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To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: Support of HB5180

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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 Arianna Mimande and I am a Masters of Social Work student at Rhode Island College. A core value of social work is social justice. Currently, Rhode Island has the second highest probation rate in the nation. I support Bill # H5180 because it is based in social justice as it seeks to reform the state's parole board by incorporating perspectives from individuals directly impacted by the criminal justice system. By including a member of the parole board who has been formerly incarcerated or directly impacted by the criminal justice system, HB5180 aims to bring diverse perspectives to the parole board, promoting fairness and equity in their decisions. This initiative aligns with broader social justice efforts to ensure that systems of governance and decision-making are inclusive and representative of the communities they serve.

Rhode Island's HB5180 impacts me and my community in numerous ways. It promotes fairness in parole board decisions, with greater understanding of rehabilitation, reentry challenges, and systemic barriers that the incarcerated or formerly incarcerated population face. This bill enhances trust in the Justice System, helping to rebuild public confidence in the system by making it more representative of the community. HB5180 encourages lower recidivism and successful reintegration into society for parolees, improving community stability and participation in the economy with reduction in reliance on public assistance programs.

This bill is a step toward addressing historical injustices in the criminal justice system, particularly for marginalized communities that are disproportionately incarcerated. It aligns with broader social justice efforts to give formerly incarcerated individuals a voice in shaping policies that affect them, as well as addressing Rhode Island's high probation rate.

For the reasons stated above, I strongly urge this committee to support Bill # HB5180, Bill Title: AN ACT RELATING TO CRIMINALS -- CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS – PAROLE {LC619/1}. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Arianna Mimande