



New Mexico Parole Board,

Americans For Prosperity is a grassroots organization that is dedicated to bringing people together to change our public policies and our government for the better. We believe that an effective criminal justice system protects people and preserves public safety, respects human dignity, restores victims, removes barriers to opportunity for people with criminal records, and ensures equal justice for all under the law.

Americans For Prosperity supports the proposed rule change (NMAC 22.510.17) for youth parole hearings and we thank you for your time in considering this incredibly important issue. On behalf of our activists across New Mexico, we urge you to support this sensible rule change as well. Brain science studies have highlighted the differences between juveniles and adults and the inability for young people to understand the long-term consequences of their actions. Criminal justice research and data has also consistently found that juvenile recidivism rates are significantly lower than adult rates. We urge you to follow the science and bring our youth justice system in line with the US Supreme Court and New Mexico Supreme Court's findings that children sentenced as adults must be afforded a meaningful opportunity to obtain release.

This rule change gives the parole board an opportunity to weigh individual circumstances and make a parole decision accordingly, while allowing reformed men and women an opportunity to succeed. The barrier preventing these cases from being heard by this board should be removed. It also makes fiscal sense to give this population a chance to rehabilitate and reenter society as productive New Mexicans, should the board see fit based on each case. The costs of lifetime incarceration weigh heavy on New Mexico taxpayers while some of these men and women are ready to contribute to society and become taxpayers, possibly for the first time in their life.

I urge you to support this sensible reform that will help restore dignity to our criminal justice system and provide second chances for those who have earned them.

Respectfully,

Brenda Boatman

Community Engagement Director

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