June 1966/(<6 years)
"commutation of sentence to a term of 35 years on the recommendation by the Division of Corrections of the State Department of Health and Social Services so that he could receive an earlier parole eligibility date"

Kenneth R. Shaw - burglary (4 counts) & issuing worthless checks//
2 counts/total of 10 years/Oct. 1968/(<4 years)
"commutation of sentence to a total of 8 years thereby making him eligible for parole at an earlier date"

Daniel Urman - rape and burglary/15 & 5 years concurrent/
Sept. 1970/(<2 years)
"commuted to 5 years based upon his strong efforts at his adjustment"

Vern Valleau - possession and use of heroin and forgery/4 years on each count concurrent/April 1970/(<2 years)
"commutation of sentence to 2 years for the charge of possession of heroin on the recommendation of the Department of Health and Social Services"

Robert Van Ermen - 1st deg. murder/life/Aug. 1961/(<11 years)
"commuted to 50 years based upon his adjustment while incarcerated and to make him immediately eligible for parole"

Willie M. White - 1st deg. murder/life/Sept. 1968/(<4 years)
"commutation of sentence to 35 years based upon the recommendation of the Division of Corrections of the State Department of Health and Social Services"

J.D. Williamson - 1st deg. murder/life/Jan. 1965/(<7 years)
"commuted to 50 years based upon his adjustment while incarcerated and to make him immediately eligible for parole"

Bernard Wood - possession & sale of marijuana/2-6 years and 5 years concurrent/July 1970/(<2 years)
"commutation of sentence to 3 years for the sale of marijuana based upon the revised marijuana laws"

1972 -Governor Patrick Lucey

Y.C. Armstrong - 1st deg. murder/life/Aug. 1964/(<8 years)
commuted to 50 years because he "has worked diligently to improve his near illiterate state to that of a high school graduate and . . . has gained considerable insight into his problems through participation in therapy"

Richard Roberts - 1st deg. murder/life/Aug. 1967/(<5 years)
"has maintained an excellent work record and holds a highly trusted position at the institution and . . . has an excellent recommendation from the medical director and the pharmacist at the institution and . . . has utilized the AA program extensively"

Owen Thompson - 1st deg. murder/life/June 1966/(<7 years)
"has received no conduct reports since his incarceration and has maintained an outstanding work record and . . . has received a letter from the warden of his institution congratulating him on his exceptional ability when a fire broke out at the prison"

Jan. 1973 to Jan. 1975 Governor Patrick Lucey - 180 clemencies granted
did not state what sentences were commuted to

Wilma Anderson - 1st deg. murder/life/Dec. 1969/(<5 years)
"commutation of sentence based on her excellent adjustment since her conviction"

August Bergenthal - 1st deg. murder/life/April 1969/(<5 years)
"commutation of sentence based on an indication from the Department of Health and Social Services that an extension of Executive Clemency would be appropriate and his involvement in programs of personal benefit"

Sherry Bradley - 2 counts 1st deg. murder/2 life sentences/
Dec. 1964/(<10 years)
"granted a commutation of sentence based on her efforts to further her education"

John E. Burt - 1st deg. murder & armed robbery/life plus 30 years/
Nov. 1965/(<9 years)
"commutation of sentence based on satisfactory adjustment in the institution and improved educational standing"

Willie Collier - 1st deg. murder/life/Sept. 1964/(<10 years)
"commutation of sentence based on a recommendation from the District Attorney for Milwaukee County"

Daniel Coogan - possession and delivery of dangerous drug & sale of marijuana/1 year, 10 years, 10 years concurrent/June 1970/(<5 years)
"commutation of sentence based on legislative revision of the laws relating to controlled substances"

Sam Diciaula - att. murder, 2 counts forgery and armed burglary/
total of 40 years/Sept. 1960/(<15 years)
"commutation of sentence based on his outstanding record of substantial personal progress since conviction"
(commutation may have been granted after release on parole)

David Fendt - 1st deg. murder/life/Feb. 1967/(<7 years)
"commutation of sentence based on his participation in available institutional programs involving individual therapy and education"

Wade French - 2 counts sale of heroin/5 years/April 1972/(<3 years)
"commutation of sentence based on legislative revision of laws relating to controlled substances"

Acklee Harrell - 1st deg. murder/life/Feb. 1967/(<7 years)
"commutation of sentence based on his participation in institutional programs and substantial personal progress since conviction"

William Hug - 1st deg. murder/life/Jan. 1968/(<6 years)
"commutation of sentence based on his participation in institutional programs and substantial personal progress after conviction"

Betty Krohn - 3 counts forgery (uttering) & 3 counts forgery/
5 years each consecutive for 1st 3 counts & 5 years each consecutive for 2nd 3 counts concurrent to first 3 counts/May 1972/(<2 years)
"commutation of sentence based on a recommendation from the Department of Health & Social Services"

Melvateem Lampkins - 1st deg. murder, att. murder & armed robbery/
life plus 60 years consecutive/June 1969/(<5 years)
"commutation of sentence based on a recommendation from the Department of Health & Social Services and on substantial personal progress since conviction"

Jack Laster - 2nd deg. murder/5-15 years/Oct. 1971/(<3 years)
"commutation of sentence based on his age and his eligibility date for parole consideration as well as substantial personal progress since conviction"

Robert Maranger - 2nd deg. murder/5 years/Aug. 1971/(<3 years)
"commutation of sentence based on the structure of his sentence and the date of eligibility for parole consideration and on substantial personal progress since conviction"

Dean McKeever - forgery/7 years/March 1969/(<5 years)
"commutation of sentence based on a recommendation from the Department of Health & Social Services and on substantial personal progress since conviction"

John Olson - 2nd deg. murder/5-20 years/Oct. 1971/(<3 years)
"commutation of sentence based on his age and his parole eligibility date"

Charles Schwamb - 1st deg. murder/life/Feb. 1966/(<8 years)
"commutation of sentence based on recommendation from the Department of Health & Social Services as well as substantial personal progress since conviction"

Tommy Shead - 6 counts issue of worthless checks/1 year on each count consecutive/May 1971/(<3 years)

"commutation of sentence based on an indication from the Department of Health & Social Services that an earlier parole eligibility date would be appropriate"

Charles Smotherman - 3 deg. murder, 2 counts breaking & entering/35 years, 10 years concurrent, 10 years consecutive/Nov. 1961/(<13 years)

"commutation of sentence based on a recommendation from the Department of Health & Social Services and on substantial personal progress since conviction"

William E. Starr - burglary & armed robbery/2 years, 30 years consecutive/May 1969/also armed robbery/15 years consecutive/Oct. 1969/(<5 years)

Earnest Taylor - 2nd deg. murder/5 years/June 1972/(<2 years)

"commutation of sentence based on his excellent record since incarceration"

Henry Thompson - 1st deg. murder/life/Feb. 1967/(<7 years)

"commutation of sentence based on his poor health"

Gilbert Turner - possession of narcotic drug/2-9 years/April 1970/(<4 years)

"commutation of sentence based on legislative revision of the laws relating to controlled substances"

John Vance - 1st deg. murder/life/March 1970/(<4 years)

"commutation of sentence based on his excellent adjustment to the institution"

Frank Velasquez - 2nd deg. murder/25 years/March 1966/(<8 years)

"commutation of sentence based on a recommendation from the Department of Health & Social Services and on personal progress since conviction"

Lonnie Young - 1st deg. murder/life/Sept. 1969/(<5 years)

"commutation of sentence so that he would be eligible to participate in institutional programs"

Carl Zinn - 1st deg. murder/life/Oct. 1971/(<3 years)

"commutation of sentence based on his poor health"

1975 - Governor Patrick Lucey - 97 pardons granted

Charles Bailey - 1st deg. murder/life/July 1970/(<5 years)

"commutation of sentence to 50 years based on his continued assistance to minority and low-income individuals and on the support of community leaders"

Theaster Beverly - 1st deg. murder & armed robbery/life plus
30 years consecutive/Dec. 1966/(<9 years)

"commutation of sentence from life to 50 years based on his
institutional adjustment"

Robert Brozovich - burglary/8 years/Dec. 1973/(<2 years)

"commutation of sentence [] to 2 years based on his good conduct
between time of conviction and time of sentencing"

Lamared Green - 2nd deg. murder/25 years/April 1965/(<10 years)

"commutation of sentence to time served based on a recommendation
from the Department of Health & Social Services"

James Lampkins - 1st deg. murder, att. murder & armed robbery/life
30 years concurrent, 30 years consecutive/June 1969/(<6 years)

"commutation of sentence to life imprisonment and 30 years and
30 years to be served concurrently based on his adjustment in
the institution"

Melvateem Lmapkins - same details as preceeding except relief granted:

"commutation of sentence from life to 50 years based on her
adjustment in the institution"

Mark Leroux - two 1st deg. murder/2 consecutive life sentences/
Nov. 1967/(<8 years)

"commutation of sentence to two terms of life to be served con-
currently based on his adjustment to the institution"

James McBair - four 1st deg. murder/4 concurrent life sentences/
Oct. 1967/(<8 years)

"commutation of sentence to 50 years on each count to be served
concurrently based on his adjustment in the institution"

James McKethan - armed robbery/20 years/Sept. 1973/(2 years)

"commutation of sentence to 12 years based on his adjustment
in the institution"

Earl Payne - 1st deg. murder/life/March 1966/(<9 years)

"commutation of sentence based on his adjustment in the
institution"

Oliver Steinberg - 2 counts conduct regardless of life/ two
5 year sentences consecutive/Nov. 1972/(<3 years)

Arthur Vara - 1st deg. murder/life/March 1969/(<6 years)

"commutation of sentence to 50 years based on his institutional
adjustment"

Kenneth Chambers - 1st deg. murder/life/March 1967/(<9 years)
"commutation of sentence to 50 years based on a recommendation from the Parole Board"

James Charles Lambert - six counts theft by fraud/four terms of 5 years consecutive, one term of 4 years consecutive and one term of 10 years probation consecutive/Dec. 1974/(<2 years)
"commutation of sentence from three terms of five years consecutive to three terms of five years concurrent because Executive Clemency was solicited on behalf of Charles Lambert and it appeared that he is deserving"

James Lee Lampkins - 1st deg. murder, att. murder, armed robbery/life plus 30 years concurrent and 30 years consecutive/
June 1969/(<8 years) (2nd grant of clemency)
"commutation of sentence to 50 years, 30 years consecutive and 30 years concurrent because he has displayed successful institution adjustment, because his application has received support from various institutional personnel, and because he has served 8 years of his sentence"

John Lee Lewis - 1st. deg. murder/life/June 1972/(<5 years)
"commutation of sentence to 50 years because of his good record since his incarceration, because his current sentence structure renders transfer to a less secure facility impossible, because of his current academic endeavors"

Scott William Mattes - 2 count att. 1st deg. murder and carrying a concealed weapon/20 years and 20 years consecutive and one year concurrent/March 1976/(<one year)
"commutation of sentence to 20 years and 20 years concurrent and one year consecutive, because he had no prior criminal involvement, because he has maintained a stable employment history prior to the conviction, and because he is married and engaged in raising their young child"

Elsie Mary Moore - 2 counts armed robbery/two consecutive 5 year sentences/June 1975/(<one year)
"commutation of sentence to five years and five years concurrent because of her satisfactory adjustment, because her daughter requires her presence at home, because she had been instrumental in assisting federal agents solve numerous crimes as well as saving the lives of many federal undercover agents"

1977 - Governor Martin Schrieber - 21 clemencies granted

Eddie McGee - 1st deg. murder/life/July 1970/(<7 years)
"commutation of sentence to 50 years because he has been found to have terminal cancer, because the Parole Board recommended that his sentence be commuted, because of numerous letters of recommendation and because of his satisfactory institutional adjustment"

1978 - Governor Martin Schrieber - 39 out of 240 clemencies granted

Roger Sarinske - 1st deg. murder/life/Oct. 1976/(<2 years)
"commutation of sentence from a term of life to a term of 99 years because he has had no other convictions, because he has shown positive adjustment to incarceration, because the presiding judge at his trial recommends that executive clemency be granted"

1979 - Governor Lee Dreyfus - 5 out of 19 clemencies granted

No commutations

1980 - Governor Lee Dreyfus - 21 out of 68 clemencies granted

No commutations

1981 - Governor Lee Dreyfus - 34 out of 114 clemencies granted

George Michael Jones - 1st deg. murder/life/Jan. 1974/(<7 years)
"commutation of sentence to a term of fifty years because he has shown positive adjustment to incarceration, he has pursued his education and training, and he has completed his GED"

Earl Lewis Jr. - 1st deg. murder/life/June 1972/(<9 years)
"commutation of sentence from a term of life to a term of fifty years because he has shown positive adjustment to incarceration and his excellent work record"

Mathis Smith - att. murder and armed robbery/two consecutive 20 year terms/Nov. 1974/(<7 years)
"commutation of sentence because he has had no other convictions, and because of the facts surrounding the crimes and the extreme length of his sentence compared to the others involved"

Joseph Anthony Sorce - 2 counts att. 1st deg. murder/2 terms of 20 years consecutive/Jan. 1976/(<5 years)

"commutation of sentence from two consecutive terms of 20 years to two concurrent terms of 20 years because he has had no further convictions and because he has shown positive adjustment to incarceration"

Clayton Zembrowski - 1st deg. murder/life/Jan. 1970/(<11 years)

"commutation of sentence from a term of life to a term of 50 years because he has had no other convictions, he has shown positive adjustment to incarceration, because of his excellent institutional work record especially in the area of tailoring"

1982 - Governor Lee Dreyfus - 61 out of 215 clemencies granted

Kenneth John Martin - 1st deg. murder/life/June 1976/(<6 years)

"commutation of sentence to 50 years because he is remorseful, has adjusted well, because he has pursued training and developed courses in photography while incarcerated"

Terrence L. Neeley - "conspiring to commit first degree murder"/life/June 1976/(<6 years)

"commutation of sentence to a term of 30 years because he has had no other convictions; he has pursued his training; he has shown positive adjustment to incarceration; and because of the circumstances surrounding the offense"

Roger Sarinske - 1st deg. murder/life/Oct. 1976/(<6 years)

"His sentence was commuted to 99 years by Governor Schrieber. He was granted a commutation of sentence to 40 years because he has had no further offenses; he shown positive adjustment to incarceration; and because he has pursued his training"

Tarsh Lee Washington - 2 counts of armed robbery/ two concurrent 30 year terms and one consecutive 30 year term/Dec. 1973/(<9 years)

"commutation of all sentences to be concurrent rather than consecutive because he has had no other convictions; he has shown positive adjustment to incarceration; he has obtained a GED; and because of the harshness of his sentence"

1983 - Governor Tony Earl - 44 out of 191 clemencies granted

Larry Brothers - armed robbery/29 years, 9 months/Sept. 1975/(<8 years)

"commutation to 23 years, because of his excellent participation in prison programs, his efforts with Project Aware and his good conduct reports"

Charles F. Jackson - armed robbery/30 years/Sept. 1968/(<15 years)
"commutation to 30 years, because he has conducted himself well while incarcerated, is near completion of a college degree, and was a founder and director of Project Aware"
(this commutation may have occurred after he was released on parole)

Bradley J. Poth - 2nd deg. murder/20 years/July 1978/(<5 years)
"commutation to 15 years, because he has a record of excellent conduct while incarcerated, has been productively employed and has been active to improve his prison community"

Amos G. Spencer - 1st deg. murder/life/March 1976/(<9 years)
"commutation to 50 years, because he has no other criminal record, has had a good conduct report in prison and there existed in the view of the judge and district attorney extraordinary mitigating circumstances at the time of the offense"

1984 - Governor Tony Earl - 56 out of 186 clemencies granted

Vernell Bass - delivery of cocaine and heroin/2 years, 5 years, 10 years and 3 years, all consecutive/Feb. 1981/(<3 years)
"commutation making sentences concurrent, because he has strong family support and a reduction in sentence would enable him to benefit from drug treatment programs"

Floyd Crawford - forgery/8 years/Feb. 1983/(<one year)
"commutation, because he has a record of excellent conduct while incarcerated, has been productively employed, has no other criminal record, has good prospects for employment in a minimum security setting and a commutation will enable a transfer to a lesser security"

Ute Maley - 2nd deg. murder/10 years/June 1982/(<2 years)
"commutation, because she suffers from deteriorating health and she has a record of excellent conduct while incarcerated, has been productively employed, has no other criminal record"

Thomas H. Manning - two 1st deg. murder & one att. murder/two concurrent life sentences plus 30 years consecutive/March 1968/(<16 years)
"commutation to a term of 75 years each on the murder convictions and make them concurrent with the sentence for attempted murder, because he has a record of excellent conduct while incarcerated, has been productively employed, has no other criminal record"

John William Mazurkiewisz - four counts burglary and breaking and entering, operating a motor vehicle without owner's consent, resisting an officer/3 years each concurrent, 2 years consecutive and 6 months consecutive to a prior ten year sentence/May 1980/(<4 years)
"commutation, because he has a record of excellent conduct while incarcerated, has been productively employed, has no other criminal record"

Robert Neely - 1st deg. murder/life/Oct. 1976/(<8 years)
"commutation because he has a record of excellent conduct while incarcerated, has been productively employed, has no other criminal record"

Lionel Walker - 2 counts armed robbery/14½ years/February 1974 (<10 years)
"commutation, because he has a record of excellent conduct while incarcerated, has been productively employed, and has been active to improve his prison community"

Abdul Rasad Diaab - masked armed robbery/12 years/June 1975/(<9 years)
"commutation, because he has a record of excellent conduct while incarcerated, has been productively employed and has been active to improve his prison community and has been employed as a paralegal for the State Public Defender, aspires to a career in law, and wishes to move to Kansas to be reunited with his wife"
(it appears that this commutation was granted after release)

Woodrow Guiden - 1st deg. murder & armed robbery/life plus 25 years/Sept. 1975/(<9 years)
"commutation, because he has had a record of excellent conduct while incarcerated, has been productively employed and has been active to improve his prison community and he has participated in programs and groups dedicated to educating juveniles about crime and improving conditions for fellow prisoners"

1985 - Governor Tony Earl - 77 out of 224 clemencies granted

Joseph Lewis Cook - 1st deg. murder/life/Sept./1974/(<11 years)
"commutation of sentence to 22 years, because he has a record of good conduct while imprisoned, has been productively engaged, he has endeavored to make use of the opportunities for improvement offered, has no other criminal record and has severe health problems requiring treatment"
(resulted in immediate release from prison due to good time earned)

Jess Ford III - two 1st deg. murder, armed robbery, concealing identity/2 life sentences, 30 years consecutive & 5 years concurrent/ Feb. 1973/(<12 years)
"commutation of the two life sentences to 50 years each, concurrent, because he has a record of good conduct while imprisoned, has been productively engaged, strong support is demonstrated, and has no other criminal record"

James Lee Harris - 1st deg. murder, armed robbery/ life plus 25 years consecutive/April 1973/(<12 years)
"commutation of the life sentence to 50 years consecutive with the 25 year sentence, because he has a record of good conduct while imprisoned, has been productively engaged, has endeavored
(cont.)

to make use of opportunities for improvement offered, has no other criminal record, and has strong support from supervisors, professors and institution staff"

Bobby James Johnson - 1st deg. murder/life/Dec. 1972/(<13 years)
"commutation to 75 years, because he has a record of good conduct while imprisoned, has been productively engaged, has endeavored to make use of opportunities for improvement offered, has strong support from family, friends and teachers and has no other criminal record"

Noreen H. Kelly - 1st deg. murder/life/Oct. 1974/(<11 years)
"commutation to 50 years, because she has a record of good conduct while imprisoned, has been productively engaged, has endeavored to make use of opportunities for improvement offered, has no other criminal record, has good prospects for employment in a minimum security setting and a commutation will enable transfer to a less security"

Marvin Madden - two 1st deg. murder, armed robbery/two concurrent life sentences and 30 years consecutive/Sept. 1973/(<12 years)
"commutation of the life sentences to 50 years each, concurrent, because he has a record of good conduct while imprisoned, has been productively engaged, has endeavored to make use of opportunities for improvement offered, has strong support from supervisors and has no other criminal record"

John D. Rockefeller - 5 counts burglary, 4 counts theft, one count threat to a witness/9 years consecutive on each burglary, 10 years each concurrent on the thefts and 4 years concurrent on the threat to a witness charge/Dec. 1975/(<10 years)
"commutation of the two burglary counts to run concurrent, because he has a record of good conduct while imprisoned, has been productively engaged, has endeavored to make use of opportunities for improvement offered, has an employment offer with Carley Capital Group, has no other criminal record and sufficient time has passed since his conviction"
(it is not clear whether he was in prison at the time of commutation)

Kevin J Shelley - 1st deg. murder, armed burglary/life plus 20 years concurrent/Aug. 1977/(<8 years)
"commutation of life sentence to 50 years, because he has a record of good conduct while imprisoned, has been productively engaged, has endeavored to make use of opportunities for improvement offered, has strong support from institution staff and has no other criminal record"

Robert A. Stanelle - 1st deg. sexual assault/3 years/(<2 years)
"commutation to time served, because he has no other criminal record, and he needs a pardon to travel overseas where he can receive treatment for a deteriorating illness"

Joe Stinson - armed robbery/8 years/March 1982/(<3 years)
"commutation to 7 years and 6 months, conditional on his continued employment because he has a record of good conduct while imprisoned, has been productively engaged, has endeavored to make use of opportunities for improvement offered, has strong support from his employer, needs a reduction in his sentence in order to maintain his employment on work release"

James L. Turner - 1st deg. murder/life/Nov. 1972/(<13 years)
"commutation to 50 years, because he has a record of good conduct while imprisoned, has been productively engaged, has endeavored to make use of opportunities for improvement offered, has strong support from institution staff and has no other criminal record"

Myles Walter Marshall - 1st deg. murder/life/April 1976/(<9 years)
"commutation to 30 years, because he has much family support, is involved in religious groups, was instrumental in saving lives of hostages in a prison riot, has a record of good conduct while imprisoned, has been productively engaged, has endeavored to make use of the opportunities offered and has no other criminal record"

1986 - Governor Tony Earl - 51 out of 201 applications were granted

August Bergenthal - 1st deg murder/life/April 1969/(<17 years)
"sentenced to life imprisonment (commuted to 50 years in 1973) and in Milwaukee County of endangering safety regardless of life on 04/14/69 and sentenced to 5 years imprisonment, consecutive (commuted to 5 years concurrent in 1973) was granted a commutation of 20 years, 2 months and 15 days, because he has a significant job need and has made good progress, has no other criminal record and sufficient time has passed since his conviction."
(presumably granted after release from prison)

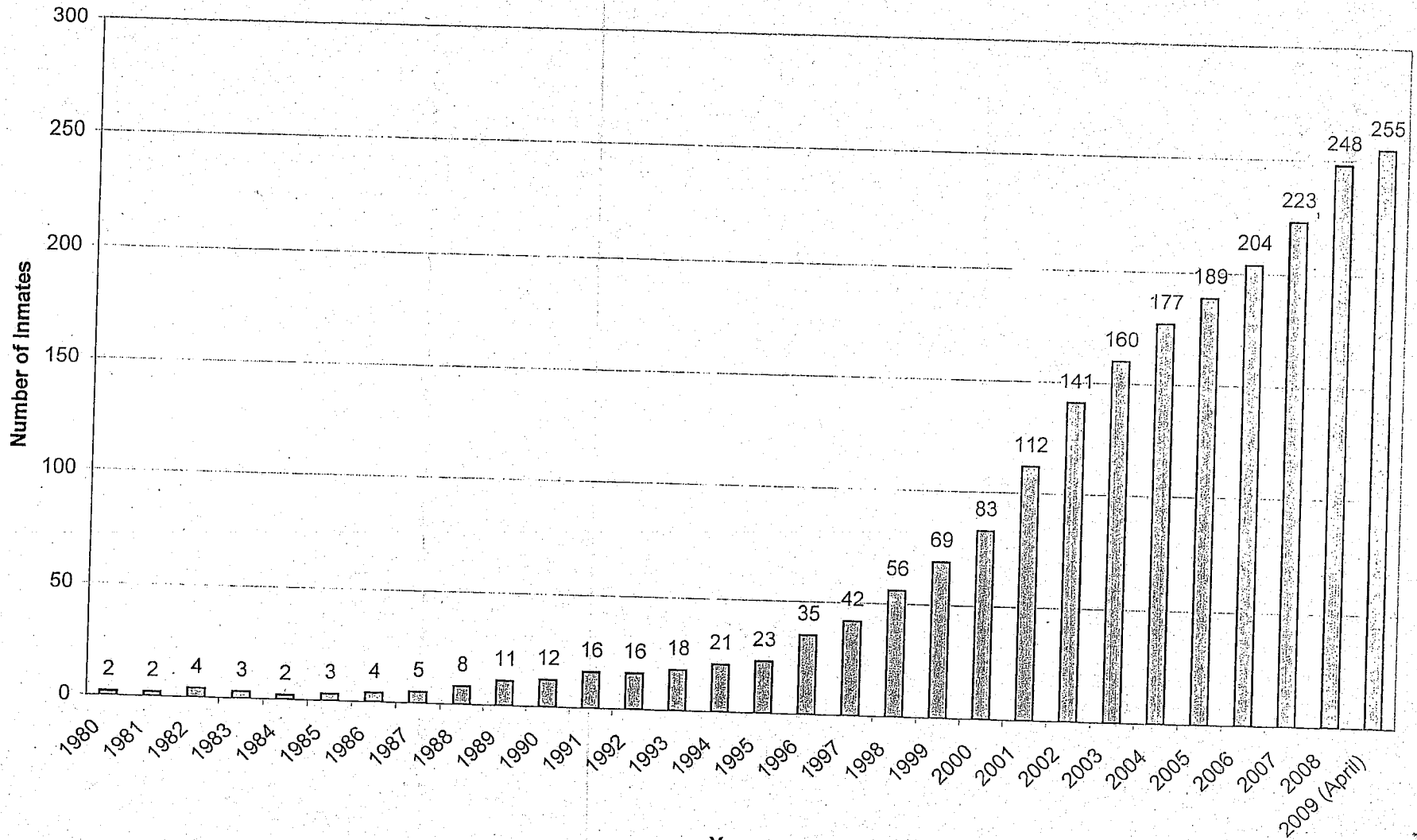
Robert C. Green - armed robbery/20 years consecutive to prior sentences/Dec. 1975/(<9 years)
"commutation to make sentences concurrent, because he has much support, has good institution adjustment, has no other criminal record and sufficient time has passed since his conviction."

Maurice Brann Pharr - 1st deg. murder/life/June 1978/(<8 years)
"commute to 75 years, because he wants to become eligible for drug and alcohol treatment, due to much support and high achievements, has no other criminal record and sufficient time has passed since his conviction"

Kevin J. Shelley - 1st deg. murder, armed burglary/life plus 20 years concurrent/Aug. 1977/(<9 years)
"commutation to 50 years, because of his significant progress, much support, remorse for the crime, he has no other criminal record and sufficient time has passed since his conviction."

Charlotte Wilkins - "convicted in Milwaukee County of 4 counts theft by fraud (PTAC) on 03/27/85 and sentenced to 4 years imprisonment on each count, concurrent (modified 2/27/86 from 5 years imprisonment on each count concurrent) and in Milwaukee County of 4 counts theft by fraud (PTAC) on 04/24/85 and sentenced to 1 count 4 years imprisonment, concurrent (modified 3/4/86 from 5 years imprisonment, concurrent), 1 count 2 years imprisonment, concurrent to each other and other sentences and 2 counts 7 years probation, concurrent to each other and consecutive to other sentences and \$8,780.25 restitution, and in Milwaukee County of one count theft by fraud (PTAC) on 04/24/85 and sentenced to 4 years probation, concurrent. Conditions: continue on methadone program and not to be discharged unless advised by prob. dept. was granted a pardon because she needs a pardon due to foster care requirement, has no other criminal record and sufficient time has passed since her conviction."
(<1 year; appears to have been granted a pardon while still in prison) (emphasis added)

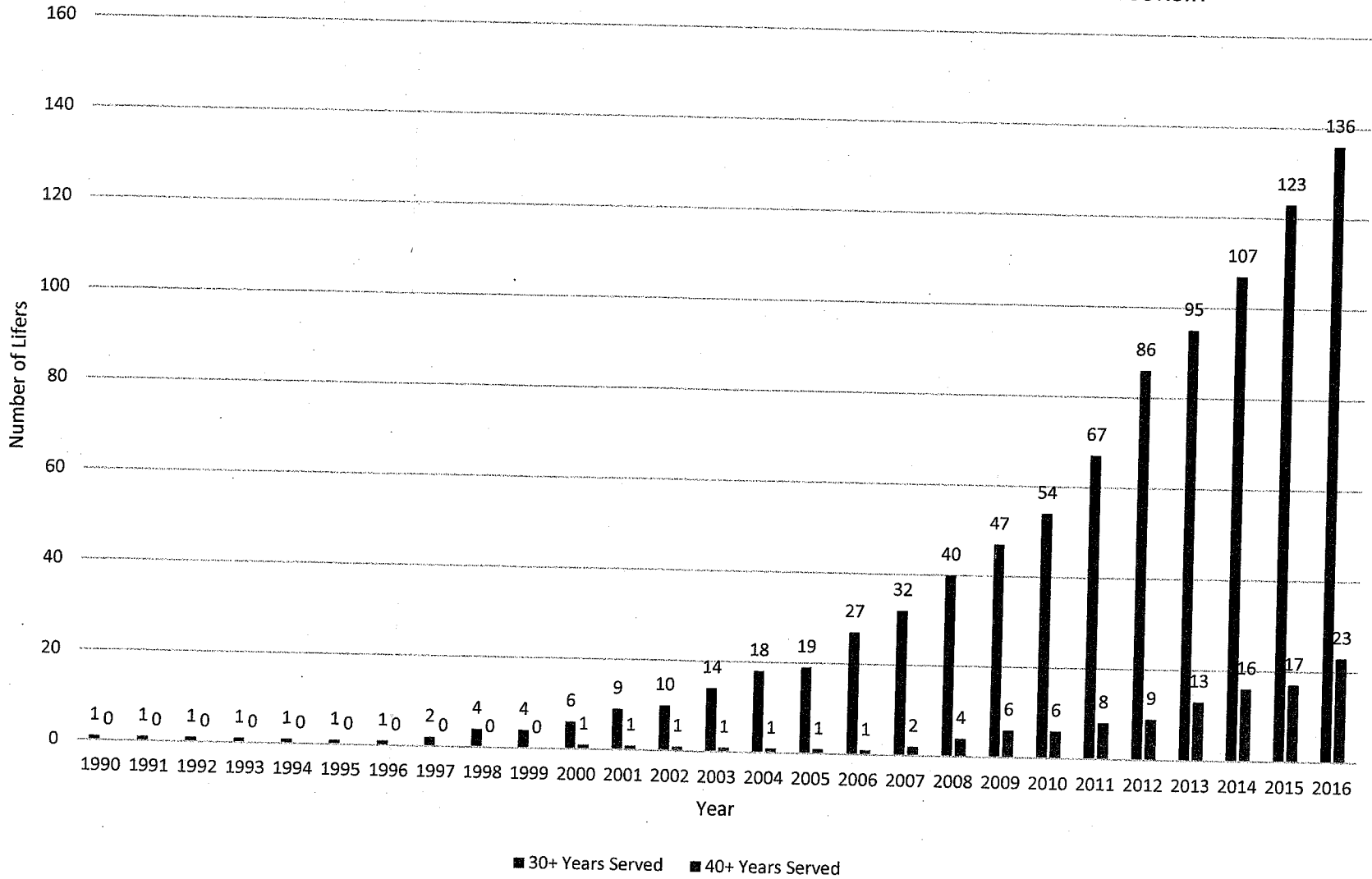
Number of Lifers with 20+ Consecutive Years Incarcerated



Years

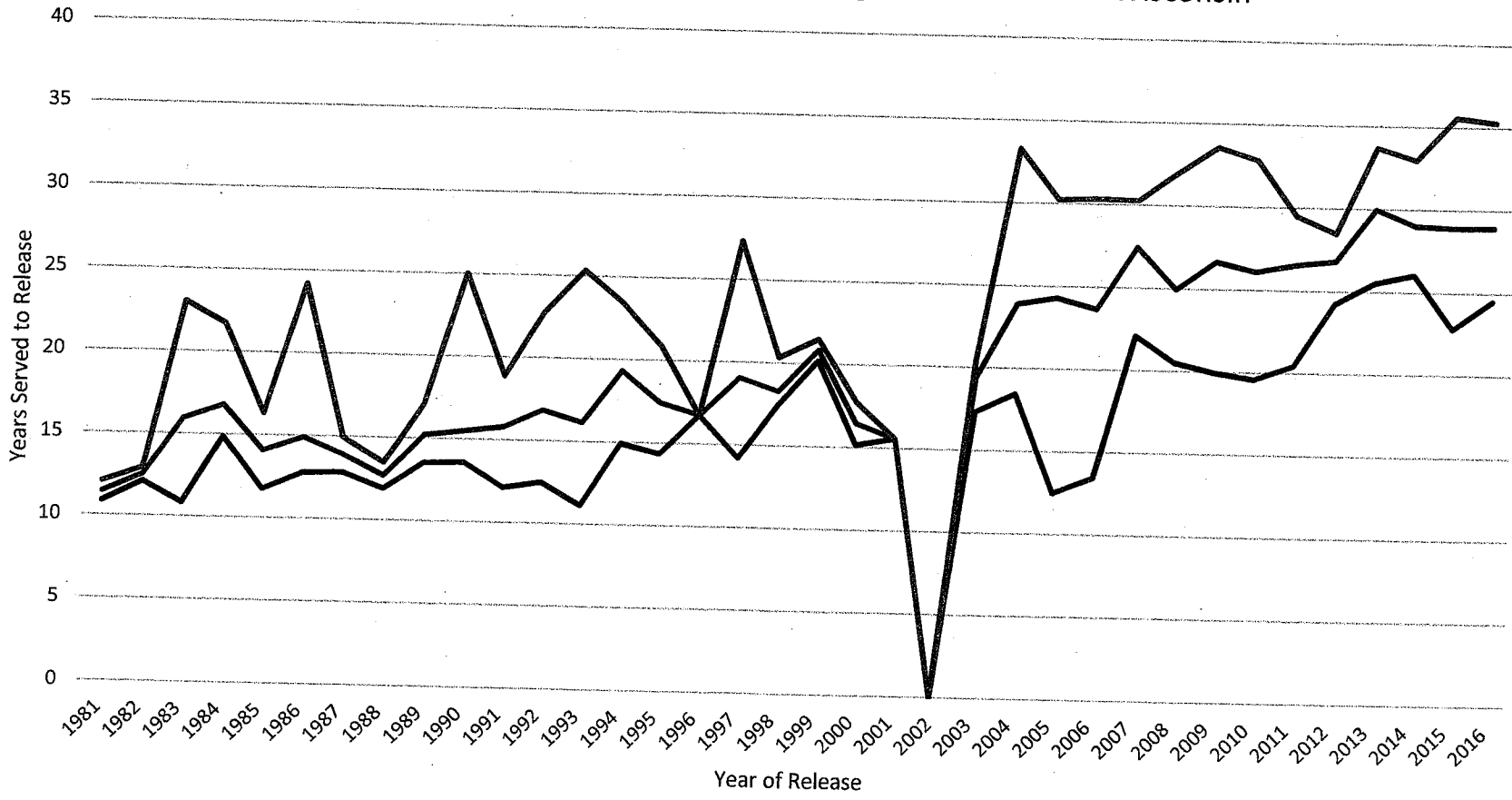
Data Compiled May 2009
Final Draft June 23, 2009
Data Compiled by Harlan Richards

Time Served by Persons with Life Sentences Who are Still Incarcerated in Wisconsin



Data compiled by Harlan Richards in May 2017 based on DOC Records

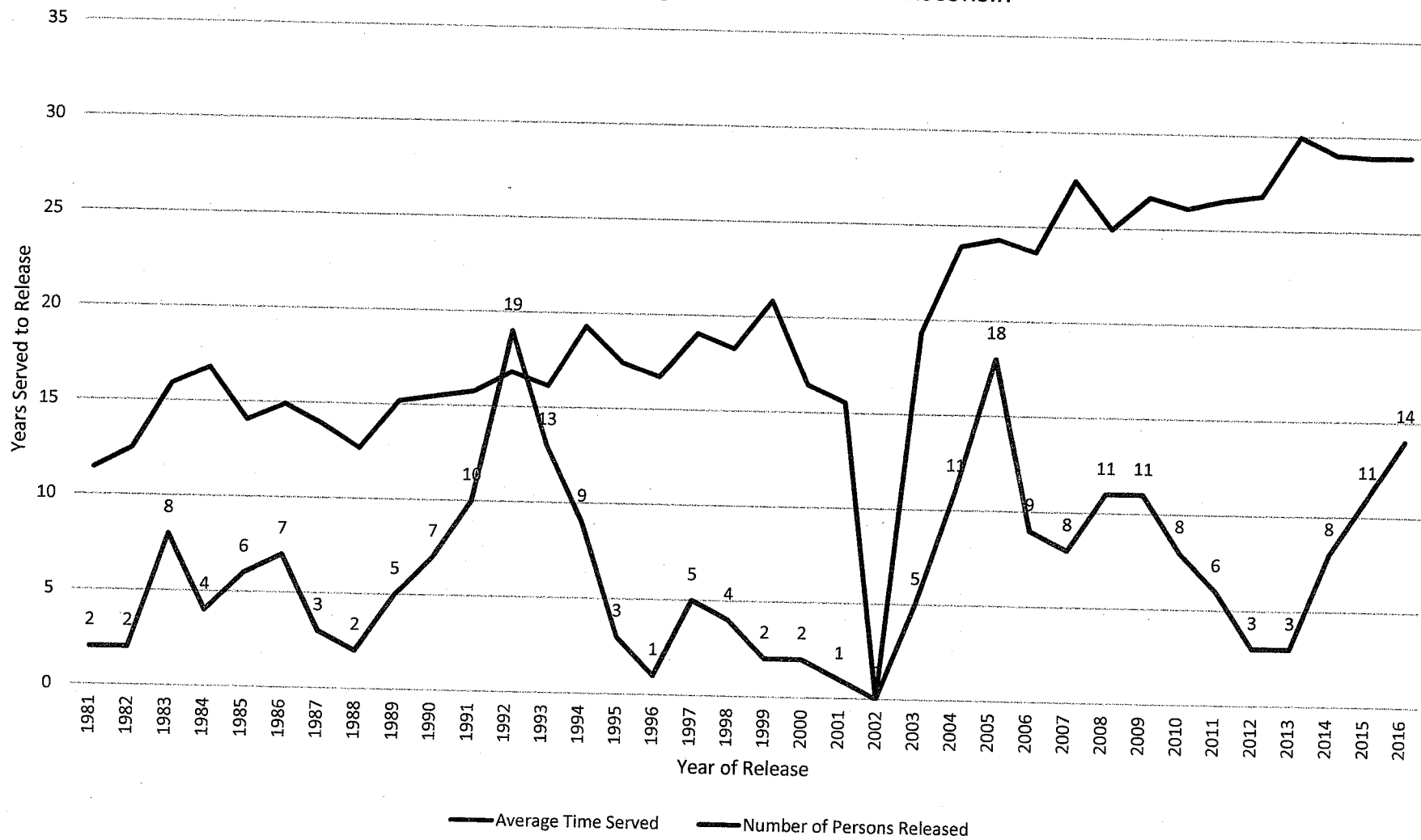
Time Served to Release for Persons Serving Life Sentences in Wisconsin



Average Time Served
 Minimum Time Served
 Maximum Time Served

Data compiled by Harlan Richards in May 2017 based on DOC Records

Average Time Served / Number of Persons Released for Persons Serving Life Sentences in Wisconsin



Data compiled by Harlan Richards in May 2017 based on DOC Records