



American Probation and Parole Association

A Force for Positive
CHANGE.

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February 23, 2017

Senator John Murante
Chair, Government, Military
and Veterans Affairs Committee
Room #1423
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509

Senator Murante:

Representing the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA), I write in support of Legislative Bill 75. APPA's members firmly believe that restoring voting rights to those released from prison encourages rehabilitation and assists community supervision officials and law enforcement efforts to promote public safety.

APPA is an international professional association with members throughout the United States, Canada and other countries who work in probation, parole, and community-based corrections. These professionals supervise more than five million adults across the nation and know firsthand the challenges faced by those reentering society after incarceration.

APPA strongly believes that bringing people with past convictions into the political process is an important part of rehabilitation and successful reintegration. Continuing to bar people from the polls brands them as outsiders, prevents full participation in their communities, and hinders reentry efforts. Participation in the voting process affirms an individual's value to the political process. In addition, it encourages participation in civic life and builds connections to other law-abiding citizens who serve as support for those who may struggle with substance abuse or mental health issues.

In 2007, APPA passed a resolution in favor of restoring voting rights to individuals upon release from prison (attached). Other criminal justice and law enforcement organizations including the American Correctional Association, the Association of State Correctional Administrators, the National Black Police Association, and the Association of Paroling Authorities International have passed similar resolutions.

In the interest of protecting public safety and promoting democracy, I urge you to support Legislative Bill 75.

Sincerely,

Veronica Cunningham
Executive Director

Resolution



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Restoration of Voting Rights

Enacted: Sep 2007

WHEREAS, many citizens who have been convicted of felonies and have completed their sentences, including community supervision, do not have the right to vote;

WHEREAS, many states have some restrictions on voting privileges for felons;

WHEREAS, the loss of the right to vote is not based on a need to protect the integrity of the electoral process and the justice system;

WHEREAS, disenfranchisement of felons is disproportionately affecting an increasingly large segment of the population and their families;

WHEREAS, disenfranchisement laws work against the successful reentry of offenders.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the American Probation and Parole Association advocates the restoration of voting rights upon completion of an offender's prison sentence and advocates no loss of voting rights while on community supervision.