

Sisters Inside Inc.

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Sisters Inside Inc. is an independent community organisation which exists to advocate for the human rights of women in the criminal justice system

14 June 2019

John Robertson
Chair
Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council

By email only: submissions@sentencingcouncil.qld.gov.au

Dear Judge

Supplementary submission – Court ordered parole

We refer to your letter dated 10 June 2019 regarding options to amend legislation in relation to court ordered parole. Thank you for the opportunity to provide further comments on this issue.

Sisters Inside does not support amendments to section 160B of the PSA to introduce a dual discretion to set either a parole release date or parole eligibility date for sentences of three years or less, but retaining other criteria.

In our view, s160B(2) ought to be amended to introduce a discretion for courts to set a parole release date in circumstances where they are now required to set a parole eligibility date – that is, in circumstances where people are sentenced to further periods of imprisonment for offences committed while they were on parole.

The current requirement to set a parole release date under section 160B(3) must be maintained. This requirement provides certainty for people sentenced for short periods of imprisonment, under three years. We are concerned that introducing a discretion to set a parole eligibility date would result in more people in prison, with serious economic and social costs to individuals and communities. In our view, this would disproportionately affect women, who are more likely to be sentenced to short periods of imprisonment.

In relation to sexual offences, we would support a dual discretion to set a parole release date or a parole eligibility date where the sentence of imprisonment imposed is three years or less. We believe this legislative amendment would balance greater flexibility and current community expectations in respect of these offences.

If you require any further information about this letter, please contact me on [REDACTED]

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]
Marissa Dooris
Policy Officer
Sisters Inside Inc