



Testimony - SB 162, Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Criminal Procedure –
Motion to Reduce Duration of Sentence – Repeal of Sentencing Date Limitation
Favorable

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

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Honorable Chairman Smith & Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee:

SEIU Local Local 500 represents thousands of public service workers across Maryland, including workers who serve communities most impacted by the criminal legal system. Our members believe deeply in accountability, rehabilitation, and a justice system that recognizes human growth and transformation over time.

Senate Bill 162 is a narrowly tailored and thoughtful reform. It does not guarantee release, nor does it weaken public safety protections. Instead, it restores judicial discretion by allowing courts to consider sentence reduction motions based on an individual's demonstrated rehabilitation, maturity, and conduct after decades of incarceration. Importantly, SB 162 ensures that these decisions are made transparently, through a court hearing, with full notice to victims and an opportunity for victim impact statements.

Decades of research and lived experience show that people who commit offenses as minors are fundamentally different from adults in terms of brain development, impulse control, and capacity for change. By removing the arbitrary sentencing date cutoff, SB 162 aligns Maryland law with these well-established principles and with evolving standards of fairness and proportionality in sentencing.

From a workforce and community perspective, continuing to incarcerate individuals who no longer pose a threat and who have demonstrated rehabilitation carries significant human and fiscal costs. Allowing courts to review these cases promotes smarter use of

public resources while reinforcing the values of redemption and second chances that strengthen families and communities.

SEIU Local 500 strongly supports SB 162 and urges the Committee to issue a favorable report. This bill reflects Maryland's commitment to justice that is both firm and fair, and to a system that recognizes accountability alongside the possibility of growth and change.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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