

# LIFERS' GROUP INC.

## PAROLE FACT SHEET - SEPTEMBER 14, 2020

The Lifers' Group has received 89 Records of Decision posted online from January 1 through May 31, 2020 - a significantly large number of Records of Decision in five months. If that rate holds - nearly 12 per month, then the Parole Board may render nearly 200 Records of Decision in 2020. The Lifers Group will follow up with other public records requests in 2020 and 2021 for the rest of the Records of Decisions published online in 2020. Notable results from the 89 decisions already received are:

- Approval Rate was **41.6%** - an increase from 2019 (38.9%) or 2018 (29.1%). If the 41.6% Approval Rate holds for all of 2020, it will be the highest Approval Rate since 2004 (46.6%) and the second highest Approval Rate since 2003 when the Lifers' Group began studying parole decisions.
- **Three** lifers were approved who had Initial Hearings (3 of 22). From 2017 - 2019, only two lifers had been approved after Initial Hearings.
- Over **one-half** (34 of 67 or 50.7%) of lifers who had Review Hearings were approved for paroles. This compares favorably to 43.1% in 2019 and 35% in 2018.
- The percentage of 4 and 5 year Setbacks in the 89 Records of Decision was **53.8%** [28.8% (4) and 25% (5)]. This is a decrease from 59% in 2019 and 2018. The three year Setback rate increased to **35%** from 30% in 2019 and 27% in 2018.
- The average time between Hearing Dates and Dates of Decision was **250** days, a decrease from 290 days in 2019 and 310 days in 2018. The Parole Board did expedite 22 decisions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The average time for those 22 decisions was 200 days. The adjusted average time for the 67 non-expedited decisions rose to 266 days.
- **53** out of 89 decisions noted that the lifer had been represented by counsel at the hearing. Of the 53, **29** were approved. Of the 36 lifers not represented by counsel, **8** were approved for a parole.
- For the 89 Records of Decision so far received for 2020, as in 2019, **45%** of lifers age 50 and younger were approved. For lifers age 51 and over, **36%** were approved for a parole, a decrease from 43% in 2019.
- Whether or not District Attorney's offices testified or submitted letters or both opposing lifers at parole hearings yielded interesting results. Only the Suffolk District Attorney's office, in those decisions which noted actions taken by the respective D.A.'s offices, did not oppose every lifer. The Suffolk D.A.'s office **did not oppose** nine lifers and **submitted letters of support** for two others. We are indebted to Norfolk's A.A.C.C. for their bringing to the attention of the Suffolk County D.A. the fact that prior to 2020, D.A.'s offices rarely, did not stand opposed to a lifer's being approved for a parole, even in cases where the respective D.A.'s office had agreed to a plea bargain.

The Lifers' Group Inc. will be preparing and publishing a full report on all 2020 Records of Decision in 2021 after receiving the rest of the Records of Decision for the year 2020.