

Michael A. Conat #369188
Gus Harrison Correctional Facility
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To the State of Michigan House of Representatives Judiciary
Committee:

Hello. My name is Michael Conat and I am writing to you in support of the Juvenile Second Chance Legislation. At the age of fifteen I was arrested for the shooting death of my sister, Laura.

I deeply regret what I did. In this selfish act that I committed my parents lost not just one, but both of their children. They are the surviving victims in this tragedy and they want me to come home to them. They need to experience the healing and closure that will only come when we can be a family again.

The person that committed the offense was an immature fifteen year old boy. I have changed drastically in the past 11 years and am not the same person I once was. Now I am a mature, intelligent, calm, twenty-seven year old man who works hard, demonstrates positive leadership among his peers, is a good decision maker, and is a model prisoner who has never received a misconduct report.

Since being incarcerated I have earned my G.E.D., 18 college credits from Ohio University with a 3.075 G.P.A., and will have an additional 5 credits once I complete my current class. I have become certified in 3 vocational trades. In addition, I have completed the Conflict Resolution, Beat the Street, Medication Management, Symptom Management, and Rational Emotive Behavior classes, along with numerous bible studies.

I have held a job for most of my time in the Michigan Department of Corrections. I worked as a porter for 8 months and an academic tutor for 13 months. For the past 5½ years I have worked in Food Service, 3½ years as the commissary clerk and the last year as the head clerk where I am responsible for ordering, inventory, payroll, filing, and training of new clerks.

The last 3 summers I volunteered in a garden that grew fresh produce for local charities. I play the guitar and organ at

church. I also wrote 3 articles which were published in Michigan History Magazine.

In the event I am released my plans are to live with my parents, get a job, and attend college part-time. Once my parole is completed I plan to attend a 4 year university full-time, using the money I saved while working, to pursue a bachelors degree in business. The college degree, combined with my work experience while incarcerated and on parole, I believe would better prepare me for a career and enable me to be an even more productive member of society.

This letter demonstrates that it is possible for an individual to change themselves for the better while incarcerated. I truly hope you will give me, and those who have worked hard to earn it, a second chance. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Conat

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