



JEWISH INCARCERATED FAMILY SERVICES

February 6th 2024

Honorable Members of Congress,

I am writing to you not just as an advocate for the humane treatment of those within our correctional system but as a voice echoing the profound teachings of Judaism on compassion, justice, and the sanctity of life. The proposed SB0128, focusing on Geriatric and Medical Parole, presents an opportunity for our society to align our correctional practices with these timeless values, ensuring that our policies reflect our collective moral and ethical standards.

In Judaism, every individual is seen as a world unto themselves, carrying a unique purpose and divine spark that commands respect and consideration, regardless of their circumstances. The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, emphasized the necessity of viewing each person's life and contributions as invaluable, advocating for a system that nurtures rather than negates this potential. His teachings inspire us to consider the deeper implications of our correctional policies, urging us to create environments that support rehabilitation and respect for human dignity, especially for the elderly and those with medical conditions.

SB0128 addresses a critical oversight in our current system, which too often leaves the elderly and medically vulnerable in conditions that neither serve the interests of justice nor the imperatives of compassion. By advocating for Geriatric and Medical Parole, this bill acknowledges the diminished threat these individuals pose to society and the disproportionate burden their continued incarceration imposes — both on the moral fabric of our community and our financial resources.

Moreover, the principles of justice and mercy that are foundational to Judaism compel us to consider the broader impacts of our actions and policies. In supporting SB0128, we are not merely advocating for a change in procedure but for a reevaluation of our societal values, recognizing the importance of providing care, dignity, and a path toward redemption for all individuals, particularly those who, due to age or illness, find themselves at the most vulnerable stages of their lives.





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My involvement with individuals and families affected by incarceration has only deepened my conviction that policies like SB0128 are not just beneficial but necessary. We have seen firsthand the challenges faced by the elderly and ill within the prison system — challenges that extend beyond the confines of justice into the realms of basic human rights and dignity. The ability for these individuals to access geriatric and medical parole would not only reflect a compassionate and just society but also promote a more effective and humane correctional system that aligns with our shared values of rehabilitation and respect for every person's inherent worth.

In conclusion, I urge you to support and advocate for the passage of SB0128. In doing so, we take a significant step toward honoring the principles of compassion, justice, and mercy that are central to Judaism and integral to our collective human conscience. Let us lead by example, showing that our commitment to these values transcends words and finds expression in our laws and policies, ensuring that our correctional system reflects our highest aspirations for a just and compassionate society.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Sholom Reindorp
Founder & Director
Jewish Incarcerated Family Services

