

Rhode Island Judiciary House Committee
Bill#: H5180
AN ACT RELATING TO CRIMINALS -- CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS --
PAROLE {LC619/1}
April 4, 2025
Support

Dear Rhode Island Judiciary House Committee Members,

I am writing in **support** of **Bill # H5180, Bill Title: AN ACT RELATING TO CRIMINALS - - CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS --PAROLE** that would require one elector of the parole board to be a person directly impacted by the criminal justice system who has completed the probation/parole process three (3) or more year prior to selection with a professional background in certain enumerated areas.

My name is Samantha McEnaney and I am a student in the Masters of Social Work program at Rhode Island College.

As someone who has a close family member who has been involved in the criminal justice system for almost ten years, I support Bill # **H5180**. As a close family member to an incarcerated individual, you have more insight on what it is like to be institutionalized. You come to understand that while incarcerated, you aren't living by the rules of the outside world. And more importantly, you learn that reintegrating into society is the scariest part of the process. You don't know whether that individual is really going to try and do better, or if they will fall back into old patterns.

I say this to highlight the importance of having someone on the parole board who knows what it looks like when someone is ready for change. Being institutionalized and then having to navigate addiction and reintegration into society is something that only someone with lived experience can truly understand.

Having a member of the parole board that can make a more informed and compassionate decision ensures a fair decision for incarcerated individuals and promotes a safer society.

For these reasons, I urge you to vote in favor of bill H5180.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Samantha McEnaney