



*The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 100-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.*

October 1, 2020

To: Governor Kate Brown  
Office of the Governor  
900 Court Street NE, Suite 254  
Salem, OR 97301-4047

Re: Prisoner protections and early release during COVID-19 pandemic

Dear Governor Brown,

The League has a position on Adult Corrections which strongly favors increased use of alternatives to incarceration where possible. The League also believes that comprehensive transitional programs are essential for successful completion of rehabilitation for each inmate released or paroled from a correctional facility.

For many years, the League of Women Voters has been interested in the functioning of our prison system. The recent testimony of Colette Peters, superintendent of the Department of Corrections, at the Judiciary Committee was of particular interest. We commend the early release of prisoners who were close to the end of their sentences and who were vulnerable to complications if they contracted the coronavirus and were impressed with the careful review of each file prior to early release.

This action will help reduce overcrowding in the prisons, where it is difficult to control the spread of COVID-19. It is imperative that we try to avoid transmission of this infection among staff as well as the prison population. Your participation in the orderly review of persons who can be safely released is appreciated. The League commends your attention to this critical issue and urges you to continue this process of early release for those who will likely be successful.

Thank you for your efforts to keep all Oregonians safe during these crises.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca L. Gladstone".

Rebecca Gladstone  
LWVOR President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Ross".

Barbara Ross  
LWVOR Public Safety Portfolio