

Letter to Parole Board

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Re: 5/30/19 suitability hearing Higgins CDC # P-29949

Dear Ms Schaefer,

I am writing this letter to address our concerns from the May 30 parole suitability hearing for inmate Higgins CDC # P-29949. I feel we were treated disrespectfully. First off when we entered the room we were told by the commissioner, "I can't offer you much but I can offer you a view". One could take that as an inappropriate joke. Or that the prisoner also enjoys a nice view. Or that, the decision has been made, this is a waste of your efforts, I won't be making a decision with anything positive to offer. It was an awkward way to begin the day and was hurtful by the end of the day.

I haven't read the transcripts yet, but during the hearing the inmate contradicted himself and had inconsistencies. I feel the board failed to ask the inmate about the contradictions and inconsistencies. There also was another joke made, during Higgins testimony about his son. Instead of clearing up the discrepancies the commissioner made a joke about the son's tattoos and red hair. It felt like the question and answer part between the inmate and the board was fake. There were other times when it felt like the board was making it easy for the inmate to answer the questions so they would get the answer they wanted. I remember one time they even said "what if I ask you like this" and re-positioned the question they were asking as to lead him to the "correct" response.

It is against the law to text and drive, it's proven, it's distracting. While the victims were reading their impact statements the presiding commissioner was typing away on his computer. Some of our impact statements were in the file but some were not. The impact statements are heart wrenching and exhausting to write, let alone to present. The deputy commissioner was literally falling asleep. From where I was sitting I couldn't see the presiding commissioner's face behind his mounted computer. When he read the verdict he did not position himself in a respectful way to us. I was put in an uncomfortable position, I didn't want to get out of my chair but I had to look at the board as they read their decision. I did eventually stand, it did not feel comfortable, respectful and mannerly, looking at the back of the monitor, I needed to see the human speak.

I am not writing this about the decision that was made on May 30th. I am writing this to explain my experience, the way we were treated. The integrity of the response to questioning. It was hurtful. To get our family to San Quintin, putting our lives on hold, is an endeavor. It felt like an insult on top of the obvious injury. My impact statement and the reasons he should stay in prison are in the file. Please let me know if I should send another copy.

Thank You,
Robin Bolger