

Bartleson, Debra K. - CC City Council Central Office

From: Victoria McVicker <VMcVicker@safehouse-denver.org>
Sent: Wednesday, April 26, 2017 2:11 PM
To: Stuart, Skye L. - MO Mayor's Office; Bartleson, Debra K. - CC City Council Central Office
Subject: Ordinance amending the sentencing structure for violations of the Denver Revised Muni Code

April 26, 2017

Denver City Council Members
1437 Bannock Street
Denver, CO 80202
c/o Skye Stuart and Debra Bartleson

Dear Esteemed Members of City Council:

On behalf of SafeHouse Denver, I urge you to support the proposed municipal sentencing reform ordinance. Under the current ordinances, defendants convicted of park curfew violations and petty theft can receive the same sentences as defendants convicted of third and subsequent domestic violence offenses. The disparity of such convictions is incongruent, illogical and dangerous.

Crimes in which the defendant has immediate, easy access to the victims – crimes that include domestic violence – put the victims at increased risk of subsequent and escalated harm. And, crimes of domestic violence charged at the municipal (vs. misdemeanor or felony) level should not be considered “low risk.” Indeed, in 2016 a victim in Denver was murdered by her abuser mere weeks after he was charged with municipal domestic violence offense. By addressing domestic violence and family violence offenders early and swiftly beginning at the municipal ordinance level we as a community can better prevent future injuries and homicides.

I appreciate the work done by the City Attorney’s Office to rectify the inequities in Denver’s municipal sentencing in such a way that better protects victims of domestic violence. I encourage City Council members to adopt this sentencing reform ordinance on behalf of victims and all members of our community.

If you have any questions regarding my recommendation, please do not hesitate to contact me at 303-302-6120.

Sincerely,

Victoria A. McVicker

CEO
SafeHouse Denver
1649 Downing Street
Denver, CO 80218
303-302-6120 (O)

Helping adults, children and youth in reclaiming their right to a life free of domestic violence.