



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1054

**PAUL HEROUX**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
2ND BRISTOL DISTRICT

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**RE: H.1620, S.786 An Act Eliminating Mandatory Minimum Sentences Related to Drug Offenders**  
**DT: 16 June 2015**

Dear Honorable Joint Committee on the Judiciary,

Thank you for considering bill *H.1620, S.786 An Act Eliminating Mandatory Minimum Sentences Related to Drug Offender*.

Mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses eliminate judicial discretion, create longer prison sentences, which in turn increases the prison population and this adds to increased incarceration costs. The research is very clear that mandatory minimums do not reduce recidivism or act as a general or specific deterrent for crime. Additionally, the research is very clear that they increase racial disparities in sentencing.

District Attorneys like to use mandatory minimums as a way to get defendants to plead guilty to a lesser charge; for them it is a tool to close cases. This is not in the interest of justice because the cases that are closed are often influenced by the cost of defense counsel.

*H.1620, S.786 An Act Eliminating Mandatory Minimum Sentences Related to Drug Offender* is not only a bill that is plausible in economic terms; it is an ethical steppingstone and rehabilitation process that will inflict less pain on drug offenders and provide them with more time to find the guidance they need, all while saving the commonwealths criminal justice resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul Heroux".

Paul Heroux