

FRESH POND MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

June 4, 2017

Governor Charles Baker
Speaker Robert DeLeo
Joint Committee on the Judiciary

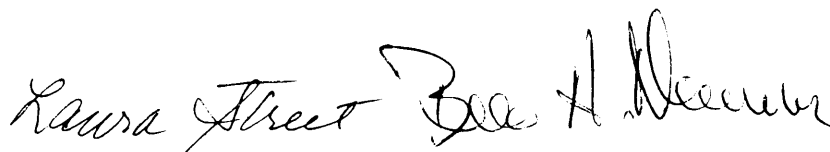
Members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) have a long-standing concern for criminal justice, and have introduced reforms and innovations, from the beginnings of the penitentiary system in the 18th Century to the present day.

Friends believe that each person is of worth and should be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their circumstances in life, or their behavior towards others.

It is time to take a hard look at our systems of criminal justice. Business as usual of incarceration and isolation buries people alive, rather than giving them a new chance at life. Recent innovations in restorative justice have shown that alternatives to punitive justice are possible.

A number of bills have been introduced this legislative session that begin to improve our broken penal system. A list of those bills is attached. In addition to these incremental changes we therefore support comprehensive criminal justice reform in Massachusetts, in order to promote restorative justice, support alternatives to incarceration, reform the pretrial process, and reduce the criminalization of poverty and race.

On behalf of Fresh Pond Meeting,
Laura Street and Bruce Neumann,
Co-clerks



5 CADBURY RD. CAMBRIDGE MA 02140