

Testimony *in Support* of Senate Bill 1038
Juveniles Convicted as Adults – Sentencing – Limitations and Reduction
(Juvenile Restoration Act)

To: Senator William C. Smith, Jr., Chair, and Members of the Judicial Proceedings
Committee

From: Rashida Gordon

Date: March 12, 2020

Re: Previously Submitted Testimony in Support of the Juvenile Restoration Act, cross-
filed as House Bill 1437

March 4, 2020

To Chairman Clippinger, Vice Chair Attabeary, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

If HB-1437 were to pass, it would be lifechanging for thousands of families. Prohibiting the court from sentencing juveniles to life sentences without the possibility of parole as well as providing methods for “juvenile lifers” to reduce their sentence would bring many families a sense of hope that their families can be reunited. My uncle is one of thousands, if not millions, of individuals that have went to prison as a juvenile with a life sentence with the possibility of parole and used their incarceration as a moment of growth and reflection on the error of their ways and to rehabilitate their character. They work to further their education, as well as providing companionship to family members and serving as mentors in hopes of preventing others from choosing the same path that they did. Additionally, it provides an incentive for juvenile lifers to better themselves in an attempt to be reintegrated into society thanks in large part to the major rehabilitation that occurred.

For these brief, yet monumental reasons, I urge a favorable vote on HB-1437.

Kind Regards,

/s/Rashida Gordon