



**ALLIANCE FOR SAFE COMMUNITIES  
TESTIMONY OPPOSTION (H 7132) AN ACT  
RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES  
HOMICIDE: ( prohibits the imposition of a  
sentence of life without parole upon any  
person 21 years of age or younger)**

This bill was initially presented by news media inclusive of a story involving four youths accused of a brutal beating and murder of a 51-year-old man in Providence. Never in the history of Rhode Island have youths aged 11 and 12 ever given life sentences of life w/ out parole sentencing, and never would that happen. It also was presented to represent other violent offenders of homicide that are age 21 and under.

It dismantles the 7 delineating factors that define the need for consequences of life without parole sentencing. It renders these factors “mute” as to how they create the need for stringent sentencing. Each represent extreme, horrific and disturbing qualities that warrant consequences of life without parole sentencing.

<https://webserver.rilegislature.gov/BillText/BillText26/HouseText26/H7132.pdf>

**7 DELINEATING FACTORS : : (1) committed intentionally while engaged in the commission of another capital offense or other felony for which life imprisonment**

**may be imposed; (2) committed in a manner creating a great risk of death to more than one person by means of a weapon or device or substance which would normally be hazardous to the life of more than one person; (3) committed at the direction of another person in return for money or any other thing of monetary value from that person; (4) committed in a manner involving torture or an aggravated battery to the victim; (5) committed against any member of the judiciary, law enforcement officer, corrections employee, assistant attorney general or special assistant attorney general, or firefighter arising from the lawful performance of his or her official duties; (6) committed by a person who at the time of the murder was committed to confinement in the adult correctional institutions or the state reformatory for women upon conviction of a felony; or (7) committed during the course of the perpetration or attempted perpetration of felony manufacture, sale, delivery or other distribution of a controlled substance otherwise prohibited by the provisions of chapter 28 of title 21; shall be imprisoned for life and if ordered by the court pursuant to chapter 19.2 of title 12 that person shall not be eligible for parole from imprisonment;**

You cannot make these qualities disappear simply due to the chronological age of the criminal.

This particular and only known case involving 11- and 12-year-old youths is rare and distracts the focus on the average youth population of 17-21 who would be more frequently implicated in a homicide event involving youth if it occurred.

“ie” gang violence youth related “assault with intent to murder “charges:

<https://patch.com/rhode-island/pawtucket/assault-intent-commit-murder-charges-3-pawtucket-juveniles-cops>

Life without Parole is applied to this population rarely if ever in Rhode Island. There is a total of 35 “LWOP” individuals retroactively dated to 1990 cases. Of that total, only 7 were at the age of 21 or under as can be seen in this list below... cases included.

VICTIMS: AMY SHUTE AND JASON BURGESS

MURDERERS LWOP: KENNETH DAY age 21 at time of crime

[Episode 154: The Murders of Jason Burgeson and Amy Shute — True Crime New England](#)

VICTIMS: MICHAEL BATISTA AND RAPHEALEDWARDS ORTEGA

MURDERERS LWOP

MURDERERS: STEPHEN QUINLAN 21, AND FRANK SANCHEZ 19 at time of crime

[STATE v. QUINLAN \(2007\) | FindLaw](#)

[Two found with severed hands face R.I. murder charges](#)

VICTIM: JENNIE LEE-M BAILEY

MURDERER: JOHN R. PACHECO 21 LWOP at time of crime

[State v. John R. Pacheco, Jr. :: 2001 :: Rhode Island Supreme Court Decisions :: Rhode Island Case Law :: Rhode Island Law :: U.S. Law :: Justia](#)

VICTIM: SYLVESTER GARDINER

MURDERER : WILLIAM PAGE 18 LWOP at time of crime

[William Page v. State of Rhode Island :: 2010 :: Rhode Island Supreme Court Decisions :: Rhode Island Case Law :: Rhode Island Law :: U.S. Law :: Justia](#)

VICTIMS: CARLOS AND HILDA CHANG AND THEIR FOUR CHILDREN, CHRISTIAN 18, JUAN CARLOS 16, YOKO 13, AND LILAY 6

MURDERER: JOSE GARCIA 18 AT TIME OF CRIME, LWOP age 18 at time of crime

<https://caselaw.findlaw.com/court/ri-supreme-court/1473530.html>

<https://www.usdeadlyevents.com/1993-feb-27-arson-fire-mass-murder-apartment-building-providence-ri-6/>

VICTIM: SAVANAH SMITH 8 year old victim, kidnapped, beaten, raped and murdered

MURDERER: JOSHUA DAVIS LWOP age 20 at time of crime

[10-4824-5-18-20.pdf](https://www.courts.ri.gov/Decisions/10-4824-5-18-20.pdf)<https://www.courts.ri.gov/Decisions/10-4824-5-18-20.pdf>

Mario's Law allows anyone serving life sentences to be eligible for parole after 25 years unless they are 21 and under, then they are eligible for parole after 20 years. It exempts those people sentenced to "Life with out Parole" .

Life without Parole offenders are not without recourse as they are able to petition the Superior Court as well as allows convicted to appeal the sentence to the Supreme Court. (TITLE 12) CRIMINAL PROCEDURE CHAPTER 12-19.2-5

Alliance for Safe Communities is also concerned that passage of this legislation will lead to further gang initiations of youthful offenders for such serious crimes that involve homicide. The lessening of possible consequences incentivizes gangs to utilize youthful offenders to carry out their directives. Crimes that older gang members, "not minors" would be sentenced for "real time" vs. what a youthful offender would be sentenced for.

The following list offers the reader a sample of youthful offenders 17 years old and older not given "life without parole". These crimes give insight as to the type of heinous crimes youths can commit as well as the fact that Rhode Island does not treat cases in a "blanket fashion" with sentences that lock youth up forever. These cases illustrate the capability of youthful offenders aged 17-21 unbridled violence when committing crimes in society.

VICTIM: KIMBERLY ANN ROCK/ AGE A MINOR 17

RAPIST AND MURDERER: ROBERT JEWETT 18

JEWETT WAS IN CUSTODY AT THE TRAINING SCHOOL AT OFF SITE CONTRACT WORKING SITE..... WANDERED OUT AND OFF INTO SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOOD TO COMMIT THESE HEINOUS CRIMES UPON MINOR KIMBERLY ANN ROCK

[Rock v. State :: 1996 :: Rhode Island Supreme Court Decisions :: Rhode Island Case Law :: Rhode Island Law :: U.S. Law :: Justia](#)

[Rhode Island Parole Board denies convicted killer's bid for release](#)

[Convicted murderer seeks parole for third time | WPRI.com](#)

VICTIM: JAMONT RICHARDSON 14

MURDERER: PHERIN ROT 15

[Teen gets life in shooting over \\$15 debt | News | timesargus.com](#)

SENTENCE : LIFE IN PRISON

VICTIM: WILLIAM ABRAHMSON

MURDERER DEMETRIUS JACKSON 18 YEARS OLD

SENTENCED TO 100 YEARS... PAROLED AND FREE

[GoLocalProv | Man Who Shot Providence Police Officer and Killed Park Ranger Granted Parole](#)

VICTIM: CHERYL SMITH AGE 54

MURDERER/ CONSPIRACY SHAYLAN MORAN AGE 18

SENTENCE: LIFE IN PRISON

[Shaylyn Moran pleads to Pawtucket murder on New Year's Day 2020](#)

[Woman, 20, gets life in prison for role in Pawtucket murder | WPRI.com](#)

VICTIM: STACIE ANN BRISSETT

MURDERER/ CONSPIRACY SHEA COOK AGE 21

[Tribal members charged with murder on reservation](#)

Actions have consequences. Actions that lead to the destruction of a life or lives leave lifetime impacts in their wake. Violent crime permanently affects those who lost loved ones or whose communities are impacted. They are imposed a sentence of life without parole, probation, or respite from their pain and suffering. For some, despair totally destroys their lives, as they are unable to cope with grief, loss, and trauma.

Violent crime and homicides cause society to question the stability of its very foundation.

Justice must be balanced, equal and fair, in response to this scenario, and must ensure that the catalyst that caused such destruction is not able to return and further destroy the delicate remains of so many impacted lives. Justice must ensure to protect all of society, which includes possible future victims. Our current system of justice addressing heinous, violent, and barbaric criminal actions is just and fair in achieving these goals. Life without parole is and always has been appropriate for such individuals who are not capable of ever rehabilitating or reintegrating into our society.

To ignore these facts serves as a grave injustice.

In conclusion Alliance submits our opposition to the passage of (H 7132)

Respectfully,

Carolyn Medeiros Executive Director Alliance for Safe Communities

