

I wish to express my support for the passage of HB 5221, An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Connecticut Sentencing Commission Regarding Lengthy Sentences for Crimes Committed by a Child or Youth and the Sentencing of a Child or Youth Convicted of Certain Felony Offenses.

The US Supreme Court has found that it is unjust to sentence youth to lengthy adult terms in prison, as the reasoning and reflecting capacity of a juvenile brain is still immature. States around the US are now rewriting their sentencing codes to reflect this new brain science. Connecticut should take the step recommended by the CT Sentencing Commission, to make parole POSSIBLE for a juvenile sentenced to an adult term, after they have served 60% of their sentence, AND IF they have shown remorse and rehabilitation. This is the right thing to do. Why continue to incarcerate a prisoner, at the great expense to the state, if they have shown growth and a capacity to rejoin the community?

This is NOT a 'get out of jail free' card. This is simply creating a 'second look' at the record of men and women who have been sentenced to terms inappropriate to their age and maturity at the time of their crime, and consideration of an early release, if the parole board approves.

Please do the right thing. Approve this bill for a vote in the House and Senate. And vote to pass it.

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