

Letter in Support of HB0003
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My name is Autumn Woodland. My father is serving a life sentence and has been incarcerated since 1983. I support HB0003. If the Governor were not involved in the parole process, my father would have been reunited with our family years ago, as he has been recommended for parole more than once. During his time in prison, he has done and is doing some of the following:

-Serves as mentor

-Serves a leader in his spiritual community

-Earned a college degree

-Taken the majority of classes offered to the incarcerated population

-Became a certified mediator

-Worked with Drew Leder, Professor of Philosophy at Loyola University of Maryland to co-author a book titled *The Soul Knows No Bars: Inmates Reflect on Life, Death and Hope*

- Co-parented with my mother: He helped my mother raise me via weekly phone calls, multiple letters, and visits when my mother and I could travel to Baltimore from Pennsylvania. He's been an active parent over the duration of his sentence. I am a person who some would consider successful. I have a B.S. in business administration from Florida A&M University, a JD from Hofstra University, and I work for a major corporation as an analyst. I mention these accomplishments because I doubt I would have achieved any of these things without the support of my father.

My father is a man who wants nothing more than to come home and support his family. He wasn't given a fair trial due to improper jury instructions, and an expert perjured on the witness stand while testifying against him. In spite of this he has remained positive and hopeful, while also boosting the morale of his children and other loved ones. When I meet people who know him, they're excited to tell me how much they respect him and that he's made a major impact on their lives.

My father remains in prison because the Governor has never seen fit to grant him parole. He's one example of many citizens who deserve to be released. The Parole Commission can't fully do what it's supposed to do because of the Governor's refusal to grant parole to people who have proven they deserve to be released. It is imperative the Governor is removed from the parole process in order to allow Maryland citizens to move on with their lives and reunite with their families.

Best,
Autumn N. Woodland, JD