

1-11-25

RE: SECOND LOOK ACT

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

MY MARYLAND SENTENCING GUIDELINES SAID THAT I SHOULD BE SENTENCED BETWEEN 4-33 YEARS.. MY SENTENCING JUDGE GAVE ME LIFE PLUS LIFE! ACCORDING TO WHAT I KNOW, THE JUDGE MUST PUT A REASON FOR SENTENCING ME OUTSIDE OF THE MARYLAND SENTENCING GUIDELINES, HE DIDN'T! MY SENTENCES WASN'T FAIR AND REASONABLE..

ON JUNE 6, 2013 THE PAROLE COMMISSIONERS TOLD ME ON MY FIRST PAROLE HEARING THAT THIS WAS MY FIRST AND LAST PAROLE HEARING AND I WAS NEVER GOING TO BE PAROLED IN THE STATE OF MARYLAND. THIS IS NOT FAIR AND REASONABLE.. THIS IS MY FIRST TIME IN PRISON AND MY SECOND TIME IN TROUBLE WITH THE LAW. THE FIRST TIME I WAS 15 YEARS OLD AND CHARGED

CONF

AS AN ADULT. WE NOW KNOW THAT THIS WAS NOT FAIR FROM RECENT CLINICAL STUDIES..

I WAS UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF CRACK COCAINE DURING THE COMMISSION OF THE CRIME. I WAS 30 YEARS OF AGE AND HOMELESS.. I TURNED MYSELF IN TO THE POLICE AND PLEADED GUILTY FROM THE VERY BEGINNING.. I DO BELIEVE THAT I DESERVE A SECOND CHANCE..

MY PUBLIC DEFENDER ASKED MY SENTENCING JUDGE TO GIVE ME A SECOND CHANCE AND HE SAID THAT "HE HAD A SECOND CHANCE WHEN HE WAS 15 YEARS OLD". I AM NOW 65 $\frac{3}{4}$ YEARS OLD AND I HAVE BEEN INCARCERATED FOR 35 $\frac{1}{3}$ YEARS.. MY CONSECUTIVE LIFE SENTENCES ARE PROBABLE LIFE SENTENCES.. THE PAROLE COMMISSION TURNED MY SENTENCES INTO LIFE WITH NO PAROLE.. THIS IS ANOTHER REASON WHY I NEED A SECOND CHANCE..

CONT

I CURRENTLY HAVE AT LEAST 30 OR MORE CLASSES UNDER MY BELT THAT ARE SELF-HELP GROUPS AND N.A, A.A.. I AM READY TO RETURN TO A FREE SOCIETY

FOR THE ABOVE REASONS THE SECOND CHANCE ACT COULD CORRECT THE ERRORS IN MY SENTENCING, PAROLE HEARINGS AND PASS RECORD ERRORS.. PLEASE HELP!

RESPECTFULLY,

ROBERT J. COOPER JR.

EASTERN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION

#209556/224126

Darnell Roberts #185247-387315
Eastern Correctional Institution
30420 Revells Neck Rd.
Westover, MD 21890

Family Support Network
3937½ Minnesota Ave., NE
PO Box 64093
Washington, DC 20029

January 1, 2025

Dear FSN:

Please accept this letter as my written testimony in support of the Md. Second Look Act. I further ask that this letter be shared with the House and Senate Judiciary Proceedings Committee.

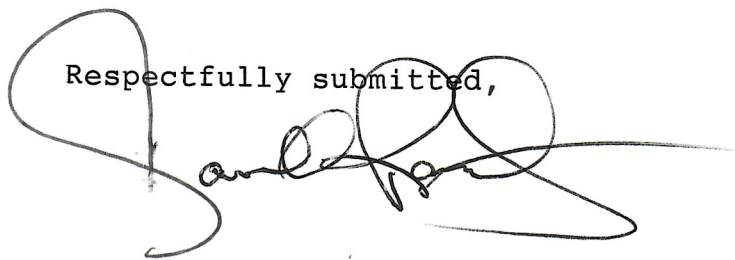
My name is Darnell Roberts and I'm 59 years old. In January 1987, while at the age of 19, I was sentenced to Life plus ten years in prison for a murder conviction. As of this date, I have spent nearly four (4) decades in prison as a result from this conviction. I truly understand that no crime should go unpunished, but the length of sentences being served today for crimes committed are far beyond what is deemed appropriate today. When I came to prison I was young, energetic, and misguided. Fortunately for me, I began taking advice from men who have been incarcerated for many years, some who are home today because of the "Unger" ruling, and listening to these men gave me direction on what it was that I wanted to do with my life. A great deal of this advice from these men were positive and meaningful. The men I listened to were fortunate enough to get a second chance at life prior to any discussion(s) of the Second Look Act being discussed. Taking advantage of this opportunity, these men who were released under the "Unger" ruling have thrived and succeeded in society since their release.

I am the president of the Lifer's Group here at the Eastern Correctional Institution in Maryland and I stress to our group plenty of times how important it is to lead a good and positive life. I stress to our group how we live now will carry over into how we will live when that day come to be released. This is my first ever incarceration. I'm not one who have been here before and returned. I know the importance of what a second chance can do, not only for you, but those in our families and communities. I know that if ever given a second chance at life in society, I would make the best from it because it is something I have worked hard at obtaining. I know that if the Maryland Second Look Act became law, so many men and women, incarcerated and free, will benefit from it. I personally have learned a great deal of respect for life and others during my incarceration. I only pray for the day to come to where I can get a second chance at life and prove to others that giving me a second chance was not a bad decision for those to make. I along with many others

are sitting here today with great minds waiting on the day to come where we can share our experiences and knowledge with others in attempts at keeping others from travelling down that road we did many, many years ago. I know I have learned from the mistake I made at such a young age and await on the day to come where I can atone for what I did as well as help our youth today in society who are being misguided as I was when I was their age.

Having the Maryland Second Look Act bill passed, it will not only gave the men and women incarcerated today hope, but the feeling to know all we have acquired throughout our incarceration can now be shared with others at attempts of helping those we have left behind from the mistakes we made years ago. I only pray that this bill gets passed so I, along with others can prove to society that although we made that mistake early in our lives, we can rebound from it and lead sound and productive lives in society as we all should. I thank you in advance for reading this and your acknowledgment of this letter will greatly be appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "S. Anderson", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned below the text "Respectfully submitted," and extends to the right with a long horizontal stroke.

TO: THE MARTINA HAZELTON, CO-FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIR. FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK

Greetings My Name is Tony Michael Chatman-Bey

As I sit down to write this letter, I am asking myself what can I possibly say that would convey to you that I am no longer the same self-indulgent, hedonistic young man that committed that horrific crime in 1987; for which I have served thirty-seven years and counting. After a lot of soul searching, prayer and with the help of completing just about every self-improving program that the state has to offer, I have come to understand a number of inescapable facts; (1) I take "Full Responsibility" for my crimes/actions. (2) In no way am I trying to minimize the seriousness of those crimes. (3) My only purpose in offering this statement is to try to give you some insight into the self-centered, immoral, and selfish person I was in the summer of 1987, as opposed to the wiser sixty-six-year-old man I am now in 2025. I have spent at least thirty of those years of incarceration doing everything in my power to make a 180% difference in my mind, body and soul.

Back in 1993 at the old Maryland Pen., I wrote an op-ed for the institution's magazine, the "Greystone". The title was *The Criminal Justice System: Punishment, Justice, or Revenge*.

The essence of the article was asking the vital question, why are people sent to prison? If it's about punishment and revenge, then nothing really needs to change, the system does that already. However, if it's about justice and/or that much over used word rehabilitation, then some major changes must be made. *The Second Chance Act*, is one of those much needed changes.

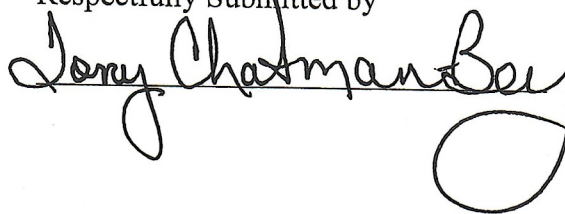
I could explain and give you numbers showing how people my age who have served as much time as me, have the lowest percentage of committing another crime. As members of the legislature you already know this, therefore, instead I am hoping my actions and achievements will show you that I am no longer a risk to society. I only request the (Second) chance to prove it. I am willing to prove this not only by my behavior, but I am willing to accept any conditions that are deemed necessary; home monitoring, sex registration, drug testing, etc.

When I came into the system back in 1987, I deserved to be here, the person I am now does not. I can do more to help change my community by being an example to the young men about what can happen if they don't change the way they are living.

I want to thank you in advance for your time and consideration in my request for a second chance to prove that I am indeed ready to be a law abiding citizen, and an asset to my family and community.

Please find enclosed a summary of the educational and rehabilitation programs that I have earned/competed over the years. I have done the work necessary to ensure that when given a second chance, I will not waste it!

Respectfully Submitted by



TO: THE MARTINA HAZELTON, CO-FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIR. FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK

CERTIFICATES & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. AVP LEAD FACILITATOR	BASIC	31 MARCH 19
2. AVP FACILITATOR	BASIC	3 AUGUST 17
3. AVP LEAD FACILITATOR	BASIC	8 FEBUARY 17
4. AVP FACILITATOR	T for T	27 OCTOBER 16
5. MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING	VETERANS	2015-16
6. AVP FACILITATOR	BASIC	30 JULY 15
7. CERTIFICATE of COMPLETION	COMMUNICATION	20 JULY 15
8. CERTIFICATE of ACHIEVEMENT	DLR REENTRY & EMPLOYMENT RESOURCES	12 MAY 15
9. AVP FACILITATOR	T for T	30 APRIL 15
10. CERTIFICATE/EVALATION	RELATIONSHIP	6 APRIL 15
11. CERTIFICATE of ACHIEVEMENT	GREAT TRUTHS of THE BIBLE	24 DECEMBER 14
12. V.P. CERTIFICATE of ACHIEVEMENT	LIFER'S ENCOUNTER GROUP #5	4 DECEMBER 14
13. AVP FACILITATOR	BASIC	28 SEPTEMBER 14
14. AVP FACILITATOR	ADVANCED	31 JULY 14
15. CERTIFICATE/ EVALATION	LIFER'S ENCOUNTER GROUP #4	10 APRIL 14
16. CERTIFICATE of COMPLETION	CONFLICT RESOLUTION I	24 MARCH 14
17. CERTIFICATE of COMPLETION	AVP T for T	5 FEBUARY 14
18. CERTIFICATE of RECOGNITION	1st PLACE POETRY COMPETITION	27 FEBUARY 14
19. CERTIFICATE of APPRECIATION	PAROLE PORTFOLIO & COMMUNICATION	12 DECEMBER 13
20. CERTIFICATE of APPRECIATION	ECI HONOR GUARD	2012-13
21. CERTIFICATION of APPRECIATION	FAMILY DAY WORKER	3 JUNE 13
22. CERTIFICATE of APPRECIATION	"POETRY WORKSHOP 1"	16 APRIL 13
23. CERTIFICATE of APPRECIATION & CONTRIBUTION	"THE FISHER HOUSE"	2013
24. COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT	MARINE CORPS LEAGUE	
25. CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION	FRIENDS OF A SAFE PLACE A CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER	
26. CERTIFICATE of COMPLETION		5 MAY 12
27. CERTIFICATE of PARTICIPATION	PAROLE SEMINAR	21 FEBUARY 12
28. CERTIFICATE HOLY CONVOCATION	PAROLE PROTFOILIO	6 DECEMBER 11
29. CERTIFICATE of COMPLETION	MEMBERSHIP "M.S.T of A."	23 APRIL 11
30. CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION	"BIG BROTHER OUTREACH	17 MARCH 10
31. CERTIFICATE of APPRECIATION	SUPPORT VICTIMS RIGHTS WEEK	18-24 April 10
32. CERTIFICATE HOLY CONVOCATION	U.S. ARMY SPECIAL FORCES ASSOC.	2009
33. CERTIFICATE BRANCH TEMPLE	MEMBERSHIP "M.S.T of A."	20 OCTOBER 06
34. INCENTIVE BANQUENT AWARD	MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE OF AMERICA, INC.	
35. CERTIFICATE of APPRECIATION		28 NOVEMBER 03
36. CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION	MHC-ANNEX	27 SEPTEMBER 03
37. CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP	MHC-ANNEX	27 SEPTEMBER 03
38. CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION	DISCOVERING THE INTERNET	4 FEBUARY 03
39. CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP	VETS OF THE VIETNAM WAR, INC.	AUGUST 2002
40. CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION	M.S.T. of A. "SMALL CIRCLE"	30 DECEMBER 00
41. CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION	HOLY CONVOCATION	26 SEPTEMBER 00
42. AVP FACILITATOR	SLOW PITCH UMPIRE	1999
43. CERTIFICATE OF MERIT	FAST PITCH UMPIRE	1998
44. CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION	AVP BASIC	15 FEBUARY 98
45. BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE	CONCERNED VETERANS	9 NOVEMBER 94
46. CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION	COPPIN ST. ALUMI ASSOCIATION	11 MAY 94
47. PROGRAM "IAC"	APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY	16 MAY 93
48. LETTER OF ENDORSEMENT	AVP T for T (FACILITATOR)	12 FEBUARY 93
49. CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION	OZZIDDI THEATRE COMPANY	20 FEBUARY 93
50. CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION	DR. LONNIE MITCHELL, Ph. D.	12 JANUARY 93
51. CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION	PEER COUNSELING & DRUG ED. PREVENTION	
52. PROGRAM "IAC"		25 NOVEMBER 92
53. CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT	AVP ADVANCE	19 AUGUST 92
54. CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION	AVP BASIC	25 JUNE 92
55. CERTIFICATE OF MERIT	OZZIDDI THEATRE COMPANY	8 SEPTEMBER 90
56. OUTSTANDING SERVICES AWARD	LEFT BANK JAZZ SOCIETY	25 AUGUEST 90
57. PROGRAM "IAC"	U.S. JAYCESS	1990
58. CERTIFICATE OF MERIT/MEMBERSHIP	OLD TOWN JAYCESS	19 JUNE 90
60. CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION	ROUND A.C. BOXING TEAM	26 MAY 90
61. CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION	OZZIDDI THEATRE COMPANY	10 MARCH 90
62. LETTER OF COMPLETION	U.S. JAYCEES	28 JUNE 89
63. LETTER OF THANKS	MONTGOMERY COLLEGE	21 MARCH 88
64. CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION	STREET LAW 1 with DISTINCTION	21 MARCH 88
	VERIOUS COURSES MONTGOMERY COLLEGE	
		7 MARCH 88
	DIRECTOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY DETENTION CENTER	
		31 DEC. 87
	SALESMANSHIP COURSE	29 OCTOBER 87

January 16, 2025
David Johnson
V. President LIFERS Group
Eastern Correctional Institution-East


House & Senate Judiciary
Proceedings Committee

I was convicted of murder at age 18 stemming from an incident that occurred in 1988. I am now 54 years old. Today, I have been incarcerated for 36 years. The Second Look Act would restore some legal rights that I lost due to my attorney's inactions.

My legal journey began with a plea offer from the State; that I would enter into an Alford Plea to two counts of Second Degree Murder in exchange I would receive 40 years of prison time. I declined the State's offer to elect a jury trial at which I was found guilty of two counts of First Degree murder and subsequently sentence to two consecutive Natural Life Sentences. I was told by my trial attorney that he would file the post-trial motion for modification of sentence and sentence review by a Three Judge Panel. After exhausting my direct appeal, I filed a pro se motion for post-conviction. I was informed by appoint attorney that he would file a supplemental petition for post-conviction to include claims that he discovered during his investigation of my case. Ultimately, my post-conviction attorney did not raise any claims on my behalf, leaving me with only one legal path to have the right to file the Motion for Modification restored which is a Reopening of Post-Conviction.

The passing of the Second Look Act would provide Incarcerated Individuals such as myself a clear path to have the right to file a motion for modification of sentence restored. More importantly, the individuals that will be affected by the passing of this piece of legislation are those that have had an opportunity to truly benefit from the rehabilitative services that DPSCS has offered. It would be a total waste of the rehabilitative process to continue one's incarceration after they have demonstrated positive change. Furthermore, it would be a dis-service to society to not benefit from the rehabilitated individuals whom have gained valuable life skills while incarcerated.

Respectfully submitted,


David Johnson 203354
30420 Revells Neck Rd
Westover Md 21890

**TESTIMONY ON SB291
MARYLAND SECOND LOOK ACT**

**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
January 30, 2025**

SUPPORT

Submitted by: Phillip Jones

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

My name is Phillip A. Jones. I am an incarcerated individual who entered prison at the age of 19. After a drug fueled night which resulted in another young man being shot. Thank God, he did not die of his injuries. I have spent 33 years in prison for this offense. And now, at the age of 53, I have made many strides to restore justice. I am no longer the teenager who, due to my addiction, committed crimes which led to me being incarcerated.

For the past 19 years, I have done what was required to heal and rehabilitate myself. I have taken every program offered to me in prison, I have worked skilled jobs such as Data Entry Invoice Clerk, Accounts Payable. I have participated in numerous self help groups. I have maintained good conduct without infractions for several years. And I have pursued my education in whatever ways I could. Along with these, I also host a podcast. I am a youth consultant, teaching reentry classes, a public speaker and I am the author of two books. I use my experience and my story to steer the youth away from gang involvement and self-destructive tendencies.

Over the years of my incarceration, I have had to seek out external alternatives to education, and/or vocational programs, due to limited availability for lifers, in pursuit of degrees and certifications. We are often placed at the bottom of waiting lists or excluded altogether in order for short time incarcerated individuals with release dates to be prioritized. I am also a proponent of mental health as well as

restorative justice. I have taken 100% responsibility for the crime I committed as an adolescent. And with that, I have displayed remorse for causing injury to the victim in my case. Also making amends through consistent efforts to grow and develop into a pro-social human being. And finally, taking measures to address my own traumas in order for me to heal and be mentally and emotionally sound.

The Maryland Second Look Act would serve as a means to allow individuals like myself to go before the sentencing court and present evidence to the judge which demonstrates that one is deserving of a second chance. Having matured, adopted healthy values, and have done the work of rehabilitation, aside from parole, which only just became available widely to lifers with the removal of the governor, in Maryland lifers have no viable means of release, no matter how model of a prisoner they have become. I was an emerging adult (19 years old) which means I will spend more time incarcerated than any other demographic. Juveniles and adult prisoners do less time than emerging adults for the same offenses. Maryland has JRA for juvenile offenders, and adults in their 30s and 40s won't serve as much time due to life expectancy. Justice requires that something be done to make sentencing equitable and fair across the board in the state of Maryland. The Second Look Act will level the playing field.

Thank you,
Phillip A. Jones