

October 9, 2019

To the Members of the Criminal Justice Commission,

I'm proud to live in Connecticut. I am encouraged by our status as one of the leading states in the country on innovative criminal justice reform. I'm proud to live in a state that recognizes the inherent complexity of the lives of all of our residents.

The lettering on the police station in my town of Enfield reads "Public Safety." I am skeptical that incarceration of non-violent offenders increases our public safety. In fact, I believe it does just the opposite. When families are broken by the incarceration of a parent, public safety suffers because of the generational trauma that results from each torn household. When teenagers accept a fatalistic attitude that they will spend some portion of their lives behind bars, we lose the potential for bright young people to contribute to the civic and economic health of our state. When we choose retributive justice over the more effective and more healing approach of restorative justice, we perpetuate a cycle of harm.

I want our next Chief State's Attorney to have the capacity to recognize the complexity of the lives of the people whose cases are to be reviewed.

I want this individual to be a champion of restorative justice initiatives and to explore diversionary options before those involving incarceration.

It would be my preference for the new Chief State's Attorney to be a person of color, bringing a point of view that can penetrate the systemic racism that birthed our current system of state sanctioned punishment.

If the candidate were a formerly incarcerated person or has incarcerated loved ones, I would consider that a positive attribute. I'd much prefer to receive the care of a doctor who has previously experienced a serious illness over one who has never suffered ill health.

Thank you for your consideration of my requests. I look forward to increasing the public safety of our state through your appointment of a Chief State's Attorney who sees the long-term effects on our entire population when considering consequences for the bad choices of individuals.

Respectfully,

Ann T. Percival
26 Douglas Drive