I would like to give public testimony regarding the goals of this Commission,

If there were fewer prisoners, there should be lower costs. I know that is not presently the case. I hope you can correct this anomaly.

One way to have fewer prisoners is to release some who are not a present danger to society, who would otherwise have no chance of release,

As of January 1, 2021, our state prisons housed 6,282 inmates. 1,051 of them were serving life without parole. That's 17%. That's the highest percent of all 50 states.

Obviously, the average age of our inmate population is older than that of most states, perhaps the oldest. Older inmates cost more to house. As many are nursing home patients, the cost of housing them can rise as high as $300,000 per year, much more than our present extraordinary level of nearly $100,000 for healthy inmates.

Older people commit street crime at much lower rates than younger people. Nursing home people do not commit street crime. Society is not nearly as much in danger from older people as younger people. Our current planet cannot guarantee complete safety,

House bill 1797 would give every inmate a parole review after 25 years of incarceration. This would allow the release of many of the inmates most expensive to care for. Please urge the Joint Judiciary Committee to give it a recommendation to pass, and to send it to the floor of both houses.

Thank you for your attention.

Rev. Jonathan Tetherly