

IN FAVOR OF SB591 - SECOND LOOK ACT

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Dear Members of the Committee

I recently became aware of SB0591, "Criminal Procedure - Petition to Modify or Reduce Sentence (Maryland Second Look Act)," and I support the bill.

I am familiar with a case that the bill would address. Leonard Cirincione's case was well publicized in the local papers and news channels in 1986. He was driving on 33rd Street on a summer evening, a night when the Orioles were playing at Memorial Stadium. Typical for Oriole game nights then, the traffic pattern that evening was changed to one-way to facilitate the game traffic. Lennie, while driving under the influence of drugs, hit traffic officer Richard Miller with his car. There was much publicity when the accident occurred, when Officer Miller died about 40 days later, and during the trial.

Lennie was charged and convicted with first degree murder. There was never any doubt that he was driving the car that hit Officer Miller that evening. What I didn't understand at the time, and still don't, is why he was charged with first degree murder. I am not a lawyer, but I always felt that his charge should have been involuntary manslaughter. His action was reckless, but I don't see how it was premeditated. It was clear at the trial that he had been under the influence of PCP. I am also not a physician or a psychologist, but as a former Baltimore city high school teacher in the late 70's, I saw how PCP crippled individuals and ruined their judgement.

As I followed the news, I was relieved that Lennie did not receive a sentence of capital punishment. I knew Lennie when he was a child and teenager – his family lived on the same street as mine in northeast Baltimore; Lennie was a few years younger than I, so we were not close associates.

He is now in his sixties and has served 32 years for something that probably took less than a minute from start to finish. What happened was horrible, but I don't feel the amount of time he has served is appropriate. Both people's lives, Officer Miller's and Lennie's, were ruined by an action that took seconds to happen. Both of their families suffered for many years. But he has spent way too many years in prison; his serving additional years in prison will not alleviate anyone's pain.

I am a member of an advocate group for Lennie appealing to the Governor to obtain Lennie's parole, rather than having him continue to serve jail time. Ideally, he will obtain parole, but in the meantime, I hope the bill becomes law so that others in similar situations will be given an opportunity to do something productive with the remainder of their lives. Again, thank you for considering this bill.

Sincerely,
Martin Reisinger