

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO. H2052

TITLE: An Act to reduce mass incarceration

SPONSOR: Rep. Christopher J. Worrell

COSPONSORS:

Rep. John F. Moran	Rep. Natalie M. Higgins
Rep. Lindsay N. Sabadosa	Rep. Steven Owens
Rep. Christine P. Barber	Rep. Danillo A. Sena
Rep. Samantha Montaña	Rep. Antonio F. Cabral
Rep. Priscila S. Sousa	Rep. James K. Hawkins
Rep. Russell E. Holmes	Rep. Mike Connolly
Sen. Jason M. Lewis	Rep. Erika Uyterhoeven
Rep. Estela A. Reyes	Rep. Marjorie Decker

HEARING DATE: June 3, 2025

PRIOR HISTORY: H1821 (2023-2024)
H1797 (2021-2022 Livingstone)
H3358 (2019-2020 Livingstone)

SENATE BILL: S1178 (Miranda)

CURRENT LAW: Section 133A of Chapter 127 of the General Laws outlines an incarcerated persons eligibility for parole, notice and hearing requirements, parole permits, revision of terms and conditions, revocation, arrest, right to counsel and funds for experts. It specifically exempts prisoners serving a life sentence for murder in the first degree who were 18 at the time of the murder from eligibility.

Section 133C of Chapter 127 outlines the representation standards for deceased victims at parole hearings by family members and establishes offenses ineligible for parole hearings

Section 2 of Chapter 265 requires persons found guilty of murder in the first degree be ineligible for parole unless the offense was committed between their 14th and 18th birthday.

Section 24 of Chapter 279 sets the standards for terms of

imprisonment for offenders including persons sentenced for life for murder between the ages of 14 and 18 years old.

Section 25 of Chapter 279 sets the standards for who is considered a habitual criminal under the law and requires such persons be sentenced for any felony to the maximum term provided by law.

BILL SUMMARY:

Section 1 - Amends Section 133A of Chapter 127 by striking the types of sentences that make someone ineligible for parole. Adds language in Section 24 of Chapter 279 to allow an incarcerated person who is serving more than 1 life sentence arising out of separate and distinct incidents that occurred at different times, where the second offense occurred after the first conviction, to be eligible for parole 25 years after the start of the second or most recent sentence.

Section 2 - Amends Section 133C of Chapter 127 by striking the types of sentences that would make someone ineligible for parole.

Section 3 - Amends Section 2 of Chapter 265 to strike the reference to conditions under which an individual is ineligible for parole and replaces it with language allowing parole pursuant to Section 24 of Chapter 279 which establishes indeterminate sentences and sentences for those aged 14 to 17.

Section 4 - Amends Section 2 of Chapter 265 to make those aged 14-17 who commit first degree murder eligible for parole within 25 years of their sentence

Sections 5 and 6 - Amend Section 24 of Chapter 279 to reduce the term for those who commit first degree murder when they are between the ages of 14 and 17 from 20-30 years to 15-20 years. It also eliminates the opportunity for increased penalties. It creates a sentence of 10-12 years for this population who are adjudicated solely by a verdict of felony murder or joint venture and where the offender is not the "actual killer." This includes offenders sentenced before and after the effective date of this Act.

Sections 7 and 8 - Amend Section 25 of Chapter 279 to allow for parole after 25 years for habitual offenders before or after the effective date of the act.

Section 9 - Requires the Department of Correction create a voluntary Restorative Justice program for those sentenced to more than 25 years.