

## WHY ILLINOIS NEEDS A PAROLE SYSTEM

- BECAUSE over 5,000 Illinoisans are currently sentenced to die in prison, and hundreds more receive such sentences every year;
- BECAUSE Illinois has no true parole system, but has dozens of overly-punitive laws that incapacitate too many people past the point that they cease to pose any threat to society;
- BECAUSE Illinois' accountability laws ensnare too many people for conduct not their own;
- BECAUSE Illinois courts are refusing to provide fair and constitutional sentencing hearings to people sentenced to die in prison for crimes committed as juveniles or young adults;
- BECAUSE Illinois needs a safety valve for the plethora of wrongfully convicted people in prison who lack the resources to prove their innocence;
- BECAUSE the clemency process is completely ineffectual due to political calculations;
- BECAUSE parole would help alleviate an overburdened court system which is systematically failing to ensure that people receive due process;
- BECAUSE since Illinois abolished parole in 1978, the Illinois Department of Corrections' budget has ballooned from \$52 million to nearly \$1.5 billion, draining state resources;
- BECAUSE Illinois' prison system is one of the most over-capacity prison systems in the nation;
- BECAUSE partially due to being over-capacity and underfunded, the Illinois Department of Corrections abandoned its mission of rehabilitation;
- BECAUSE parole costs only about \$2,000 per person annually while incarceration costs \$38,000;
- BECAUSE society now has the tools to create a fair and effective parole system;
- BECAUSE Illinois is one of the few states without any type of compassionate release law;
- BECAUSE it would help reduce some of the moral injury suffered by correctional staff forced to watch people die in prison for no legitimate penological purpose;
- BECAUSE mass incarceration is inhumane and is the civil-rights issue of our era;
- BECAUSE Article 1, Section 11 of the Illinois Constitution states that all criminal penalties "shall be determined both according to the seriousness of the offense and with the objective of restoring the offender to useful citizenship";
- BECAUSE people should be afforded an opportunity to prove they can be productive citizens; and
- BECAUSE IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO!