

Dontay Toliver

2025-Maryland General Assembly Legislative Session

-Md Second Look Act

Greetings,

-My name is Dontay Toliver I am currently housed at the Eastern Correctional Institution I'm serving a life sentence for a crime I committed when I was 15 years old, I've been locked up for 20 years and I'm now 44 years of age. I think the Md Second Look Act would benefit a lot of inmates who have been incarcerated for a long period of time who've worked on rehabilitation and have taken the proper steps through change of character, education, religion, etc. Many of us have been locked up for a long period of time with no appeals or outlets to look forward to but still work on ourselves to be able to re-enter society. I'm an inmate who benefited from the (JRA) Juvenile Restoration Act and I think the Second Look Act entails some of the same principals as the JRA. Many of my peers such as myself came to prison very young, teenagers or early 20's. I think the Md Second Look Act should be passed to create opportunities for prisoners who are deserving and sincere about bettering themselves in the name of freedom. I can speak to this first hand, I was a 15 year old boy when I first got incarcerated but over the years as I aged and matured I became a different person.

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I aged and matured I became a different person.  
Yes I grew into a man naturally but threw cognitive  
groups, education and programs that also assisted  
my growth. In many cases after many years we find  
to build up respectable resumes through the inst. inst.  
programs but after years and years of being locked  
up appeals eventually run out and the progression

Timeline doesn't match up with the appeal timeline, so after X amount of years that growth that we made those college courses or those traits we earned doesn't have a platform? I think the Second Look Act would fulfill that wish. And yes Parole is a option but with a stiff sentence that might not be feasible. I myself was initially sentenced to a 3 life consecutive sentence that would have me up for parole after 15 years, 15 years for every life sentence.

The Md Second Look Act would provide a great opportunity to a ~~portion~~ nice portion of ~~inmate~~ prisoners who are not threats to the community anymore. Respectfully in my opinion I think the Md Second Look Act should be passed based on that testimony.

Dontay Toliver  
ECT 1/26/97  
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Westover, MD  
21890



David M. Fischer  
ECI #262-021  
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Westover, MD 21890-3368

10 January 2025

House and Senate Judiciary Proceedings Committee  
Attn: Senator Charles E. Sydnor, III  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE:** Testimonial in support of Maryland Second Look Act

Dear Senator Sydnor:

I learned from the *Family Support Network* ([thefamilysupportnetwork.org](http://thefamilysupportnetwork.org)) that the *Maryland Second Look Act* is coming up for consideration this session. As someone who has spent nearly 30 years incarcerated, I am glad that the bill is being given another look. I have been looking forward to its eventual passage for years. There exists a significant time gap between the 5-year cap for a potential Sentence Modification hearing by the judge, and a first parole hearing which may occur decades later. The prison system has many programs available designed to help rehabilitate individuals. These programs, combined with the life-altering experience of long-term incarceration, do work in many cases. However, these beneficial changes are diminished if there is no meaningful possibility of a second chance at rejoining society.

This is my first and only incarceration, but not my first brush with the law. Throughout my teenage years, to my incarceration on my current sentence, I was arrested a number of times. I suffer from "Social Anxiety Disorder," a condition which creates intense anxiety in social situations, making it extremely difficult to make friends. This contributed to my falling in with the only people who would accept me since I couldn't make friends with the people that I wanted to associate with. This "undesirable" crowd was impressed by actions – like shoplifting or breaking into cars –

rather than interesting conversations. As long as I was willing to go along with their criminal inclinations, I was accepted by someone, instead of being ignored by everyone.

I am in no way dismissing my actions. I went along with almost everything. I committed crimes. I am responsible for my conduct and deserve to be punished. I accept responsibility for my actions.

For nearly 30 years I have done everything possible to turn my life around and become a better person. Through the help of a number of Social Work and Case Management programs available in different institutions, I was able to determine how my life ending up going the way it did. And, I have been able to break through much of the social anxiety that was holding me back from making proper associations and friendships.

For most of my incarceration I have tried to help others, working primarily as a tutor in the education department of every institution I have been in. I have helped teach adult education for those with under a 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading level (Reading Academy), teaching students with learning disabilities (like dyslexia), English as a Second Language (ESL) students, GED students preparing to take their exams, and, my current assignment, teaching *Microsoft Office* to post-secondary students. Each position has had unique challenges, which I have enjoyed almost as much as seeing the differences I have made in hundreds of students' lives.

I have also held jobs in Maintenance as an electrician and in the MCE (Maryland Correctional Enterprises) Meatcutting Plant as the head of the Maintenance Department. I have earned dozens of certificates, letters from supervisors, and even a college degree from *Ohio University* with a perfect 4.0 average.

And, over the last few years, especially during our quarantine lockdowns, I have been looking to the future and what my post-incarceration life might look like. I have developed a plan to build a completely off-grid, 10-acre homestead, for myself and my family. Raising our own animals and crops to provide clean, organic food in a healthy environment. I have read every book on construction, farming, raising animals,

preparing food, land management, etc. that I could get my hands on, and turned that knowledge into a 300+ page plan covering every aspect of the homestead. (The letterhead icon is from my plan. I call it *MorningStar Ranch*.) And the entire construction will be funded by money I earned through 20+ years of investments in mutual funds (which I learned from a course at MCI-J).

For, literally, decades, I have done everything in my power to become a better person, to help others become better people, all in the hopes of someday being able to rejoin my family back in Baltimore County (Woodlawn) before something happens to one of my brothers or my parents. Without the passage of the *Maryland Second Look Act*, that may not be possible. I never received a sentence modification hearing, and parole is always a longshot, at best. I still have not even had my first parole hearing.

I have seen the types of people that are in prison, and I will be the first to admit that many of them are right where they need to be. Many of them will leave prison the same people they were when they entered. For them, rehabilitation has not happened. But for many of us, myself included, a significant change has occurred during our sentences. We deserve the chance of a "Second Look," and only you can make that happen. If the *Maryland Second Look Act* passes and becomes law, other inmates will see that staying out of trouble, hard work, and doing the right thing can actually yield results. More will be inspired to rehabilitate themselves, and incarceration can become more than just "locking them up and throwing away the key."

I urge you to pass the *Maryland Second Look Act*, for the many who have put in the work and deserve to be seen again. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. M. Fischer". The signature is fluid and cursive.

David M. Fischer

David Logue #1336504-292463  
30420 Revells Neck Rd.  
Westover, MD 21890

January 6, 2025

To whom it may concern:

This letter is submitted to the House and Senate Judiciary Proceedings Committee in support of the Maryland Second Look Act.

My name is David Logue and I'm 62 years of age. I'm serving a life sentence and have completed 26 years of this sentence to date. I began this sentence at the age of 35.

I think the Maryland Second Look Act should be made into law because it has been proven that the people who was released on the Unger issue, all whom have served a minimum of 25 years, have not been in trouble and are productive members of society. Given the second chance, these individuals have proven to everyone that we can become productive members of society. No one who has served a minimum of 25 years of incarceration ever wants to return to prison which should be a factor going forward. We only want to be a part of those men who have become productive members of society and spend the remainder of their lives with our families. Health issues are also a factor for this bill. We are going to have many health issues. I am personally dealing with a second battle of cancer and I am the only one of many who have the same problems with health issues.

In closing, I strongly believe that if the many men and women who are incarcerated today for lengthy periods of time have learned a valuable lesson in life from our mistakes and if given a second chance, will not be a statistic in contributing to the recidivism rate in the state of Maryland. The Second Look Act will give us the opportunity to seek a second chance at life while contributing to society in positive ways which we all can benefit from. This bill should be passed because it is not us who have been here for decades contributing to the recidivism rate. I thank you for your time in this matter.

Sincerely,

David Logue

Adrian Ward 162802  
Easton Correctional Institute  
Westover Maryland 21890

January 8, 2025

Martina Hazelton  
Co-Founder and Executive Director  
Family Support Network

My name is Adrian Ward. I am sixty three years old. At the age of eighteen, my high school track coach, without preamble asked me to come along with him. Obediently I followed him down a hallway to a classroom full of fellow high school students. After placing me in front of the students, he began speaking of an incident that happened the day before. A young kid from a nearby middle school had approached him and inquired as to my whereabouts. The young boy had wanted to meet me to acquire an autograph. That coach, who had positioned me in front of those students many years ago, pointed to me and said, "All of you should aspire to be like Mr. Ward, a role model.., a person who people could look up to."

Today I am in prison. At present I am serving a life sentence, dating from 11-27-81, for rape. So far I have served 42 years of my sentence. I was born February 12, 1962, single and have a 12th Grade education. I graduated from Northwestern High School in North Baltimore in 1981 and attended Villanova University during the fall semester. My college studies were terminated by my arrest of the above offense. My work history prior to my arrest was limited to summer and part time employment.

During my incarceration, I have learned a lot about myself. Despite what I did, Insanely enough, I always considered myself a good person. I had good friends, average grades, and was active in several community activities. However a good person does not go out on a beautiful Sunday morning and terrorize another human being.

Since incarcerated, I had several parole hearings. At every parole hearing, I was always asked, "Do you think your sentence is fair?" I always said yes. If my sentence was designed to punish me, it certainly has. If it was intended for me to face what I have done, and reflect on the pain and suffering I've caused others. It has done that also. What it has not done was to give me a second chance. My mother and father had lost a son. My younger brother and sister ostracized by their community because of the deeds of their older brother. But most of all, the victim did not deserve the pain and suffering that I caused them. I can only imagine that their suffering did not end with my assault. The fact that they not only survived, but had the strength and courage to face me in court, and look me in the eye without fear, or shame to tell their story, is to be admired.