

My name is Toree Warfield, Incline Village resident and friend to parolee, Wesley Goetz.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to me today. I am here to talk about concerns I have regarding P&P.

I realize that my experience is limited to one parolee but I feel that if these things are happening to Wes, a registered sex offender, they may also be happening to others.

First of all, I am grateful for the work the Parole and Probation Department does to keep our communities safe. It is a difficult and important job, and I suspect the officers are over-worked, as are many people in government jobs, serving the public.

I am here to attempt to illustrate the other side of the picture, that of the perpetrators, parolees and prisoners. I think it might be possible to forget, when working in the fields responsible for the management of this segment of society, that these people are also human beings with wants, needs and feelings.

To illustrate, I will use Wes' story. Understand that I have known Wes from before the time he committed this crime, I know the victim and her mother and I have a complete understanding of what occurred and why.

From the beginning, Wes took responsibility for his actions. While in prison, he made use of the time to educate and improve himself. He was in communication with me during his time in prison and we have been involved since his release. I think of myself as a mentor to Wes, helping him to navigate the difficulties he has encountered, which have been many, due to his label as registered sex offender.

Upon his release into the care of P&P, he has strived to follow the rules and be a model parolee. He has had several POs, some more willing than others to work with him and help him to achieve his goals. Due to his good behavior, he has been given more freedoms.

In the last year, despite the fact that he has done nothing to indicate he is not behaving like a responsible and good citizen, his freedoms have slowly begun to be curtailed. His actions are being questioned to the point where he is becoming fearful and distrustful.

An example: A couple of months ago, Wes and I were talking on the phone. I was trying to tell him something and he was being snippy with me. He finally told me he was busy and had to go and hung up. I was not done telling him what I wanted to tell him so I sent him a text, admonishing him that I was trying to help him and he'd better not alienate one of the few people on his side.

He eventually called me back and told me why he had been short with me. He told me that he was thinking that he couldn't trust me. He felt that when he told me something he was planning, something bad would happen.

He used as an example the fact that he had told me that he had gotten a call from a "customer" who wanted to "hire" him as a chauffeur, which, as you may know, turned out to be a sting operation. He had been thinking that perhaps I had planned this with Officer Chambers. (I could expound at length regarding this unnecessary "sting" operation).

As his mentor and friend, I knew this to be some wild thinking but I understood something. The real or imagined persecution and harassment were getting to him. He was becoming paranoid, distrustful and fearful.

I understand this all too well. I was briefly (for four years) married to an abusive and manipulative man. This man quickly put me into a position where he had power and control over me, and yes, I allowed this to happen. It was a terrible yet humbling experience and I learned much about abuse, the abusers and their victims.

I had recognized that the same thing was happening to Wes with his current parole officer. His parole officer had complete control over Wes. The harder Wes struggled, the more he became entangled, the less free he became. Even though Wes was doing nothing wrong!

It is a terrible position to be in. I know, because I lived it. And because I lived it, I recognize it and have determined to fight such abuse, no matter what the situation. I tried to coach Wes on how to "manage" this situation. I told him that the harder he pushed, the harder he was going to be pushed back.

I think that P&P has a huge responsibility to keep the public safe. I also believe that P&P has a responsibility to the people they are "managing".

I believe that even an ex-con has a right to the pursuit of a life. I was told by Wes' current PO that Wes couldn't just be out there doing whatever he wanted. His travel permits had to be for legitimate work purpose only.

Which I took to mean, "...a parolee is only to be allowed to pursue work opportunities, no recreation or pleasure".

I think part of the problem is that there is not a detailed enough process whereby to identify "risk". I understand liability and that P&P will be held liable and accountable should one of their clients re-offend.

Again, using Wes as an example, Wes has been out for seven years. He has shown no inclination to re-offend. I personally know with 100% assuredness, that Wes will not ever re-offend. I know that P&P cannot possibly know that but after seven years, I believe that at some point the level of confidence in Wes should be increasing, NOT decreasing.

As I have stated, Wes' freedoms are becoming less and harder to attain. At least a part of the purpose of P&P must be to reintegrate an ex-con fully back into society. It would be more beneficial to the state to HELP the parolee achieve this, not constantly put up roadblocks, as is happening with Wes.

Wes is a different sort of person. His current PO is attempting to shove a square peg into a round hole, and I believe, simply because he can.

I realize that P&P has to be free to perform its job. But I believe that, in the name of "We are just doing our job", there is a potential for abuse.

Wes has attempted to file complaints with the Division of Professional Responsibility. Perhaps I am wrong, but I see this division as sort of a "cop on cop" situation, not as a platform for a parolee to air a grievance.

So it seems to me, there is not really a way for a parolee to complain or receive justice. No one is perfect, not even police officers and officers also need to be held accountable for their actions. It should not be assumed that each PO is properly and fairly doing his/her job. And, if a parolee believes he is not being treated fairly, there should be some "higher power" that can help him achieve satisfaction. So far, nothing has come of Wes' (legitimate) complaints.

Since I am here, and briefly on prisons, I have known people incarcerated in the Utah prison system. I also do business with an entity located within Utah State Prison. I have them print my T-shirts. I get a great product at a price that allows me to make money when I resell them, the inmate I deal with is courteous and professional.

Has anyone looked at Utah for ideas? A person I know who spent time as an inmate at "the point of the mountain", as locals called it, had the opportunity to develop and work in the garden. He was quite excited and proud of his work there.

I think it is paramount to provide prisoners a way to gain some pride and self-respect. I suspect there are dozens of business endeavors that could be started in the prisons that could ultimately make money for the state while providing prisoners with a chance to learn a trade and feel pride in the fact that they are working and contributing; also preparing them for eventual release in re-entry into society.

Some of these people get out of prison with no skills, too long out of the job force, labeled as ex-con—therefore finding it extremely difficult to get a job. The more tools we can give our inmates, the better society will be in the long-run.

Reference materials:

Next stop:

ACLU of Nevada

Non-Profit Organization

Address: 1325 Airmotive Way #202, Reno, NV 89502

Phone: [\(775\) 786-6757](tel:(775)786-6757)

<http://aclunv.org/node/12> to file a complaint on line, request for help

I plan on helping Wes file a complaint online with the ACLU.

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If I get a chance to get down there and actually speak, I will be covering the portions in black, as I have written too much. As it is, the black portions are still 5 minutes long!