

My name is Steve Finner and I am a resident of Barre City.

I am a volunteer lobbyist for Vermont Interfaith Action and a member of their Corrections and Housing Organizing committees.

However my very brief comments this morning represent only my personal view.

Each year, a number of men exit our correction institutions and become residents of transitional housing of one kind or another. Halfway houses are one example of these. Or they are approved for housing with a family member. I do not know the number but it is easily obtainable from the Department of Corrections.

They hold a job and are on their way to a successful reentry into our community. After some time, they have saved enough money to rent an apartment and fill out one or more applications which ask if they have ever been convicted of a felony. They answer honestly and are not approved for renting the apartment.

Granted some of these people are on the sex offender registry and the apartment may not be available to them for that reason because of its location. But the others have served their time and for them to be denied the the opportunity to rent an apartment because they have committed a felony is poor public policy as we try to accomplish successful re-entry into our communities of these Vermonters.

I thank you for your consideration of this testimony and for your service.