

Terrence Hayes

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Testimony of Terrence Hayes in support of Oregon Senate Bill 1511.

Birthdays. Graduations. Weddings. Funerals. While I was incarcerated after my conviction by a non-unanimous jury, there wasn't a milestone I didn't miss. I thought the pain of my conviction would ease after my release, but it persisted. Job applications ignored. Housing denied. You would think that a nearly two-decades old conviction wouldn't matter, but it does. It matters in small and big ways.

This bill before you all today, SB 1511, will not give me back those years with my children, nor the opportunities I have been denied. But beyond the significant practical consequences for those who were convicted by a non-unanimous jury and whose cases are no longer pending, it will give so many Oregonians – myself included – the recognition and acknowledgment that harm was done, justice was not delivered, and our state will strive to be better. I urge you: let the passage of this historic legislation be a milestone we don't have to miss.