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Aug. 2, 2019

The Honorable John Wetzel, Secretary  
Pennsylvania Department of Corrections  
1920 Technology Parkway  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

**RE: External Review of Parole Needed**

Dear Secretary Wetzel:

The recent spate of murders by Pennsylvania offenders released on parole is unfathomable. An 8-year-old boy was repeatedly stabbed while other children watched, stunned. A woman was strangled in her home, then set on fire to cover the evidence. An off-duty Pittsburgh police officer was shot three times in the back.

Five recent Pennsylvania prison parolees have been charged with killing six people in just two months. Our process of determining who to release on parole is critically flawed and must immediately change. I stand with the Pennsylvania State Corrections Officers Association in demanding an outside review of our state's parole policies and procedures. An internal audit is simply not enough.

We cannot sit idly by, watching murder after murder, in the name of soft-on-crime "reforms" that loosen our parole policies. The people of Pennsylvania put their trust, their safety and their lives in the hands of public officials like you who ultimately decide if a convicted criminal should be freed from prison.

You've indicated in news articles that you are happy to provide access to the necessary Department of Corrections records and data for any independent reviewer. I trust you will stand by that promise and support an external examination of our parole system. We should be more focused on protecting innocent Pennsylvanians from senseless death at the hands of convicted criminals than about reducing our prison population at all costs.

Please put any new parole hearings on hold until an independent, outside review can figure out why so many unrehabilitated murderers are slipping through your bars and back into society.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Frank Burns".

Frank Burns  
State Representative  
72<sup>nd</sup> Legislative District

Cc: Mr. Theodore W. Johnson, chairman, Pennsylvania Board of Probation & Parole