

Opposition to Senate Bill (SB) 291 (Richard Collins)

I am a resident of the state of Maryland, and I oppose passing this extremely flawed and dangerous bill that would threaten the public well-being and severely restrict the ability of our civic institutions of governance (i.e., law enforcement, judicial process, social assistance) to provide adequate protection of the general population. Our laws are designed to protect public health and safety of all its citizens on the basis of trust that our institutions remain uncompromised when administering the constitutional decisions handed down by our courts. This piece of legislation represents a clear and present danger to law abiding citizens in the state of Maryland and beyond as it circumvents the defending the public's interests to be free from the risk of violent injury or death at the hands of those who have demonstrated, through past actions, that they are untrustworthy to move freely in our society and to respect the well-being of fellow citizens.

There exists no credible justification to enact such legislation particularly given the fact that there are already numerous mechanisms through which sentences can be reviewed and diminished. Absent of new credible evidence to support resentencing, this is nothing more than a bill seeking to reward criminals, for actions that they choose unlawfully, that harm innocent citizens. This begs the question of how this bill intends to serve justice for the victims and survivors of violent crimes which are unjustly inflicted upon them. This bill does not act as a deterrent of violent criminal actions but rather as an incentive for violent lawbreakers as they premeditate the worst possible outcomes of justice that may be handed down of which they may be willing to accept.

Finally, this is an incredibly callous and insensitive bill that totally disregards the heinous criminal acts and their impact on victims, survivors, families of victims, and the broader community within the state. Greater consideration must be given to the welfare of the law-abiding citizens in the great state of Maryland to ensure our streets and neighborhoods remain safe from violent crime.