



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1054

PAUL HEROUX
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
2ND BRISTOL DISTRICT

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RE: S.71, An Act Promoting Restorative Justice Practices
DT: 16 June 2015

Dear Honorable Lead Sponsor and the Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities,

Thank you for considering bill *H.1313, S.71 An Act Promoting Restorative Justice Practices* before your committee.

This bill provides communities with a more effective approach to reducing recidivism and potential incarceration. Through this bill law enforcement and criminal cases can be examined on a community based level, by providing the victim and the perpetrator the ability to come hand in hand in compensatory and apologetic manners. *S.71, An Act Promoting Restorative Justice Practices* is a stepping stone to leading the commonwealth to a revamped justice system that is predicated more on the victim understanding the reasoning behind offender's actions, and what the offender would have done differently in hindsight. Although the outcome of specific cases may not be affected, the bill provides the commonwealth with opportunities of learning, accountability, and sorrow.

According to criminologist Larry Sherman in a 2007 report, restorative justice has been found to:

- substantially reduced repeat offending for some offenders, but not all;
- doubled (or more) the offences brought to justice as diversion from traditional criminal justice (CJ);
- reduced crime victims' post-traumatic stress symptoms and related costs;
- provided both victims and offenders with more satisfaction with justice than CJ;
- reduced crime victims' desire for violent revenge against their offenders;
- reduced the costs of criminal justice, when used as diversion from CJ;
- reduced recidivism *more than* prison (adults) or *as well as* prison (youths).

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter. *S.71, An Act Promoting Restorative Justice Practices* is an intuitive approach to local criminality, and the construction of an Office of Restorative justice is just the first step in an active movement to reduce recidivism, and incarceration in our local communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Heroux".

Paul Heroux