



*Via email at [HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov](mailto:HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov)*

April 2, 2025

Rhode Island General Assembly  
House Committee on Judiciary  
State House  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

To the Honorable Chair Robert E. Craven, Esq. and the Honorable Judiciary Committee Members:

I am writing in full support of **House Bill #H5180, An Act Relating to Criminals-- Correctional Institutions—Parole**. By way of introduction, I am a lawyer in private practice in Providence, Rhode Island. Prior to going into private practice, I served on the Rhode Island Parole Board for thirteen years, of which I was Chairperson for eleven years.

During my tenure on the Board, I deliberated with my fellow Board Members on thousands of parole release considerations. It was my policy as Chairperson, to encourage members to express their rationale for their personal vote on cases. I encouraged Members to dissent when they felt strongly for or against discretionary release. Deliberations between the Members were robust and fulsome. It was extremely important that the Board Members had diverse backgrounds and could look at each case with the lens of their personal background, education and experiences.

In October of 2021, Mr. Peter Slom was appointed to the Parole Board as a public member. As a formerly incarcerated individual and social worker, Peter provided a unique and meaningful perspective to the Parole Board. I have represented individuals before the Parole Board while Peter was a Board Member. While I cannot attest to his contributions to the deliberation process, as that is done in Executive Session, it was abundantly clear to me from his questioning of my clients, that his experiences as a justice involved individual provided a perspective that other Members did not have. His questions were oftentimes related to institutional behaviors and the challenges of incarceration. Unfortunately for the State, Mr. Slom has decided to end his public service on the Board.

Upon hearing of Mr. Slom's departure, I recognized that the Board would be missing the critical perspective that he brought to the Board. He will leave a substantial void on the diversity on the Board. of The passage of H5180, would mandate that one of the Board Members be a formerly incarcerated individual or a person directly impacted by the criminal justice system. In addition, the Member would have a background in psychology, mental health and/or substance use, transitional housing, re-entry after incarceration, education or law.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of my position.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa S. Holley

Lisa S. Holley, Esq.