



## Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform

Dear Senator

SB0494, the Juvenile Restoration Act, is designed to abolish the sentence of Juvenile Life Without Parole and permit a person who was convicted of a crime committed while the person was a minor to file a motion for a sentence reduction. This bill supports the belief that no child is beyond the hope of redemption. We join The Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth and other advocates in support of this bill.

The United States treats children, particularly youth of color who come into conflict with the law, in intensely cruel and inhuman ways, disregarding their human rights and differences from adults. This is evidenced most starkly by the fact that the United States is the only country that sentences children to die in prison by imposing life-without-parole sentences on individuals under age 18.

African American youth are serving life without parole at a per capita rate that is 10 times that of white youth. Historically, just five states are responsible for imposing two-thirds of overall juvenile life without parole sentences, despite youth in those states being no more deserving of punishment than in any other.

Maryland is one of the few States that has not banned Juvenile Life Without Parole.

On Wednesday, 2/17, the Judicial Proceedings committee will consider SB0494 which is designed to correct a grave injustice. As your constituent I ask you to support this bill and move the committee to allow the reconsideration of unfair sentences.

Sincerely,