

**Testimony By: Eddie Matos, DIN: 90T4422**

**Before: The New York State Senate Committee on Crime Victims,  
Crime & Correction Hearing on how the Elder Parole and Fair & Timely Parole Bill will  
improve Parole release laws and public safety in New York.**

To whom it may concern,

My name is Eddie Mato. I am 55 years old and have been incarcerated for the past 33 years and 20 days. I was found guilty by my peers for the crime of murder, attempted robbery and burglary. I was sentenced to a concurrent term of 25-years to life. In March of 2023, I am scheduled to appear before my sixth parole board.

Before I go any further, I want this committee to know that I understand the seriousness of my crime and have taken full responsibility for my actions. During the course of my incarceration I have taken every available opportunity to better myself. I have taken every mandatory program I was required to take in order to give myself a better chance in society, as well as many volunteer programs that helped me deal and cope with the unresolved issues I had in my past. These therapeutic programs helped me to remain drug free for the last fifteen years. They also helped me to better serve my community and peers in prison, as well as others in any way possible.

At this moment I am a facilitator for Project Build/Exodus Transitional Community's Reentry and Resocialization program that is a nine month voluntary program designed to address participants' antisocial attitudes, behaviors, and values. I have been a facilitator for the past four years.

The problem with the way the parole board is currently functioning is that they are still re-sentencing some people for the crimes they committed years ago. Arguing that the individual's release will be "incompatible with the welfare and safety of the community and so depreciate the serious nature of the crime as to undermine respect for the law."

Often these denials do not take into account the hard work, time and effort incarcerated people put in to better themselves in hopes of making it back to their families and communities. Many of the parole board's decisions disregard the COMPAS Risk Assessment tool that was put in place to better gauge a person's readiness for release, and whether that person will remain at liberty without violating the law.

Like many incarcerated individuals, I have done everything possible to give myself a chance. I changed my life around from an immature 21-year-old to a mature 55 year old and became a teacher and mentor to countless young men. I truly do not understand why I am continually

denied parole. I have asked the parole board on several occasions what more can I do to prove that I can remain at liberty without committing a crime? I have not received an answer yet.

In conclusion, I understand that parole is not given just because someone has done good while in prison. However, it should not be denied based solely on someone's past crime either. A crime that can never change. Release should be based on who the individual is today, not on who he or she was ten, fifteen, or thirty years ago.

The passage of the Fair & Timely Parole and Elder Parole bills can and will correct the outdated practices of the parole board and give those appearing before it a realistic and honest chance of gaining their release. Please pass this much needed bill. Thank you.

Eddie Matos

DIN: 90T4422

Green Haven Correctional Facility