

Testimony for Juvenile Sentencing Reform

My name is Sofia Bachiashvili.

I want to thank the commission for allowing me to submit my testimony in regards to the juvenile sentencing.

I am from the Republic of Georgia. I am a senior at the University of Saint Joseph in West Hartford, majoring in International Studies and politics.

When I became aware of some of the sentencing in Connecticut, specifically that minors under the age of 18 could get life sentences without parole and that many others had near life sentences I found it appalling. I became aware, for instance, of one case in particular of a homeless girl of 14 who was sentenced to 50 years for her involvement in a Felony Murder, meaning it was not proven which party performed the actual murder, and she has no opportunity for a parole hearing. There are many more cases like hers. Only a country like Somalia has such draconian sentencing of minors.

I researched the Republic of Georgia statues on similar crimes and discovered the maximum for crime a minor can get is 10 years for ages 14-16 years and 15 years for 16-18 years.

This bill does not address enough of the issues that concern me but it is at least a small measure in the right direction.