



## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts General Court

September 5, 2023

Governor Maura Healey  
Massachusetts State House  
24 Beacon St., Room 280  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Healey,

As you well know there are currently many applicants seeking your nomination for a seat on the Commonwealth's Parole Board. While you consider these applicants we, the Co-Chairs of the Criminal Justice Reform Caucus, write to voice our wholehearted support for those applicants who were previously incarcerated themselves.

In order for the Parole Board to appropriately and equitably perform its duties, it must consider a diverse array of opinions and experiences. An essential lived experience that has too often been excluded from the Parole Board is one that can only be derived from a period of incarceration. Only someone who has spent time behind the walls of one of our correctional facilities can truly speak to the effort and dedication it takes to rehabilitate oneself in such a context. Only they know how such lessons can be applied upon re-entry into our common spaces and society. It is time that this viewpoint be given its rightful place as an essential stakeholder on our Parole Board. Doing so can only empower that Board to make more informed, equitable decisions that engender trust and justice in our institutions and communities.

This request is consistent with one of the core recommendations of the Special Commission on Structural Racism. Specifically, that report [recommended](#) that "The Parole Board shall have at least one member who is a formerly incarcerated individual who has completed the parole process..."

As such, we ask that you put someone on the Parole Board who has lived experience as an incarcerated person. We thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary S. Keefe".

Mary S. Keefe, House Co-Chair  
State Representative  
15<sup>th</sup> Worcester District

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James B. Eldridge".

James B. Eldridge, Senate Co-Chair  
State Senator  
Middlesex and Worcester Distr