

Nicholson campaign: Urges Wisconsin Parole Chair to deny parole to Daniel Dower for murdering his foster father Joseph Vite

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DELAFIELD, Wis. – Today, Kevin Nicholson sent a [letter](#) to Wisconsin Parole Board Chair John Tate, who was appointed by Governor Tony Evers, demanding that he deny parole and keep Daniel Dower behind bars for brutally murdering his foster father, Joseph Vite, in 1985. This demand comes at the request of the Vite family, who reached out to Nicholson with concerns over Tate's egregious decisions to let murderers back into society. The Vite family believes the parole board is scheduled to take up Dower's parole on June 7th.

Nicholson previously called on Evers to use his authority and influence to encourage Tate to reverse his parole decision in the case of Douglas Balsewicz. Ultimately, Evers did so, and the parole board did not release Balsewicz. Nicholson also encouraged Evers to remove Tate from the board – something Evers has not yet done.

Nicholson's letter reads as follows:

June 1, 2022

John Tate

Chair, Wisconsin Parole Commission

ParoleCommission@wisconsin.gov

3099 East Washington Ave.
Madison, WI 53704

Mr. Tate:

I am writing on behalf of the family of murder victim, Joseph Vite. At their request, I strongly urge you to deny parole to Daniel Dower when the Wisconsin Parole Commission meets with him on June 7th.

On January 16, 1985, Joseph Vite was murdered; he was shot as he walked into his home. Eric Nelson was one of two people convicted for the first-degree murder of Vite on May 10, 1985, and was subsequently sentenced to life in prison. Despite the fact that the victim's family, former Kenosha County Executive Jim Kreuser, and Kenosha County District Attorney Michael Graveley, [all opposed the release of Eric Nelson](#), you and other members of the Wisconsin Parole Commission released Nelson from confinement on November 30, 2020. In doing so, you further ignored [3,202 citizens of the Kenosha community who signed a petition requesting you keep Nelson behind bars](#).

Today, due to your callous disregard for public safety, Eric Nelson is free and living in Menasha, Wisconsin. Due to Nelson's release, and your recent plan to release convicted murderer [Douglas Balsewicz](#), Joseph Vite's family reached out to me to ask for help in ensuring that Joseph Vite's other convicted murderer, Daniel Dower, is not released.

[Daniel Dower](#), Joseph Vite's foster son, callously planned and executed Vite's murder along with Eric Nelson. Along with Nelson, he was also convicted of first-degree murder on May 10, 1985, and was sentenced to life in prison, plus five years. Joseph Vite's family has informed me that Dower is scheduled for a parole hearing on June 7, 2022.

Given Dower's pending parole board hearing, and given your board's atrocious record, I am asking on behalf of the Vite family - and the people of Wisconsin - that you deny Dower parole and keep him incarcerated.

Given the deadly nature of their crimes and convictions, it was completely inappropriate for your board to release Eric Nelson, and to attempt to release Douglas Balsewicz. The state of Wisconsin has [experienced a 62% increase in murders between 2019 and 2020, and the violent crime rate per 100,000 people](#)

[rose 8.85% during that same time.](#) *Law and order, along with public safety, is dissolving in our society because people like you have undermined the role of law enforcement officials, while also working to free violent offenders.*

Before you make another egregious mistake that endangers the people of Wisconsin, I call on you and the rest of the Wisconsin Parole Commission: keep Daniel Dower in prison. Ensure that he serves out the rest of his life sentence behind bars.

Semper Fi,

Kevin Nicholson