



# RECTIFY Inc.

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RECTIFY Inc.  
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Honorable Members of the Maryland House of Delegates,

I am writing to you today to request that you vote in favor of SB0123/HB0724 the Second Look Act, a pivotal piece of legislation that holds the potential to bring about transformative change in our state's approach to criminal justice. As a living testament to the power of redemption and rehabilitation, I stand before you as evidence that second chances should indeed be granted, even to those who have committed grave offenses such as homicide.

At the tender age of 18, I found myself entangled in a series of regrettable choices that culminated in a conviction for homicide and a daunting sentence of life plus 15 years in prison. However, within the confines of incarceration, I underwent a profound metamorphosis—a journey marked by introspection, remorse, and an unwavering commitment to self-improvement. Central to my transformation was the pursuit of education. Upon entering the prison system, I was functionally illiterate, a seventh-grade dropout struggling to navigate a world fraught with challenges.



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Yet, fueled by a fervent desire for change, I embarked on a journey of learning, gradually ascending from a place of academic deficiency to one of intellectual empowerment. Education became my cornerstone, illuminating pathways to redemption and equipping me with the tools necessary to effect positive change within myself and others.

In addition to academic pursuits, I actively engaged in rehabilitative programming, recognizing the imperative of addressing underlying issues of violence, trauma, and substance abuse. Through initiatives such as the Alternative to Violence Project and gang intervention programs, I acquired invaluable skills in conflict resolution and community building, endeavoring to foster a culture of healing within the confines of a maximum-security prison. Moreover, my journey toward redemption was deeply intertwined with spirituality and faith-based communities, providing solace, guidance, and a sense of purpose amidst adversity. As I grappled with the complexities of my past, I found solace in the embrace of compassionate mentors and the camaraderie of fellow seekers of redemption, forging bonds that transcended the confines of prison walls. Beyond personal growth, I dedicated myself to serving others, leveraging my experiences to mentor and support fellow inmates in their own journeys of rehabilitation and self-discovery.



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From facilitating cognitive behavioral programs to coordinating peer specialist training initiatives, I endeavored to create a legacy of empowerment and hope within an environment often characterized by despair.

Today, as a forensic peer specialist for the Maryland Office of the Public Defender, I bear witness to the transformative power of second chances on a daily basis. Utilizing my lived experiences as a catalyst for change, I stand as a beacon of hope for those who, like myself, yearn for redemption and a chance to rebuild their lives.

In closing, I implore this esteemed committee to wholeheartedly support the Second Look Act, a landmark piece of legislation that embodies the principles of compassion, fairness, and justice. By affording individuals who have demonstrated genuine remorse and rehabilitation the opportunity for resentencing after 20 years of incarceration, we not only uphold the values of equity and redemption but also pave the way for a more inclusive and compassionate society. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to justice and fairness.

Sincerely,

*Desmond Haneef-Perry*