

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

January 6, 2017

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to express our deep concern for the many Oregonians who are currently serving mandatory minimum sentences for nonviolent offenses in federal prison that are disproportionate to the crimes that they committed.

In many cases, mandatory minimum sentences have imprisoned people for far longer than is just. We commend the administration's efforts to commute the sentences of federal prisoners. We urge you to review the sentences of the many Oregonians who are currently serving mandatory minimum sentences for nonviolent offenses in federal prison and commute those that are eligible where doing so would be appropriate given the circumstances of the case.

As you know, mandatory minimum sentences strip judges of their ability to analyze the particular facts of a case in order to devise appropriate sentences, and impose extraordinary costs on society and of course on those whose lives are affected. This has resulted in hundreds of thousands of people serving sentences that are disproportionate to the crimes that they committed. As more and more people are incarcerated under mandatory minimum sentences for nonviolent offenses, the enormous costs of over incarceration continue to take resources away from effective strategies such as crime prevention and prisoner reentry programs. This method of sentencing doesn't make our communities safer, and many of these prisoners deserve to have their sentences reviewed.

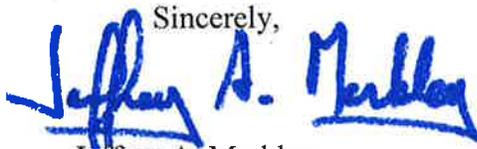
In light of the bipartisan effort currently underway in Congress to move away from "one size fits all" sentencing, we urge you to review the sentences of the many Oregonians who are eligible and currently serving mandatory minimum sentences for nonviolent offenses in federal prison, and consider commuting those sentences to a reduced sentence or time served, where circumstances make it appropriate.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

CC: Attorney General Loretta Lynch
U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon Billy J. Williams