

**INQUIRY INTO SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AND
MANAGEMENT OF INMATES SENTENCED TO LIFE
IMPRISONMENT**

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 25/10/2015

Partially Confidential

24 October 2015

The Director
Standing Committee on Law and Justice
Parliament House, Macquarie St,
Sydney NSW 2000.
T: (02) 9230 2898
E: law@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Director,

Submission to the Legislative Council Inquiry on the “Management of Lifers”

I am deeply disturbed to learn of the proposal for harshening the treatment of prisoners serving life sentences that I understand is currently before the NSW Legislative Council’s inquiry into the “Security Classification and Management of Prisoners Sentenced to Life Imprisonment without Parole.” I believe that this proposal is improper and should be dismissed.

I believe that the lesson of the highly emotive petition appeal of Mrs Christine Simpson is that better support must be provided for the relatives of victims of serious crimes, so that they are able to heal from the grief and pain of their terrible losses.

In fact, no victim’s relative should be given the opportunity of influencing the outcome of a sentenced inmate’s classification review.

I hope that you will review victim support services with a view to providing the immediate families of murder victims with access to specialist, in-depth bereavement counselling. Mrs Simpson deserves compassion,

There are more constructive, more restorative approaches to victimhood, and it is appropriate that care be taken (and that the small sum of public funds necessary be invested) so that she and others like her can reap the benefit of such approaches.

People sentenced to life imprisonment have that penalty imposed on them as the outcome of a thorough legal process. It is that process that legitimizes their lifetime incarceration. The rule of law will be weakened if arbitrary harshening

of their suffering is inflicted because of the intensity of the victim's relatives' animosity against them.

Society must certainly make clear that it will not tolerate murder. But this is adequately done through heavy sentences, especially the life sentence. The "pains of imprisonment" run deep. It is enough if the sentencing court deprives a killer of mobility, family life, prospects of having children, membership of society, the right to make everyday choices, and so on for the rest of his / her life. Further cruelty will do nothing but degrade and brutalize the offender, the officers responsible for inflicting and maintaining that cruelty, and all of us as a society.

Please do not let important legal principles be undermined by emotion.

Yours sincerely,