

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO. H1853

TITLE: An Act to enhance the availability of immunity to witnesses in the courts of the Commonwealth.

SPONSOR: Rep. Jay D. Livingstone

COSPONSOR(S): None

HEARING DATE: September 9, 2025

REPORTING DEADLINE: November 8, 2025

PRIOR HISTORY: H1645 (2023-2024)
H.1750 (2021-2022)

SENATE BILL: None

CURRENT LAW: Section 20D of Chapter 233 of the General laws provides a list of enumerated crimes eligible for a grant of immunity in exchange for witness testimony.

Section 20E of Chapter 233 of the General Laws permits witnesses testifying for the supreme judicial court, appeals court or superior court to be eligible for 20D immunity for their testimony. It permits those courts to, after a hearing, issue an immunity ruling. It also stays any pending criminal proceedings against a cooperating witness except grand jury proceedings.

BILL SUMMARY: Section 1 – This replaces the existing Section 20D and removes the list of crimes, permitting any crime to be eligible for Section 20E immunity.

Section 2 – This expands the immunity issuing authorities to District Court and Juvenile Court.

Section 3 - This expands the stay issuing powers to District Court and Juvenile Court.