

## Agenda Item #10C - Public Input

From: [Tess Dornfeld](#)  
To: [Guidelines, Sentencing \(MSGC\)](#)  
Subject: sentencing guidelines comment  
Date: Thursday, December 29, 2016 4:51:17 PM

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Good afternoon,

I'm writing to add my voice to those in favor of allowing defendants to use the new sentencing guidelines to calculate criminal history scores. Frankly it seems like a bit of an absurd debate to me; what was the point of revising the guidelines last year if they're going to be ignored? If the legislature agreed that the new guidelines should be adopted, then there should be no disagreement over whether these are the guidelines that should in fact be used.

Beyond the simple fact that if new guidelines are approved then the new guidelines should be used, however, are the deeper issues that the new guidelines address. A person doesn't have to be very engaged today to know that the war on drugs has been an epic failure, mass incarceration is a crisis, and disproportionate punishments are having serious consequences throughout our society. You can look up the facts and figures yourself, but it's not hard to understand that the harshly punitive approaches of the past are not having the desired outcomes, and we need to rethink our policies.

The new sentencing guidelines are an excellent starting place, as evidenced by their adoption in the legislature, and so it is clear in both practical and moral terms that defendants should at the very least have the option for the new guidelines to be used in their cases.

Thank you,

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