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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 9 January 2020 9:47 AM  
**To:** sentencingcouncil  
**Subject:** Submission from Dr M A Hanlon to the NSW Sentencing Council

To Whom it May Concern at the NSW Sentencing Council

**Review of sentencing for murder and manslaughter  
and the standard non-parole periods for murder**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I understand that the NSW Attorney General Mark Speakman has recently called for the abovenamed review to be conducted by the NSW Sentencing Council.

The areas of most concern to me are sections 6.11, 6.12, and 6.13 on page 91 of [www.sentencingcouncil.justice.nsw.gov.au/Pages/Homicide.aspx](http://www.sentencingcouncil.justice.nsw.gov.au/Pages/Homicide.aspx).

It is distressing to note that “NSW is the only Australian jurisdiction where parole is not available for life sentences. Elsewhere in Australia life sentences are either discretionary or mandatory.”

I am concerned that under current NSW legislation prescribing standard non-parole periods for murder and what is known as “truth in sentencing” law, a judge has no discretion but to impose a life sentence with no hope of parole for the heinous crime of murder. A person thus sentenced will serve the remainder of their life incarcerated and never have the chance to make a life for themselves outside of their ‘life’ as a prisoner in jail, no matter how long they have been in prison, how good their behaviour has been during their long period of incarceration, nor how promising their prospects for being returned to the community to conduct themselves as a model citizen are deemed to be.

Would the NSW Sentencing Council therefore kindly take the following into consideration during your review:

1. I have committed a heinous crime. But to know that I will never be released from prison, dooms me to a life unto death utterly devoid of hope for the remainder of a decent human life in the foreseeable future.
2. Please give me that hope by changing the current legislation to enable, from the outset of sentencing me to my prison term for murder, that there be a discretionary parole period for my crime for the court to determine.
3. With that prospect of discretionary parole in place at sentencing, I can then *begin* my sentence in prison knowing that once I have demonstrated that I have paid for my crime by serving a long prison sentence on my best behaviour, that I will pose no threat to anyone upon my release, and that I have undertaken during the course of my prison term to prepare myself well for the rest of my life outside jail, you will have the discretion to show me clemency by granting me parole. That will be a future to look forward to and will no doubt guide me on my path to rehabilitation every moment along the way.

I thank you for taking this submission into consideration.

Yours sincerely,  
Dr Margaret Ann Hanlon, BA(Hons), PhD  
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