March 3, 2014

Good afternoon committee members. My name is Rachael Ortiz, beside me is our family. We are all here in support of Bill# (HB 5221) Juvenile Sentence reconsideration. I would like to take this time to read this testimony on behalf of my fiancé Wilfredo Ortiz # 267596

Wilfredo is currently serving a 27yr sentence for Felony Murder. Wilfredo was only 17 yrs old when arrested and has been incarcerated for 16yrs now. Wilfredo has accomplished so much in those 16yrs; currently he is a CNA at Osborne CI. Wilfredo is role model for the other prisoners in the facility. Wilfredo is also a AVP Facilitator (Alternative to Violence Program) which he enjoys teaching other inmates every month. Teaching tools in life and using them in a positive way of, making him & others awareness for any issue to turn it around into a positive situation. The other huge impact on Wilfredo's life is the Hospice Program at Osborne. He has dedicated countless hours as a "Hospice Volunteer", with providing love and support and so much more for these dying men 24hrs a day, 7days a wk. Wilfredo also is a barber at Osborne, and will give hair cuts to these dying men making them forget how sick they really are and feel like a man as they did before their illness. These experiences and so much more has driven Wilfredo to become the man is today. Not that 17year old kid who knew no better before his incarceration. I know Wilfredo can't undo his past and is truly sorry for all the hurt and pain he caused towards the victim's family and his own family. If Wilfredo is given the opportunity, He will be a productive member in society. Wilfredo has a very supportive family which is willing to do anything to keep pushing him to complete more goals. Just like him & I we started off as a friendship which grew over the years due to the change I seen in him. Now we are engaged and planning on our wedding for this summer. Wilfredo is living proof of change and that his testimony that is attached can create a positive outlook on someone who has lived it, has matured and been rehabilited. I hope you can see the change of who he was, to who he is today. Thank you all for allowing me to present my testimony.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rachael Ortiz

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Monday March 3, 2014

Re: Testimony on behalf of Wilfredo Ortiz #267596 for March 3rd, 2014 Sentencing Commission public hearing.

Good afternoon to all committee members. My name is Rachael Ortiz, beside me family we all are here in support of Bill # (HB-5221) Juvenile Sentence reconsideration bill. I would like to read this testimony of behalf of my husband.

Good afternoon to all committee members, my name is Wilfredo Ortiz #267596. I am serving a 27 year sentence for felony murder. I was 17 years of age when I was arrested I've been incarcerated for 15 years, going on 16. As I re-visit on thoughts my past and update my testimony tears run down my eyes. I can only imagine how my victim and victim's family live daily. But I must provide my testimony and create awareness, from once a lost child to a progressive mature young man. Forever there will be a deep hole, a wound that can never heal no matter how good I do; my actions have hurt so many people. I will live with this forever, I am truly sorry! For my victims and victims' families sorry is not enough. I was a young ignorant kid with no education or guidance. I lived in street areas that were filthy with drugs and gangs, at that age trying to identify myself; I was trying to fit in. I was looking for acceptance, love, and support in all the wrong places, so I joined the streets and this is when my nightmare started. Streets where all I knew I made so many poor decisions in my life, because I knew no better. When running in the streets you are made to believe these street concepts. Concepts that after 15 years have caused a lot of pain, suffering, and loss you learn that those concepts were not true. During my 15 years of incarceration I have accomplished so many goals. Of course it was a struggle at the beginning since I found myself with a 27 year sentence and nothing to look forward to. I did everything in the book that describes negative at that particular time in my life I thought it was over for me, hope was out the window. How do you explain to a kid a sentence if he knows nothing? That's when it went from bad to worse.

It wasn't until reality started to set in that I said to myself I needed to change. I was hurting, my family was hurting, I started to think and reflect on all that I had gone through. I knew then, in that moment I had to change but how? At the time I was housed in a level 5 maximum security prison (Northern CT) I successfully completed gang programs DOC offers still struggling with my ways, but trying. I knew I had to serve 25 years in prison no matter how good I did. Since the charge itself of felony murder I have to serve what's required of a minimum mandatory sentence, 25 years. For others this chain of thought is why they continue in the negative path with no hope. For me it was more of just trying to become a better a better person. I was trying to really find myself, to identify who I am and what I wanted in life..I started to take full advantage of any and every program the DOC has to offer. I went to school, learned English properly; to read and write. After 3 attempts I successfully completed my GED a tool that is required in life, especially in the DOC to be accepted into other programs. Out of all of the programs I successfully completed there are two of them that have had a huge impact on my life. A.V.P (Alternative to Violence program) is one of them. It teaches you how to change a negative situation into a positive outcome, mainly to know that we all possess tools in life and we need to use them in a positive way to make awareness. These tools allow us all to be good, to care for others, to sympathize, have compassion for others, and to always put yourself in other people's shoes. I am