



State of Connecticut

SENATE

SENATE MINORITY WHIP

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Sen. Martin Testimony In Support of H.B. 6926 Judiciary Committee March 4th, 2015

Sen. Coleman, Rep. Tong, Ranking Members Kissel and Rebimbas, and members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am Sen. Henri Martin, and I am testifying in favor of H.B. No. 6926 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING LENGTHY SENTENCES FOR CRIMES COMMITTED BY A CHILD OR YOUTH.

My primary focus is on the risk reduction credit portion of this bill, and here's why:

An unspeakable tragedy occurred in my hometown of Bristol last year.

An innocent child was sliced open and murdered by a person who should not have been released from prison.

Prior to allegedly fatally stabbing the baby in Bristol on August 18, Arthur Hapgood was released from prison early, thanks to the state's Risk Reduction Earned Credit program.

Hapgood was released early in spite of failing three drug tests in prison and helping two inmates escape from custody from a halfway house four months earlier.

We need to address the major flaws in the state's Risk Reduction Earned Credit program.

Unfortunately, and to my disappointment, I understand that a bill I introduced – Senate Bill 32 – will not receive a public hearing from this committee.

My bill sought to prohibit any person sentenced for a violent felony from earning risk reduction credit toward a reduction in his prison sentence.

My goal – and the goal of many of my constituents in the greater Bristol area – is to prohibit violent offenders from being released early.

Since my proposal will not be heard in a public setting, I want to bring your attention to Section 12 of this bill before you today, House Bill 6926.

Section 12 would prevent certain violent felons from earning risk reduction credits.

It would prevent those who have been found guilty of manslaughter from getting those credits.
This is a public policy we should all be in favor of.

Let's take a step to make our streets safer and to prevent future tragedies – like the one we saw in Bristol last year, from occurring.

Please support H.B. 6926. Thank you.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Henri Martin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "H" and "M".

Senator Henri Martin
31st District