

From: sbleaf@aol.com
To: [Public Affairs](#)
Subject: [External] Attention: Public Affairs – Priorities Comment
Date: Monday, October 17, 2022 8:22:09 PM

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Dear Sentencing Commission Members, thank you for the opportunity to offer commentary on the United States Sentencing Commission's possible policy priorities for the amendment cycle ending May 1, 2023.

As an impacted family member whose son is currently in custody serving a 15 federal year mandatory minimum, it is reassuring to know that the Commission is now fully staffed and able to wholly focus on its mission. My concern is focused on the parts of the Commission's mission pertaining to continuously establishing and amending federal sentencing guidelines for the judicial branch and assisting other branches in developing effective and efficient crime policy as it pertains to all statutes that fall under Child Pornography (CP) and sexual offenses. I hope my input will encourage the USSC to reform existing sentencing guidelines for those convicted of these types of offenses using empirical evidence and facts, resulting in meaningful changes to current laws in sentencing, custody, and registries, spur the introduction and passage of practical, effective future legislation, and inspire significant much needed prison oversight and reform.

The fact that most of the people incarcerated due to a sexual offense are excluded from the First Step Act is deeply concerning to me, especially considering the low recidivism rates for sexual offenses and the large number of those who are first time offenders with no criminal history. Knowing the mass incarceration issue the United States faces, it seems logical to find ways to reduce the amount of people incarcerated by providing avenues for all to work towards. Excluding some from working towards credits to be released early sends the message that this population is not worthy of these credits, and discounts the desire for many to rehabilitate. As you forge ahead in determining priorities and have thoughtful discussion, there are many families looking to the commission for non-partisan recommendations and leadership. The commission members should evaluate, using its own statistics, to make recommendations on this exclusion.

Impacted families like mine, look to the Commission for leadership to revise and recommend realistic sentencing guidelines which keep up with changes to technology. We are counting on your non-partisan reach to communicate to judges and both parties in Congress the need to enact common sense legislation based on recidivism rates and statistics like the Commission's own research, not fear and hysteria from incendiary comments, such as "frightening and high" recidivism rates, based on discredited research. Please make it a priority to address the many problems in our current judicial/prison system for all aspects of sexual offense laws.

Thank you for your time it is greatly appreciated. If you should need further information please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shawn Barrera-Leaf

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