

June 16, 2025

When I was arrested and wrongfully convicted 9 years ago, making friends in prison was not on my list of things to do. I realized quickly, for myriad reasons, that there were very few people I wanted to associated with. I've become isolated because I have nothing in common with those around me and I have no interest in those things which other captives seem interested in. Surprisingly, I found a friend, so let me tell you about my friend David Sowers.

David Sowers is a 68 year old man who exudes calm. He is well educated and is well collected. He speaks of fairness, equality and acts in a manner that is becoming of those ideals. He exhibits a level of patience that I envy and compassion I share. He is a good man. Knowing this, you might be surprised that he has now served 44 years in the Virginia DOC. He was arrested in 1981. There are no crimes I am able to name that justify more than 4 decades in prison. Every other civilized country in the world agrees with that sentiment. Many of the 50 states have come to that same conclusion. On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025 David was denied parole for the 30<sup>th</sup> time. I am not only addended for my friend David, who is the exact example of who should be granted parole, but I am actually offended by so blind a decision. David simply takes it in stride.

As the Virginia parole board knows, they violated David's due process, as per VA Code Section 51-1-136; there was no public hearing and he never met with the board itself. I am going to write numerous articles and essays about the VA parole board, who I see as a state sponsored terrorist group. My friend David will write a well thought out essay about justice and probably several haikus which he really enjoys and is quite good at. I am going to exhibit resistance fighter levels of ire and openly accuse the parole board of a number of provable legal and human rights violations. David will continue to be, in every way, a perfect candidate for parole as he prepares for the next review, patiently doing everything expected of him regardless of the fact that the Virginia parole board cannot see anything beyond a single event in 1981, 44 years ago.

I have no idea what David's crime was, I don't ask. It was 44 years ago and it is entirely irrelevant to his being my friend. I was 6 in 1981 and I am certain that I did some stupid things too. I don't want to know what he did because it will not change my opinion of who he is; a good man who helps me navigate the nightmare that is Virginia's prisons, and who has become a very human being in spite of more than four decades of inhumane captivity. I don't need to know what crime he committed 44 years ago in 1981. He finished paying his debt 20 years ago and every civilized country would

agree. Continuing to hold this man in a prison only proves that Virginia is inhumane and a failed state.

Making matters worse, the Virginia parole board under the state pariah Patricia West, combined two separate parole hearings – based on totally separate criteria – into one denial. This is just another example of a government agency acting in a lawless manner, something in the Virginia parole board does weekly. The Virginia parole board and Patricia West are violent criminals. They have done nothing but cause harm to thousands of captives who debts and so much more are paid. My friend David is among those who have bene harmed and victimized by that parole board.

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