

The Alliance for Safe Communities

Testimony to House Judiciary and Senate
Judiciary regarding support to repeal “Good
Times” for those who commit Heinous Crimes

Honorable members of the Committee:

My name is Carolyn Medeiros. I am the Executive Director of the Rhode Island non-profit Alliance for Safe Communities, dedicated to assisting communities to achieve the promise of a safe environment made to them by government. We work with legislators, state and local law enforcement, other RI non-profits, National non-profit organizations, the Attorney General's office, Department of Corrections, Department of Probation, Media Networks, and most importantly, Rhode Islanders who call this state home.

To begin: a victim impact statement for the Donnelly family. June 9th Shirley Donnelly was brutally murdered by Mathew Komrowski. Corrections spokesperson Tracey Zeckhausen said despite an early release, Komrowski was not an ideal inmate. Mathew Komrowski earned 448 days good time with over 90 infractions while incarcerated. Within less than 48 hours he committed this heinous crime.

The oversight committees correction option legislation has done it's job, that is true, it did save money, by releasing Komrowski 448 days early we saved maybe 40 to 50 thousand dollars or if we want to use the number used in the April 16th 2010 committee meeting, that actual per diem rate is about \$4,000 per year, but the real question is money saved at what cost.

I would ask each of you to close your eyes and imagine this horrific crime just happened to someone you care about. How would you look at this so called "Good Time Program". You wouldn't think it was worth the money it supposedly saved.

Prison decisions are now being made based not on security, custody, and control, but for money considerations.

The safety of the families of Rhode Island should be the primary responsibility of government. And while it does cost money to incarcerate someone in prison, the savings from preventing a crime far outweighs the cost. What it comes down to is "how much we pay collectively as opposed to how much we are willing to have Rhode Island families pay later as potential crime victims from an early release criminal.

If money saved is the primary issue vs value of life: Are we truly saving the taxpayer money with this agenda.

In July, a month after Shirley Donnelly's tragic murder, FOX news released a Research Segment: " Murder by Numbers a Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology Cost estimate per offense for five index offenses"

Source using 2008 U.S. dollars

(the break down to tax payers in costs looks like this):

Over \$17 million dollars for Murder

\$448,532 for Rape

\$335,733 Armed Robbery

\$145,379 Aggravated Assault

\$41,288 Burglary

Costs are broken down as victim costs, Justice costs, Offender Productivity, and "wtp" the amount of money citizens are willing to pay to prevent crimes.

I believe it is wrong to eliminate Prison Good Time altogether. The problem with this law ... is the amount of time being allowed and who is allowed to earn time off in the first place.

"Good Time" has become an agenda of cost effectiveness and needs to be utilized for its therapeutic benefits for those intended and capable of rehabilitation: if not we will continue to see an agenda inclusive of early releases of moderate to high risk, repeat offenders, and more victims impacted throughout the state.

RESPECTFULLY AND GRATEFULLY,

CAROLYN MEDEIROS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ALLIANCE FOR SAFE COMMUNITIES

Additional comments addressed that of the 500 inmates mentioned by Director AT Wall of Corrections..... it was noted in a WPRI segment "The Danger Amongst Us" that 275 violent offenders were inclusive of that population from April 2011-April 2012.

Additional comments addressed the issues of the total effectiveness of “GPS” tracking devices when monitoring a population released to society. Alliance director pointed out that although a GPS device may show location of an individual it does not show the individuals actions at the location. Alliance director referred to a case in the 1970’s where as a young girl was repeatedly sexually assaulted by an individual wearing a GPS device and hence forth set the justice wheels in motion for Rhode Island to adopt “Megan’s Law” which allows us a registry of sex offenders to date.