

**Washington State Criminal Sentencing Task Force**  
**Meeting Summary: November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020 | 8:45am-3:00pm**  
 Virtual Meeting via ZOOM

**Task Force Members & Alternates Attendees:**

- Nick Allen
- DeVitta Briscoe (alt. for Martina Kartman)
- Russ Brown (alt. for Jon Tunheim)
- Chief Gregory Cobb
- Sarai Cook (alt. for Tarra Simmons)
- Suzanne Cook
- Lew Cox
- Sen. Manka Dhingra
- Judge Veronica Galvan
- Rep. Roger Goodman, Co-Chair
- Keri-Anne Jetzer (alt. for Judge Rumbaugh)
- Martina Kartman
- Gregory Link
- Mac Pevey (alt. for Sec. Sinclair)
- Chris Poulos
- Judge Stanley Rumbaugh
- Judge Roger Rogoff
- Sec. Stephen Sinclair
- Melody Simle (alt. for Suzanne Cook)
- Tarra Simmons
- Clela Steelhammer
- Nick Straley (alt. for Nick Allen)
- Jon Tunheim, Co-Chair
- Judge Josephine Wiggs-Martin
- Councilmember Derek Young

**Additional Participants:**

- Anthony Blankenship
- Carl Filler
- Bruce G.
- Carolyn Gray
- Omeara Harrington
- Jaime Hawk
- Cynthia Hollimon
- Lauren Knoth
- Kelly Leonard
- Noreen May Light
- James McMachan
- Joanne Smieja
- Matt Tremble
- David Trieweiler
- Kehaulani Walker

**Facilitation Team:** Amanda Murphy, Chris Page, Molly Stenovec, Hannah Kennedy, Maggie Counihan – William D. Ruckelshaus Center

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**MEETING GOALS:** • Check-ins and updates from members • Continue consensus deliberations on recommendations for inclusion in 2020 Report

**WELCOME, AGENDA REVIEW and GROUND RULES**

Amanda welcomed Task Force members, alternates, and guests and reminded participants of the recording of the meeting for TVW. She noted the Task Force will be having consensus deliberations on recommendations and that the meeting time had been extended until 3pm. Chris reminded the group of selected ground rules.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Task Force members and alternates introduced themselves and shared organizational affiliations and the constituencies they represent on the Task Force. Judge Josephine Wiggs-Martin, new member (replacing Judge Rogoff in representing the Superior Court Judges’ Association of WA) provide a brief self-introduction. Amanda and Chris reminded observers to send questions for the Task Force to the facilitation team or save them for the time reserved at the end of the meeting for questions.

**CO-CHAIR UPDATES**

Rep. Goodman acknowledged the hard work of the Task Force members and facilitation team and encouraged members to have patience with the process (even into 2021), even if the group does not reach consensus at the meeting.

**FACILITATION TEAM UPDATES**

The facilitation team hopes to have the Task Force complete consensus deliberations by the December 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Amanda shared the draft timeline for the final report, congratulating the Task Force on reaching consensus on 14 recommendations thus far.

**CONSENSUS DELIBERATIONS**

Amanda and Chris read the recommendations and how they met the goals of the Task Force. Members and alternates if their member were not present- were asked to indicate if they support, can live with it, or cannot live with each recommendation up for consensus.

**Potential Recommendation #9:** Request the SGC to develop a proposal to move all statutes associated with felony criminal penalties from Chapter 69.50 RCW to Chapter 9.94A RCW. At a minimum, this proposal should also include:

- a review of drug sentences and recommendations to reduce reliance on punitive sanctions and restructure outcomes to prioritize a therapeutic model for associated drug offenses.
- a review of reforms to reduce or eliminate criminal penalties for problematic drug use, particularly felony possession.

**Deliberations:**

- A member said they believed the second bullet point looks like a backdoor to legalize felony drug possession, which they cannot support
- Another member said the current system incarcerates too many people and that if the Task Force cannot reach consensus on the second bullet, they find that troubling.
- This recommendation would not bring full decriminalization and would focus on use and possession.
- The potential recommendation does not call for a specific policy, just a review.
- Would removing the word 'eliminate' allow people to live with the recommendation?
- The Task Force discussed the review of reforms, with some members stating a review does not lead to any necessary conclusions or outcomes and others opining that the recommendation's wording makes felony decriminalization a foregone conclusion.
- A member observed that one of the main goals the Task Force has discussed was addressing disproportionality said we cannot depend on human discretion for that.
- Incarceration is the only compelled method to address drug addiction, but other models exist. It is not a criminal issue but a public health issue.
- A member noted that to them, what stands out is "problematic drug use," commenting that "We're all going to feel safer if individuals with problematic drug use have access to treatment and alternatives other than incarceration."
- Suggestion: have the recommendation read "a review to include: but not limited to..."
- A member suggested continuing to work on the recommendation even if no consensus is reached and suggested pulling the two subpoints apart to try for consensus.

**Note from Task Force Consensus Deliberation:** The Task Force was not in consensus on including the following statement as a second bullet in the recommendation: "This proposal should also include a review of reforms to reduce or eliminate criminal penalties for problematic drug use, particularly felony possession".

Members agreed that consolidating criminal statutes from the Uniform Controlled Substance Act (i.e., Chapter 69.50 RCW) into the Sentencing Reform Act (Chapter 9.94A RCW) would meet the Task Force's goal to reduce complexity and errors in the sentencing system. Members also broadly agreed that as part of the SGC's consolidation proposal there be a review of reforms to the State's criminal drug penalties. The WASPC expressed concern with the wording of a second bullet of the recommendation and would not be in support if the review only looked or was specifically meant to achieve the outcome to "reduce or eliminate criminal penalties for problematic drug use". WASPC supported removing the second bullet and if others could not support that, then to remove the word "eliminate" from the second bullet. A number of members were not able to live with the removal of the second bullet nor with changing the wording of the second bullet, stating that it was important that the Task Force agree that the state's current approach to problematic drug use is not working. The Task Force was not able to reach consensus on the second bullet.

*2020 Task Force Meeting Summaries to reference for additional context: Aug 6<sup>th</sup> and Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>*

**Potential Recommendation #10:** Request the SGC to develop a proposal to consolidate all statutes associated with felony criminal penalties into Chapter 9.94A RCW.

Consensus agreement reached.

**Potential Recommendation #11:** Encourage court systems that coordinate or are compatible to adopt a unified filing system.

Consensus agreement reached.

- Several members, particularly the Judges, emphasized that their support for this recommendation hinged on the modified, softer language that did not mandate any filing system changes.

**Potential Recommendation #12:**

**12.1** Modify statute to increase the occasions when PSIs can be requested by Superior Court judges. (*\*\*New PSI - As of January 2021\*\* "Unless specifically waived by the court, the court shall order the department to complete a presentence investigation before imposing a drug offender sentencing alternative upon a defendant who has been convicted of a felony offense where domestic violence has been pleaded and proven."*)

**12.2** PSIs should be made available earlier in the court process instead of at sentencing.

**12.3** Relocate the duty to complete PSIs from DOC to a state-funded unit within the Superior Court. Court should work with all PSI stakeholders to reduce differences among forms and make the form inclusive to the needs of all stakeholders.

**12.4** Increase cultural competency of persons conducting PSIs to reduce disproportionality, reduce subjective language, and collect as much relevant information as possible from persons of different cultures.

**12.5** Remove the sentencing recommendation portion from the PSI form.

**12.6** Review approaches and tools in PSI risk assessment and recommend ways to make risk assessment information uniform, accurate, and consistent, and address potential bias and/or disparities and predictability.

**Deliberations:**

- A member asked for clarity on 12.1, wondering what the benefit would be of starting early and using a resource if the accused may ultimately be found innocent.
- One members main concern is the fiscal note.
- Another member asked if 12.2 needs to be a part of the recommendation. Broader than PSI- acknowledges the principle that more information leads to better outcomes and such info should be collected throughout the process.
- It was noted that at the SGC, Judges really advocated for 12.2.
- A member suggested removing 12.2 from the recommendation.

- Alternative language was suggested for 12.2.

Consensus agreement reached. New language under 12.2 is underlined below.

**12.1** Modify statute to increase the occasions when PSIs can be requested by Superior Court judges. (*\*\*New PSI - As of January 2021\*\* “Unless specifically waived by the court, the court shall order the department to complete a presentence investigation before imposing a drug offender sentencing alternative upon a defendant who has been convicted of a felony offense where domestic violence has been pleaded and proven.”*)

**12.2** More information earlier in the process allows for better tracking and would help judges sentence appropriately.

**12.3** Relocate the duty to complete PSIs from DOC to a state-funded unit within the Superior Court. Court should work with all PSI stakeholders to reduce differences among forms and make the form inclusive to the needs of all stakeholders.

**12.4** Increase cultural competency of persons conducting PSIs to reduce disproportionality, reduce subjective language, and collect as much relevant information as possible from persons of different cultures.

**12.5** Remove the sentencing recommendation portion from the PSI form.

**12.6** Review approaches and tools in PSI risk assessment and recommend ways to make risk assessment information uniform, accurate, and consistent, and address potential bias and/or disparities and predictability

**Task Force Input:** *Budget climate makes a state-funded unit challenging.*

**Potential Recommendation #13:** Increase earned early release time (EERT) to a minimum of 33% for all crimes and enhancements and increase earned early release time 50% for some crimes and apply changes retroactively.

**Deliberations:**

- A member would like to see the sentencing grid be redone with the intent to reduce sentence lengths.
- A member noted the challenging nature of computing sentences because of enhancements.
- Earned early release time helps DOC manage their population and that amending sentencing lengths should be addressed via the grid.
- Members discussed varying percentage levels of earned time, with some wondering if they could reach consensus on a specific percentage.
- Lauren Knoth shared the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) report on the effect of increasing EERT from 33% to 50%, she noting a relatively small overall EERT reduction (avg. ~63 days); those that had greater EERT had lower recidivism rates compared to those who stayed in prison longer. The WSIPP report also contains a Cost-Benefit analysis.
- A member proposed the percentage levels of 15% for serious violent crimes and 33% for all other crimes.
- The group discussed sending the recommendation back to the grid subgroup for more work.
- Members discussed making a new recommendation about enhancements and making them eligible for earned early release and partial confinement and it was noted this would reduce complexity for DOC.

Members agreed to have the grid subgroup work on recommendation #13 and bring it back to discuss with the Task Force on 12/3.

During the above deliberations, the Task Force identified a new, related, stand-alone recommendation:

**New recommendation #TBD:** Make enhancements eligible for earned early release and partial confinement.

Consensus agreement reached.

**Potential Recommendation #15:** Eliminate the protected zone enhancement (RCW 69.50.435).

**Q:** A member asked what the length of time the enhancement is. **R:** 24 months

**Deliberations:**

- A member expressed concern about dealing drugs to minors and suggested enhancing the penalties, if the data shows the enhancement is not effective, or making it an aggravating factor.
- There is already a different statute that addresses the behavior and crime. If it became an aggravating factor, it would not get around a plea bargain.
- A member opined that the sentencing ranges currently in statute are sufficient and that the enhancement has been relied upon too much.

Consensus agreement reached.

**Potential Recommendation #16:** Firearm and Deadly Weapon Enhancements:

**Prospective and Partially Retroactive (Earned Early Release)**

- **Eliminates mandatory stacking of firearm and deadly weapon enhancements going forward (prospective only).** Specifically, provides that multiple firearm or deadly weapon enhancements imposed for offenses (occurring after the effective date of the act) are to be served concurrently, unless the court orders the enhancements to be served consecutively, using judicial discretion.
- **Eliminates the requirement for firearm and deadly weapon enhancements to be served in total confinement (prospective and retroactive),** thereby subjecting that portion of a sentence to the general restrictions and requirements on confinement options.
- **Eliminates the restriction on earned early release time for firearm and deadly weapon enhancements (prospective and retroactive).** Allows the Department of Corrections to implement the retroactive application of these changes for those currently incarcerated over a six-month period.
- **Would allow incarcerated individuals or prosecutors to petition for “de-stacking” where inordinately long sentences were given, requiring Legislative funding for the involved parties to deal with resentencing.**

Consensus agreement reached.

**Potential Recommendation #17:** Eliminate the street gang enhancement (RCW 9.94A.533(10)(a)).

Consensus agreement reached.

**Potential Recommendation #19:** Move crime of “failure to register as a sex offender” to a non-sex offense.

**Deliberations:**

- A member expressed concern that this would create a loophole: if someone fails to register and that failure doesn’t get classified as a sex offense, someone could petition to not have to register and they never commit another sex offense they could have that petition approved, having never followed the law.
- Members discussed that this is an administrative violation and not a new sex offense. They also noted that it disproportionately affects individuals with housing instability and mental illness.
- Failure to register is still a criminal charge that individuals who are not registering can be charged with, but that it is just simply not a sex crime.

Consensus agreement reached.

**Potential Recommendation #35:** Expand the opportunity for victims to be informed at the time of sentencing about the existence of the Facilitated Dialogue process and their right to request such a meeting if that would aid in their healing. Allow community-based organizations to facilitate dialogue processes when a person is incarcerated in a local jail, on work release, on community supervision or living in the community. Expansion of dialogues would require that:

1. The court of conviction will automatically is encouraged to modify no contact orders to allow for a one-time facilitated meeting and/or the delivery of a letter which, if the person is under DOC supervision or total

confinement, has been processed through the DOC Accountability Letter Bank and notifies Department of Corrections and DOC automatically temporarily lift prohibited contact order for the discrete purpose of restorative justice dialogue at a survivor's request; The name and credentials of the individual(s) facilitating the dialogue will be specified in the motion.

2. A request to modify a no contact order or condition on a Judgment and Sentence should only be made by a victim or a victim advocate after consultation with a victim. A victim should never be approached on behalf of the person who offended against them. All VOD processes should only be initiated at the request of the victim.

3. Provide resources and facilitation training/capacity building for community-based organizations to facilitate these processes through coordination with the Department of Corrections or local jurisdictions. Develop a system of oversight to assure that facilitators are adequately trained in domestic violence and familial sexual assault dynamics, victim sensitivity and specific Victim/Offender Dialogue Facilitation.

Consensus agreement reached.

**Potential Recommendation #38:** Support DOC programs and policy changes that increase opportunities and accessibility for family engagement, when appropriate, during reentry planning.

Consensus agreement reached.

**Potential Recommendation #39:** Amend RCW 72.09.270(8)(a) related to County of Origin to allow: In circumstances where there will not be adverse impacts to victims or survivors, increase DOC's ability to consider factors that will increase opportunities for successful reentry and long-term support (e.g., proximity to programs, resources, family and pro-social relationships, housing, employment, etc.) when determining release locations.

**Deliberations:**

- A member shared background of the statute and how it impacts Pierce County and asked that DOC consider the net impact on different areas. If Pierce County does not want to have everyone end up simply because of housing available for individuals leaving prison.
- A member note this (County of Origin) presents one of the main barriers to successful reentry. Individuals should get released to communities where they have the best chance of success.
- A member expressed support for DOC and asked that any language changes in statute are helpful to them.
- Suggestion: add language "ensure no county gets disproportionately impacted."

Consensus agreement reached with added language (in italics below).

Amend RCW 72.09.270(8)(a) related to County of Origin (*defined in RCW 72.09.270(8)(c): the individual's county of origin means the county of the person's first felony conviction in Washington*) to allow: In circumstances where there will not be adverse impacts to victims or survivors, increase DOC's ability to consider factors that will increase opportunities for successful reentry and long-term support (e.g., proximity to programs, resources, family and pro-social relationships, housing, employment, etc.) when determining release locations. *It will be important to ensure no county gets disproportionately impacted.*

**Potential Recommendation #40:** Support policy changes and establishment of criteria that allow individuals to maintain engagement with faith leaders, mentors, and/or volunteers following release.

Consensus agreement reached.

**Potential Recommendation #41:** Continue to provide resources for the Statewide Reentry Council and the Departments of Commerce and Corrections to partner with community organizations that provide reentry services, mentorship, and credible messaging to individuals prior, during, and following release. Prioritize

support to organizations that employ people with lived experience (alternate wording: Prioritize support to organizations and approaches shown to produce good outcomes).

Consensus agreement reached.

**Potential Recommendation #42:** Increase the delivery of and access to (both while individuals are incarcerated and on supervision) vocational/educational programming that has been proven effective at promoting successful reentry and connecting individuals with employment opportunities upon release. Specifically:

- Support the development of a program delivery action plan among Department of Corrections, Reentry Council, Department of Commerce, and other entities delivering vocational/ educational programming such as the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) and Statewide Board of Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) providing education for current and formerly incarcerated persons.
- Increase funding to support the capacity and infrastructure needed to increase accessibility for vocational training and education within DOC facilities and jails.
- Provide the necessary funding to increase the delivery and access to advanced trade/job skills training programs such as the Trades-Related Apprenticeship Coaching (TRAC) and higher education.
- Support connections to employment opportunities.

Consensus agreement reached.

**Potential Recommendation #43:** Provide resources in an equitable manner to DOC and community-based organizations to continue and expand comprehensive and individualized reentry planning. This includes:

- Planning for incarceration period and reentry;
- Treatment for substance addictions and/or mental health services, if applicable;
- Appropriate sequencing of programs and training;
- Funding to support the ability of community organizations to help facilitate successful reentry programs. For example, the Depts. of Corrections and Commerce and the Reentry Council are currently administering grants to community organizations such as DADS, Tacoma Urban League, House of Mercy, Freedom Project, and Revive Reentry. These grants provide for the basic needs of people exiting, or who have recently exited correctional facilities, including but not limited to: housing, transportation, cell phone, groceries; and
- Opportunities for engagement with family and community-based organizations (if appropriate).

Consensus agreement reached.

**Potential Recommendation #44:** Support current and ongoing efforts to develop incentives for businesses and organizations that hire formerly incarcerated individuals, including but not limited to those who complete vocational/ educational programming while incarcerated.

Consensus agreement reached.

**Potential Recommendation #45:** Support efforts to address housing concerns for individuals impacted by the criminal justice system. This includes:

- Legislative efforts to address landlord practices that exclude individuals with any arrest record or conviction record from rental housing.
- Current and ongoing efforts (among DOC, Reentry Council, Dept. of Commerce) to increase access to safe, affordable, and quality housing options for individuals upon reentry.
- Developing incentives for reentry housing providers and landlords.
- Providing housing assistance and continuing support of DOC's temporary housing program.
- Increasing opportunities for vacant buildings, units, or public land to be developed into reentry housing.
- Establishing performance-based criteria for contracts with reentry housing providers.

Consensus agreement reached.

**NEXT STEPS**

The next meeting is November 19<sup>th</sup> from 8:45am-3pm.

**QUESTIONS FROM OBSERVERS**

An observer shared a letter from the Stafford Creek Chapter of the Black Prisoners Caucus, expressing support for the expansion of earned early release time. *(See supporting materials section for a copy of the letter)*

**ADJOURN**



**SUPPORTING MATERIALS: Statement from the Black Prisoners Caucus Stafford Creek Chapter to the Criminal Sentencing Task Force**

As directly impacted people we, the Black Prisoners Caucus Stafford Creek Chapter, support an increase of earned release time that would allow good time to be earned on an entire sentence. Including on enhancements that would be consistent to the rate of earned time allowed for the underlying sentence of an incarcerated individual. However, we oppose the current proposal as it does not meaningfully address the racial disproportionalities that exist within the criminal justice system and the Department of Corrections' goal of permanently reducing the prison population.

This proposed bill which would amend RCW 9.94A.729 in order to increase the allowable amount of earned time on certain offenses not classified as a violent, sex, or crime against a person from 33% to 50% does not go far enough and is further evidence that the goal of permanently reducing the prison population and addressing the harms of racially biased policies is apparently a nominal aspiration. In addition to the minimal cost savings benefits and the ambiguity as to whether the term "earned time" is being used interchangeably with "good time," this proposal also serves to further complicate a sentencing calculation system that has already proven to be flawed.

We propose retroactively increasing allowable earned time on the entire sentence (which would include enhancements) for offenses classified from serious violent down to non-violent. As well as the eliminating of mandatory stacking of subsequent enhancements. This not only simplifies the sentencing calculation process but works in conjunction with the Department of Corrections expressed goals of reducing the prison population and saving money by releasing individuals with the lowest risk to reoffend that have earned time for good behavior and positive programming.

For offenses that already receive 33% allowable earned time, we propose an increase to 50%. For offenses which currently receive 10%, [we] propose an increase of allowable earned time to 33%. These proposed increases serve the interest of reducing the prison population and saving the state significant money while centering racial equity by including an increase for offenses that disproportionately impact people of color and that have the lowest recidivism rates. According [to the] 2019 Adult General Disproportionality Report those who make up the incarcerated population set to benefit from the DOC's proposal are those with some of the highest recidivism rates and are not those who are as significantly harmed by the disproportionalities resulting from institutional racism. Not to mention that the Sentencing Guidelines Commission already has recommended that all enhancements should be eligible for good time as applied to the underlying sentence and unanimously recommends that the mandatory stacking of subsequent enhancements should be eliminated.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration!

*The Black Prisoners Caucus Stafford Creek Chapter*

**SUPPORTING MATERIALS: Letter to Outside Community and Advocates**

Dear Outside Community and Advocates:

Thanks to everyone for the time, energy, and effort you've devoted to passing legislation to bring us home. We are grateful and know that we couldn't make *anything* happen without your support.

Since we are approaching the next legislative session, those of us on the inside feel it's important

to share our vision, stance, and guiding principles with all of you.

Throughout the years, people working on criminal justice reform in the communities have requested that those living inside express their views about the type of legislation *we* want to see. Last year, in one of the parole coalition meetings, the point was made that we need to step up and lead the work, rather than rely exclusively on those in the community. We take this responsibility seriously and intend to do just that—step up and lead on.

Despite the challenges of social distancing, many of us have been networking on the inside. We have united members from all groups—Black Prisoners Caucus, Concerned Lifers Organization, Asian Pacific Islander Cultural Awareness Group, Native American Community, Latino Development Organization, and many others—to make sure *all* voices and perspectives are heard. We understand that one or two voices does not speak for the entire communities and organizations, but the individuals involved are working to disseminate all information to their respective groups and receive their feedback. Many of these individuals have been working on sentencing reform for decades.

Admittedly, much of this work has taken place at the Washington State Reformatory. But we have made a tremendous effort to reach broader networks and keep all in the loop regarding our plans and motives—full transparency is one of our goals. We have received positive feedback from every in-prison organization we have contacted.

We have agreed as a collective to work on the following three pieces of legislation for the upcoming session:

1. **Emerging Adults Parole:** This bill raises the age limit for those eligible for parole under the *Miller* Fix from 18 to 25. The current law provides review after 20 years for juveniles convicted of any crime except aggravated murder, and after 25 years for juveniles convicted of aggravated murder. This bill would also reduce the number of years needed to serve before review eligibility from 20 to 15 years for all except those with aggravated murder who would still need to wait 25 years.
2. **Exclusion of Adult Points:** This bill retroactively prohibits using juvenile adjudications in adult offender score calculations. Anyone with juvenile points will be resentenced.
3. **Restoration of Good Time:** This bill enables prisoners to earn up to 33% off every portion of their sentence—the amount of good time originally directed in the SRA—instead of the current 10% on non-mandatory terms. Everyone serving a determinate sentence would benefit from this bill.

Due to the constraints imposed by the pandemic and our limited ability to communicate with more of you, we have selected a small working group to advance these pieces of legislation. They are currently gathering qualitative and quantitative data, including personal stories from individuals currently in prison. This group has been empowered by us to represent our voices, and those of us who have signed onto this letter ask others in the community to either support this group or give it space to advance our goals.

Please allow *our* voices to be heard on these issues. Please do not campaign against us or contribute to in-fighting inside the prisons or in the outside community. Such actions are only dividing the movement and making it weaker, making our desired change impossible to obtain. It is necessary to make another point. While it is vital that the formerly incarcerated support the

movement, it is just as important to respect those who remain left behind. Simply being formerly incarcerated does not confer an unlimited authority on anyone to speak on our behalf. Those who speak “for us” should be speaking with us--amplifying our voices, not overriding them. Systems of oppression constantly evolve, so it is crucial that the voices from the inside, on the front line, are heard—not misinterpreted and misconstrued.

We are hoping this letter does not come across as harsh. If you have received this letter, it is because you are someone we respect and appreciate—we are allies. We recognize your long history of working towards these types of legislation and hope you continue this work alongside us.

Many of us have been fighting for ourselves and our fellow prisoners for decades. Time and time again we have seen great momentum fail to deliver results because of personal feelings, egos, and past grievances. We cannot continue to allow such things to get in the way. We are imploring everyone who cares about the incarcerated population in the State of Washington to set all that aside.

We believe this is a unique moment, given the political climate, to enact significant changes to the law: changes that will make our punishments less cruel, catalyze substantive systematic transformation, and provide real hope to thousands of families.

We are extremely unified on the inside and we are asking *all* advocates to support our efforts by allowing our voices and wishes to be heard. It is not about receiving glory and accolades for this work, it’s about getting the work done. Those who are doing this work for the right reasons with a good heart already know that.

WE must remember: we are not at odds with each other, we are at odds with the system that oppresses us.

**Thank you for all you do!**

Sincerely,

*-Asian Pacific Islanders Cultural Awareness Group, Washington State Reformatory/Stafford Creek/Clallam Bay/Purdy*

*-Black Prisoners Caucus, Washington State Reformatory*

*-Concerned Lifers Organization, Washington State Reformatory*

*-Latino Development Organization, Washington State Reformatory*

*-Native American Community, Washington State Reformatory*

*-State Raised Group, Washington State Reformatory*