

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO. H1918

TITLE: An Act promoting fairness in youthful offender indictments

SPONSOR: Rep. Tram T. Nguyen

COSPONSOR(S): None

HEARING DATE: June 10, 2025

PRIOR HISTORY: None

SENATE BILL: S1240 (Payano)

CURRENT LAW: Section 52 of Chapter 119 of the General Laws establishes definitions for the subsequent sections on delinquent children and youthful offenders. It defines a “Youthful Offender” as a person between 14 and 18 years of age who has committed an offense which, if they were adult, would be punishable by imprisonment in state prison and has: (i) been committed to DYS previously; (ii) committed an offense involving serious bodily harm; (iii) committed an offense involving an illegal firearm under subsections (a), (c) or (d) of Section 10 of Chapter 269; or (iv) committed an offense involving an illegal firearm transaction under Section 10E of Chapter 269.

Section 54 of Chapter 119 outlines the procedures for making a complaint against a child between 12 and 18 years of age. It further provides that the Commonwealth may file the complaint via indictment if the child is between 14 and 18 years of age and meets the requirements of a “youthful offender” in Section 52.

Section 58 of Chapter 119 outlines the potential punishments available to the court for youthful offenders and includes language that youthful offenders by reason of violations of subsections (a), (c) or (d) of Section 10 or Section 10E of Chapter 269 must be committed for at least 180 days in DYS. For a second offense the mandatory commitment in a correctional institution is for 1 year.

BILL SUMMARY: Section 1 – Reduces the age range for a youthful offender in its definition in Section 52 to between 16 and 18 years of age.

Section 2 – Removes the predicate for a youthful offender in its definition in Section 52 of being committed to DYS previously.

Section 3 – Removes language in Section 52 requiring youthful offenders be subject to mandatory commitment periods within Section 58.

Section 4 – Reduces the age range for a youthful offender in its definition in Section 54 to between 16 and 18 years of age.

Section 5 – Removes the predicate for a youthful offender in its definition in Section 54 of being committed to DYS previously.

Section 6 – the provisions of this bill will apply to juvenile cases not yet adjudicated at its effective date.