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Thursday, November 29, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

**RE: Support of Juvenile Bill Revision**

I am writing this testimony in support of my brother, Gilberto Delgado (167752), who is currently incarcerated for crimes he committed as a juvenile in 1988. The sentencing modification would aid in many prisoners, such as my brother, becoming eligible for parole when they would otherwise serve their full sentence.

The crimes committed by my brother should not be ignored or disregarded. Unfortunately, he was influenced by older men to commit a hideous crime. These men took advantage of young men and programmed them to believe they were adults in order to carry out crimes that they, as adults, would not commit themselves. My brother was young, naïve and too immature to understand the severity of the consequences that were coming before him. Despite being faced with numerous charges, he wouldn't budge on the names of the people who hired him, a silent code he learned over time with this group of people. He feared what would happen to his family, to himself and to any loved one.

I lost my brother many years ago. Granted, physically he was alive, but the young bright, silly man that used to pick me up and make me laugh was gone. Instead, I had a brother that would write to me, have limited phone conversations of 15 minutes and visitations lasting one hour. It broke my heart to see my brother "grow up" behind the cold walls of a prison.

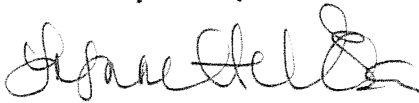
Twenty-four years later, I see my brother as the smartest man I know. Despite his current fate, he is optimistic and happy. He and I discuss everything from books to sports to life. The time he has served has been spent furthering his education, working and accumulating good time in hopes of making it home as early as possible. He is no longer that young boy but a man who knows that he robbed himself of his own life. He is married to his number one supporter, who in preparation for his release and offering him a better lifestyle has moved away from the inner city. Therefore, upon his release and if granted parole, he will no longer be living in the inner city or in the same neighborhoods that led him to crime years ago.

It is wonderful to hear him talk about future plans that he has with his wife. Simple pleasures that you and I take for granted on a daily basis. I hear him talk about my mother and how much sorrow it brings him to know that he broke her heart the day he was sentenced. This is a guilt that will take him years to mend. If you give him the opportunity, he will be able to meet family members that were born after he was incarcerated; nieces and nephews that only know him by name. If asked today, Gilberto will say the most important thing to him is his family. He, like all of us, is looking forward to rekindling the family bond and starting new beginnings.

Many of the individuals who committed crimes as juveniles have evolved into the true person they are today. The crimes they once committed do not define who they are. I know my brother is not a bad person. The crime he committed is sad and unforgivable but it does not define who he is today. Passing the Juvenile Bill will give individuals, such as my brother, a second chance at the life that was cut short. This bill will give them a chance to show themselves for who they are, grown adults who were too foolish to understand the world when they were younger. Please, allow these individuals, my brother included, the opportunity to make the right choices as adults.

I am requesting your consideration and support in passing the juvenile bill and provide the young men sentenced years ago, and now mature men the opportunity to show you they are able to make positive changes in their lives. I am sure my brother, who is also a son, father and husband, will not disappoint you or take the opportunity for granted; neither will we, his family.

Thank you for your time and support.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lynnette Vera". The signature is fluid and somewhat stylized, with a large initial "L" and a decorative flourish at the end.

Lynnette Vera