

Bill: HB-853

Position: Unfavorable

Contact: Joyce Conyers

Good afternoon,

Thank you for taking the time to hear our side for the non-treatment of victims in Maryland. My name is Joyce Conyers. I am the mother of Willie Herman Baskerville Jr, age 23 who was assassinated by Desmond Perry in December 2001 only a couple of days after Christmas. My son, Willie, had no knowledge of Perry or that his life was endangered for merely celebrating the Christmas holiday.

I am before you today to remind you of how victims have been treated by Maryland's State Attorney's office. To be clear, they have aggravated victims' pain and sorrows. Furthermore, our voices have been cut off without representation.

In many cases victims have been neglected and kept in the dark, while murderers and criminals that committed unspeakable crimes get numerous hours with the States Attorney's office to plead their cases.

In my case, I found it absurd that at least two other State attorneys - which had previously represented our family in this case, were denied the opportunity to speak on the case and were not allowed to speak with the lead detective and chief of police. In fact, the prosecuting attorney told our victims of crime representative attorney that he had no place in the courtroom and really could not speak.

This was not only unfair to the people that are trying to live a decent life and work for a living just to be struck down by the rhetoric of the Progressive Party telling us that after a few years we should be able to cope with whatever has happened and allow these murderers to continue with their lives and to be a part of society.

Then I am left with my beautiful grandson having to look a young man in the eye and say forget the person who assassinated your father only because he spent 20 years in a prison box as a model citizen. Because this is basically what was told to me.

We have murderers testifying in court for other murders that have been rehabilitated inside four walls for a few years. So, they should be giving 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th chances while all the while they have done one thing to a better society.

I want to thank you for your time and your patience. I know that you have a hard job and a hard decision. Just like law enforcement staff spend countless hours away from their families so that these criminals can go to court and their pathetic cries and plead for release. While victims' cry falls on deaf ears. Hear us, we are here, and you need to hear us.

In addition to the devastation these heinous criminals have already caused, an overwhelming 90% of them never pay back the restitution they owe—a clear and blatant violation of their parole. Yet, this critical requirement is overlooked 99% of the time, as if it were a mere suggestion rather than a court-ordered obligation. It feels like a slap on the wrist, with offenders catching break after break while victims are left to pick up the pieces. The Second Look Act only adds fuel to this

injustice, serving as yet another gateway for defendants to be released early—only for many of them to walk free without following parole conditions or repaying the restitution that was supposed to provide victims with some measure of justice.

I challenge State Delegate Clippinger to put himself in the victims' place and feel the intense pain of sorrow. Furthermore, Delegate Sandy Bartlett is a mother of two, therefore she is in a perfect position to deeply reflect on, and experience the unbearable pain of losing a son. My son will never receive reconsideration to return to life, therefore a criminal should not receive reconsideration to enjoy freedom.

Finally, I pray that you get the support that is required to bring justice back to the blind eye which it was instituted.

Very Respectfully,

Joyce M Conyer

