

# Felons' Rights to Vote

Claudia Arredondo

In Illinois felons are allowed to vote as long as they're not incarcerated. After their release from prison, while on parole or probation, felons have the right to vote. In other states felons aren't allowed to vote, or they have to wait until they are off parole or probation. Our 15th Amendment says that states can't "prevent a citizen from voting because of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." Some felons in this country are having their right to vote taken away. I don't think this is fair.

Many felons are tax payers. The majority of felons who are not incarcerated work and pay taxes. They should be allowed to vote. If felons have paid their debt to society, society should not take their right to vote away.

People may think that felons are not capable of making "educated decisions" such as voting, yet they are released from prison to live among other human beings. What's going to happen next? Are states are going to start saying that poor people aren't allowed to vote, because they'd be considered "incapable of making such an educated decision?"

We, the people, make up this country. Some states are sending the message that felons aren't important

enough to vote, that their opinions don't matter, and that we don't value them. If states prohibit felons from voting, they are degrading them as people. To me, it is discriminatory.



Claudia Arredondo is 21 years old and working towards a GED. As soon as she passes the exam (hopefully this year), she plans to go to college.



Yusuf Stroud is currently working on his GED in St. Louis, MO.