

NSW Sentencing Council
GPO Box 31 SYDNEY NSW 2001

To whom it may concern

I write regarding the upcoming “review of murder and manslaughter and the standard non-parole periods for murder”.

Truth in Sentencing by which currently legislation is known, is draconian, inhumane, costly and outdated, and the Attorney General of NSW, Mr Mark Speakman, is right to call a review.

Under this legislation, no matter what his /her behaviour, a prisoner demonstrates he/she will never ever have the chance for parole. Life in jail is indeed till the day the prisoner dies.

I urge you to consider amendments to this legislation, that will be both more humane to the prisoner, in the long-term have economic benefits to the state and be more in line with other jurisdictions in Australia.

It is common sense to note that:

- To remove all chance of parole is to impose a sentence of a lifetime of hopelessness. Hope is an emotion that drives good outcomes, it incentivises, it fuels dreams, it gives life meaning. A jail sentence should be as much about punishment as about an opportunity for rehabilitation. Surely providing hope when sentencing can improve a prisoner’s chance of rehabilitation. It would encourage better behaviour and increased cooperation in prison.
- If a prisoner has rehabilitated and clearly will not be a danger to society again, why would we not show clemency and humanity?
- What is the point of keeping someone in prison at the whopping cost of \$80000 a year [and increasing] to the taxpayer if there is no clear danger to society? Surely there is better use of the taxpayers’ funds than keeping a rehabilitated prisoner behind bars.
- I accept that an objective of imprisonment is punishment, but after a period, that objective is accomplished. Thereafter imprisonment becomes persecution.

NSW is the only state in Australia where parole is not available for life sentences. It is time for the Sentencing Council legislation to introduce discretionary sentencing and for this to be passed in parliament. Only then would the concept of rehabilitation have meaning, prisoners have hope and the NSW government have additional funds to redeploy more sensibly.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

Diane Jennifer Singer

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