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July 8, 2016

The Honorable Rick Jones
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
Michigan State Senate
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Senator Jones:

I am writing to express my serious concerns regarding the unintended consequences of HB 5273. It would be the rare occurrence in a homicide for the sentencing judge to still be in office when a parole board is ready to entertain a hearing. In a homicide case the victim's family has long term scars that the local successor judge can more appropriately balance against an inmate's rehabilitation.

We are seeing so many times our criminal justice system breach a promise we make with our resident-victims. The families of our deceased victims thought the killer of their loved one was in prison for good. Our government made a promise to those families to that effect. HB 5273 is not constitutionally mandated and this breaks a promise we, as a government, made to our residents.

I am aware of at least one family in my county whose daughter was raped and murdered in the late 1970's. The family of that victim is aware the successor judge has, from time to time, made it known he would veto a parole hearing. It is my belief the successor judge would have a better view to balance the heinous crime and the effect on our local community against the inmate's rehabilitation and therefore, should retain the veto power.

The Senate should consider an amendment to exclude Murder 2 life sentences to mitigate the impact described above.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael J. Sepic".

Michael J. Sepic

cc: Sen Schuitmaker
Sen Rocca
Sen Colbeck
Sen Bieda