

March 20, 2025

House Bill 853

To whom it may concern,

I am the mother of Malakai Cooke who was stalked, set up and murdered April 16, 2021 in Frederick, MD at the age of 17. My son started residing with a close friend four months before his murder to protect his family. We spoke all the time and I saw him almost every day. He came to me and told me someone wanted him dead but it was okay that he was going to die. Imagine hearing this from your own child. Malakai was one of a kind, outgoing, full of life. He started being stalked in March of 2021. On the evening of April 16, 2021 we spoke over the phone he was in great spirits. I was suppose to pick him up the next morning. He went out with a few people to get food and just talk and one of the people he was with (who also came to my house several times) called the person who was after my son and told him where he was. My son was dropped off a few hours later walked back into where he was staying for the night. Malakai left his headphones in the persons car, he received a phone call from the person he was with to come back outside he would be there in ten minutes. During this time that person met behind the location with the one that murdered him, told him Malakai was about to come back out. He hid up in the trees, my son came out got into the car for less then five minutes before getting back out of the car. He was walking back inside, they pulled off and the one who murdered him came down the hill and shot my son who did not see him. He wasn't shot once but he was shot four times. Twice in the back, once in the arm and once in the chest and died on scene before the police could get to him.

I attended every single court date for both the person that set him up and the murderer. There wasn't a finalization through the courts until 2024. It was a long, frustrating, devastating situation. I have no fail in the court system after all of this. The one that set him up was suppose to spend the rest of his life in jail but since he was 17 at the time of this crime, a new law was just passed allowing him to plea down to juvenile. He spent one year in the detention center, then went to a juvenile facility where he went from first degree murder to reckless endangerment. He was released one month later because he was going to testify against the one that killed my son. He violated probation several 10 out of 11 times and NOTHING ever happened. He got off probation and house arrest a year later. It's like he didn't do a damn thing. I was destroyed when they let him out. The person

who murdered my son was suppose to get life in prison. A long story made short he got life suspend all but 40. JUSTICE WAS NOT SERVED FOR MALAKAI. He was tragically taken from his family and friends. Our lives will NEVER be the same again. I struggle every since day over the loss of my son.

The thought of defendants who serve 20 years of their sentence being entitled to resentencing every five years is disgusting and has to be a joke. Do you not understand that people are being murdered, their life is lost, the family/friends are torn. This should not be an option at all. Personally, I believe the death sentence should be in all states. They don't deserve a second chance, they don't deserve to be free. They deserve nothing but the worst. They have no conscience. Why even give them this option for taking a life? This is injustice!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Sincerely,

*Katey Cooke*

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