



1411 K Street N.W., Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20005
202.525.5717

Free Markets. Real Solutions.
www.rstreet.org

Testimony from:

Logan Seacrest, Resident Fellow, Criminal Justice and Civil Liberties, R Street Institute

In SUPPORT of SB 162, “Criminal Procedure – Motion to Reduce Duration of Sentence – Repeal of Sentencing Date Limitation”

January 27, 2026

Judicial Proceedings Committee

Chair Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the committee,

My name is Logan Seacrest, and I am a research fellow in the Criminal Justice and Civil Liberties program at the R Street Institute, a nonprofit, nonpartisan public policy research organization. Our mission is to engage in policy research and outreach to promote free markets and limited, effective government. This is why the sentencing review provisions in Senate Bill 162 are of special interest to us.

We believe SB 162 is a necessary technical fix to ensure fundamental fairness and consistency in Maryland’s sentencing laws.

At present, the Maryland Second Look Act creates an arbitrary distinction in eligibility for judicial review. While the law allows certain individuals between the ages of 18 and 24 at the time of their offense to petition for a sentence reduction, it excludes those who were under the age of 18 if they were sentenced prior to October 1, 2021.¹ This has created an inconsistency in the law, where young adults are afforded an opportunity for review, while that same opportunity is denied to juveniles, despite the Supreme Court ruling the latter is less culpable under the law.²

For example, if a 15-year-old and a 24-year-old were arrested as co-defendants today, the 24-year-old would eventually be eligible for sentence review, while the 15-year-old would not. This discrepancy is not only constitutionally questionable, it represents a departure from the latest developmental science.

¹ Md. Code Ann., Crim. Proc. § 8-110 (West 2021).

² *Roper v. Simmons*, Supreme Court of the United States, March 1, 2005, p. 569; *Miller v. Alabama*, Supreme Court of the United States, June 25, 2012, p. 471.



1411 K Street N.W., Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20005
202.525.5717

Free Markets. Real Solutions.
www.rstreet.org

The prefrontal cortex—responsible for decisions and impulse control—develops rapidly during adolescence, making teens more susceptible to negative influences, but also more responsive to behavioral interventions.³ This higher level of “neuroplasticity” makes rehabilitation more effective in young children than in adults.⁴ Continuing to incarcerate individuals who have demonstrated decades of rehabilitation when they no longer pose a threat to public safety is an inefficient use of state resources.

A limited, effective government should ensure that its mechanism for reviewing sentences is applied logically and equitably, rather than based on an arbitrary date. SB 162 resolves this oversight by removing the date restriction, ensuring that a meaningful opportunity for review is available to all individuals who were under 18 at the time of their offense.

We respectfully ask the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 162.

Thank you for your time,

Logan Seacrest
Resident Fellow
Criminal Justice and Civil Liberties
R Street Institute
lseacrest@rstreet.org

³ Mariam Arain et al., “Maturation of the adolescent brain,” *Neuropsychiatric Disease and Treatment* 9 (April 2013), pp. 449-461. <https://doi.org/10.2147/NDT.S39776>.

⁴ Lisa L. Weyandt et al., “Neuroplasticity in Children and Adolescents in Response to Treatment Intervention: A Systematic Review of the Literature,” *Clinical and Translational Neuroscience* 4:2 (July 2020), p. 21. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2514183X20974231>.