

Department of Correction
Testimony of Leo C. Arnone, Commissioner

Judiciary Committee
March 23, 2012

Raised Bill No. 5546, *An Act Concerning Sentence Modification for Juveniles*

Good morning, Senator Coleman, Representative Fox and members of the Judiciary Committee. I, Leo Arnone, Commissioner of the Department of Correction submit this testimony in support of Raised Bill No. 5546, *An Act Concerning Sentence Modification for Juveniles*.

This bill would require the Connecticut Sentencing Commission to study the feasibility of establishing a process by which a person who, while a juvenile was tried and convicted as an adult for a serious offense, and given a long-term sentence, would be afforded a meaningful opportunity to make a petition based on demonstrated rehabilitation and maturity for a sentence reduction after serving a portion of their term of imprisonment. As you know, I have worked with both the juvenile as well as the adult offender population for 38 years. I know from my own personal experiences with these populations and scientific research that the brain of an adolescent is still in the process of growth and development. The adult brain – and its control over impulsivity and judgment – is not fully developed until about the age of 25.

I sincerely look forward to working with the Sentencing Commission on this matter. The report and recommendations that are submitted to this committee in January may result in giving a person, who did a very bad thing at very young age because they lacked the control and judgment of a mature brain, a second chance to become a contributing, law abiding member of society.

I urge the Committee's support of Raised Bill No, 5546.