



General Assembly

February Session, 2026

Raised Bill No. 503

LCO No. 2976



Referred to Committee on JUDICIARY

Introduced by:
(JUD)

AN ACT CONCERNING SENTENCING OF AND PAROLE ELIGIBILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WHOSE OFFENSE WAS COMMITTED WHEN SUCH INDIVIDUAL WAS UNDER THE AGE OF TWENTY-SIX YEARS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 54-125a of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

3 (a) A person convicted of one or more crimes who is incarcerated on
4 or after October 1, 1990, who received a definite sentence or total
5 effective sentence of more than two years, and who has been confined
6 under such sentence or sentences for not less than one-half of the total
7 effective sentence less any risk reduction credit earned under the
8 provisions of section 18-98e or one-half of the most recent sentence
9 imposed by the court less any risk reduction credit earned under the
10 provisions of section 18-98e, whichever is greater, may be allowed to go
11 at large on parole (1) in accordance with the provisions of section 54-
12 125i, or (2) in the discretion of a panel of the Board of Pardons and
13 Paroles, if (A) it appears from all available information, including any
14 reports from the Commissioner of Correction that the panel may

15 require, that there is a reasonable probability that such inmate will live
16 and remain at liberty without violating the law, and (B) such release is
17 not incompatible with the welfare of society. At the discretion of the
18 panel, and under the terms and conditions as may be prescribed by the
19 panel including requiring the parolee to submit personal reports, the
20 parolee shall be allowed to return to the parolee's home or to reside in a
21 residential community center, or to go elsewhere. The parolee shall,
22 while on parole, remain under the jurisdiction of the board until the
23 expiration of the maximum term or terms for which the parolee was
24 sentenced less any risk reduction credit earned under the provisions of
25 section 18-98e. Any parolee released on the condition that the parolee
26 reside in a residential community center may be required to contribute
27 to the cost incidental to such residence. Each order of parole shall fix the
28 limits of the parolee's residence, which may be changed in the discretion
29 of the board and the Commissioner of Correction. Within three weeks
30 after the commitment of each person sentenced to more than two years,
31 the state's attorney for the judicial district shall send to the Board of
32 Pardons and Paroles the record, if any, of such person.

33 (b) (1) No person convicted of any of the following offenses, which
34 was committed on or after July 1, 1981, shall be eligible for parole under
35 subsection (a) of this section: (A) Capital felony, as provided under the
36 provisions of section 53a-54b in effect prior to April 25, 2012, (B) murder
37 with special circumstances, as provided under the provisions of section
38 53a-54b in effect on or after April 25, 2012, (C) felony murder, as
39 provided in section 53a-54c, (D) arson murder, as provided in section
40 53a-54d, (E) murder, as provided in section 53a-54a, or (F) aggravated
41 sexual assault in the first degree, as provided in section 53a-70a. (2) A
42 person convicted of (A) a violation of section 53a-100aa or 53a-102, or
43 (B) an offense, other than an offense specified in subdivision (1) of this
44 subsection, where the underlying facts and circumstances of the offense
45 involve the use, attempted use or threatened use of physical force
46 against another person shall be ineligible for parole under subsection (a)
47 of this section until such person has served not less than eighty-five per

48 cent of the definite sentence imposed.

49 (c) The Board of Pardons and Paroles shall, not later than July 1, 1996,
50 adopt regulations in accordance with chapter 54 to ensure that a person
51 convicted of an offense described in subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of
52 this section is not released on parole until such person has served eighty-
53 five per cent of the definite sentence imposed by the court. Such
54 regulations shall include guidelines and procedures for classifying a
55 person as a violent offender that are not limited to a consideration of the
56 elements of the offense or offenses for which such person was convicted.

57 (d) The Board of Pardons and Paroles may hold a hearing to
58 determine the suitability for parole release of any person whose
59 eligibility for parole release is not subject to the provisions of subsection
60 (b) of this section upon completion by such person of seventy-five per
61 cent of such person's definite or total effective sentence less any risk
62 reduction credit earned under the provisions of section 18-98e. An
63 employee of the board or, if deemed necessary by the chairperson, a
64 panel of the board shall assess the suitability for parole release of such
65 person based on the following standards: (1) Whether there is
66 reasonable probability that such person will live and remain at liberty
67 without violating the law, and (2) whether the benefits to such person
68 and society that would result from such person's release to community
69 supervision substantially outweigh the benefits to such person and
70 society that would result from such person's continued incarceration. If
71 a hearing is held, and if the board determines that continued
72 confinement is necessary, the board shall articulate for the record the
73 specific reasons why such person and the public would not benefit from
74 such person serving a period of parole supervision while transitioning
75 from incarceration to the community. If a hearing is not held, the board
76 shall document the specific reasons for not holding a hearing and
77 provide such reasons to such person. No person shall be released on
78 parole without receiving a hearing. The decision of the board under this
79 subsection shall not be subject to appeal.

80 (e) The Board of Pardons and Paroles may hold a hearing to
81 determine the suitability for parole release of any person whose
82 eligibility for parole release is subject to the provisions of subdivision
83 (2) of subsection (b) of this section upon completion by such person of
84 eighty-five per cent of such person's definite or total effective sentence.
85 An employee of the board or, if deemed necessary by the chairperson, a
86 panel of the board shall assess the suitability for parole release of such
87 person based on the following standards: (1) Whether there is a
88 reasonable probability that such person will live and remain at liberty
89 without violating the law, and (2) whether the benefits to such person
90 and society that would result from such person's release to community
91 supervision substantially outweigh the benefits to such person and
92 society that would result from such person's continued incarceration. If
93 a hearing is held, and if the board determines that continued
94 confinement is necessary, the board shall articulate for the record the
95 specific reasons why such person and the public would not benefit from
96 such person serving a period of parole supervision while transitioning
97 from incarceration to the community. No hearing pursuant to the
98 provisions of this subsection may proceed unless the parole release
99 panel is in possession of the complete file for such applicant, including
100 any documentation from the Department of Correction, the trial
101 transcript, the sentencing record and any file of any previous parole
102 hearing. Each member of the panel shall certify that all such
103 documentation has been reviewed in preparation for such hearing. If a
104 hearing is not held, the board shall document the specific reasons for not
105 holding a hearing and provide such reasons to such person. No person
106 shall be released on parole without receiving a hearing. The decision of
107 the board under this subsection shall not be subject to appeal.

108 (f) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (a) to (e),
109 inclusive, of this section, a person convicted of one or more crimes
110 committed while such person was under eighteen years of age, who is
111 incarcerated on or after October 1, 2015, and who received a definite
112 sentence or total effective sentence of more than ten years for such crime

113 or crimes prior to, on or after October 1, 2015, may be allowed to go at
114 large on parole in the discretion of the panel of the Board of Pardons
115 and Paroles for the institution in which such person is confined,
116 provided (A) if such person is serving a sentence of fifty years or less,
117 such person shall be eligible for parole after serving sixty per cent of the
118 sentence or twelve years, whichever is greater, or (B) if such person is
119 serving a sentence of more than fifty years, such person shall be eligible
120 for parole after serving thirty years. Nothing in this subsection shall
121 limit a person's eligibility for parole release under the provisions of
122 subsections (a) to (e), inclusive, of this section if such person would be
123 eligible for parole release at an earlier date under any of such provisions.

124 (2) The board shall apply the parole eligibility rules of this subsection
125 only with respect to the sentence for a crime or crimes committed while
126 a person was under eighteen years of age. Any portion of a sentence that
127 is based on a crime or crimes committed while a person was eighteen
128 years of age or older shall be subject to the applicable parole eligibility,
129 suitability and release rules set forth in subsections (a) to (e), inclusive,
130 of this section.

131 (3) Whenever a person becomes eligible for parole release pursuant
132 to this subsection, the board shall hold a hearing to determine such
133 person's suitability for parole release. At least twelve months prior to
134 such hearing, the board shall notify the office of Chief Public Defender,
135 the appropriate state's attorney, the Victim Services Unit within the
136 Department of Correction, the Office of the Victim Advocate and the
137 Office of Victim Services within the Judicial Department of such
138 person's eligibility for parole release pursuant to this subsection. The
139 office of Chief Public Defender shall assign counsel for such person
140 pursuant to section 51-296 if such person is indigent. At any hearing to
141 determine such person's suitability for parole release pursuant to this
142 subsection, the board shall permit (A) such person to make a statement
143 on such person's behalf, (B) counsel for such person and the state's
144 attorney to submit reports and other documents, and (C) any victim of
145 the crime or crimes to make a statement pursuant to section 54-126a. The

146 board may request testimony from mental health professionals or other
147 relevant witnesses, and reports from the Commissioner of Correction or
148 other persons, as the board may require. The board shall use validated
149 risk assessment and needs assessment tools and its risk-based
150 structured decision making and release criteria established pursuant to
151 subsection (d) of section 54-124a in making a determination pursuant to
152 this subsection.

153 (4) After such hearing, the board may allow such person to go at large
154 on parole with respect to any portion of a sentence that was based on a
155 crime or crimes committed while such person was under eighteen years
156 of age if the board finds that such parole release would be consistent
157 with the factors set forth in subdivisions (1) to (4), inclusive, of
158 subsection (c) of section 54-300 and if it appears, from all available
159 information, including, but not limited to, any reports from the
160 Commissioner of Correction, that (A) there is a reasonable probability
161 that such person will live and remain at liberty without violating the
162 law, (B) the benefits to such person and society that would result from
163 such person's release to community supervision substantially outweigh
164 the benefits to such person and society that would result from such
165 person's continued incarceration, and (C) such person has demonstrated
166 substantial rehabilitation since the date such crime or crimes were
167 committed considering such person's character, background and
168 history, as demonstrated by factors, including, but not limited to, such
169 person's correctional record, the age and circumstances of such person
170 as of the date of the commission of the crime or crimes, whether such
171 person has demonstrated remorse and increased maturity since the date
172 of the commission of the crime or crimes, such person's contributions to
173 the welfare of other persons through service, such person's efforts to
174 overcome substance abuse, addiction, trauma, lack of education or
175 obstacles that such person may have faced as a child or youth in the
176 adult correctional system, the opportunities for rehabilitation in the
177 adult correctional system, whether the person has also applied for or
178 received a sentence modification and the overall degree of such person's

179 rehabilitation considering the nature and circumstances of the crime or
180 crimes.

181 (5) After such hearing, the board shall articulate for the record its
182 decision and the reasons for its decision. If the board determines that
183 continued confinement is necessary, the board may reassess such
184 person's suitability for a new parole hearing at a later date to be
185 determined at the discretion of the board, but not earlier than two years
186 after the date of its decision.

187 (6) The decision of the board under this subsection shall not be subject
188 to appeal.

189 (g) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (a) to (f),
190 inclusive, of this section, a person convicted of one or more crimes
191 committed while such person was under [twenty-one] twenty-six years
192 of age [, who was sentenced on or before October 1, 2005,] and who
193 received a definite sentence or total effective sentence of more than ten
194 years' incarceration for such crime or crimes, [committed on or before
195 October 1, 2005,] may be allowed to go at large on parole in the
196 discretion of the panel of the Board of Pardons and Paroles for the
197 institution in which such person is confined, provided (A) if such person
198 is serving a sentence of fifty years or less, such person shall be eligible
199 for parole after serving sixty per cent of the sentence or twelve years,
200 whichever is greater, or (B) if such person is serving a sentence of more
201 than fifty years, such person shall be eligible for parole after serving
202 thirty years. Nothing in this subsection shall limit a person's eligibility
203 for parole release under the provisions of subsections (a) to (f), inclusive,
204 of this section if such person would be eligible for parole release at an
205 earlier date under any of such provisions.

206 (2) The board shall apply the parole eligibility rules of this subsection
207 only with respect to the sentence for a crime or crimes committed while
208 a person was under [twenty-one] twenty-six years of age. Any portion
209 of a sentence that is based on a crime or crimes committed while a

210 person was [twenty-one] twenty-six years of age or older shall be subject
211 to the applicable parole eligibility, suitability and release rules set forth
212 in subsections (a) to (e), inclusive, of this section.

213 (3) Whenever a person becomes eligible for parole release pursuant
214 to this subsection, the board shall hold a hearing to determine such
215 person's suitability for parole release. At least twelve months prior to
216 such hearing, the board shall notify the office of Chief Public Defender,
217 the appropriate state's attorney, the Victim Services Unit within the
218 Department of Correction, the Office of the Victim Advocate and the
219 Office of Victim Services within the Judicial Department of such
220 person's eligibility for parole release pursuant to this subsection. The
221 office of Chief Public Defender shall assign counsel for such person
222 pursuant to section 51-296 if such person is indigent. At any hearing to
223 determine such person's suitability for parole release pursuant to this
224 subsection, the board shall permit (A) such person to make a statement
225 on such person's behalf, (B) counsel for such person and the state's
226 attorney to submit reports and other documents, and (C) any victim of
227 the crime or crimes to make a statement pursuant to section 54-126a. The
228 board may request testimony from mental health professionals or other
229 relevant witnesses, and reports from the Commissioner of Correction or
230 other persons, as the board may require. The board shall use validated
231 risk assessment and needs assessment tools and its risk-based
232 structured decision making and release criteria established pursuant to
233 subsection (d) of section 54-124a in making a determination pursuant to
234 this subsection.

235 (4) After such hearing, the board may allow such person to go at large
236 on parole with respect to any portion of a sentence that was based on a
237 crime or crimes committed while such person was under [twenty-one]
238 twenty-six years of age, if the board finds that such parole release would
239 be consistent with the factors set forth in subdivisions (1) to (4),
240 inclusive, of subsection (c) of section 54-300 and if it appears, from all
241 available information, including, but not limited to, any reports from the
242 Commissioner of Correction, that (A) there is a reasonable probability

243 that such person will live and remain at liberty without violating the
244 law, (B) the benefits to such person and society that would result from
245 such person's release to community supervision substantially outweigh
246 the benefits to such person and society that would result from such
247 person's continued incarceration, and (C) such person has demonstrated
248 substantial rehabilitation since the date such crime or crimes were
249 committed considering such person's character, background and
250 history, as demonstrated by factors, including, but not limited to, such
251 person's correctional record, the age and circumstances of such person
252 as of the date of the commission of the crime or crimes, whether such
253 person has demonstrated remorse and increased maturity since the date
254 of the commission of the crime or crimes, such person's contributions to
255 the welfare of other persons through service, such person's efforts to
256 overcome substance abuse, addiction, trauma, lack of education or
257 obstacles that such person may have faced as a person who was under
258 [twenty-one] twenty-six years of age in the adult correctional system,
259 the opportunities for rehabilitation in the adult correctional system,
260 whether the person has also applied for or received a sentence
261 modification and the overall degree of such person's rehabilitation
262 considering the nature and circumstances of the crime or crimes. There
263 shall be a rebuttable presumption that any person who is made eligible
264 for parole pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, that such
265 person has satisfied all other factors concerning such person's parole
266 eligibility.

267 (5) After such hearing, the board shall articulate for the record its
268 decision and the reasons for its decision. If the board determines that
269 continued confinement is necessary, the board may reassess such
270 person's suitability for a new parole hearing at a later date to be
271 determined at the discretion of the board, but not earlier than two years
272 after the date of its decision.

273 (6) The decision of the board under this subsection shall not be subject
274 to appeal.

275 (h) Any person released on parole under this section shall remain in
276 the custody of the Commissioner of Correction and be subject to
277 supervision by personnel of the Department of Correction during such
278 person's period of parole.

279 Sec. 2. Section 54-91g of the general statutes is repealed and the
280 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

281 (a) If the case of a child, as defined in section 46b-120, is transferred
282 to the regular criminal docket of the Superior Court pursuant to section
283 46b-127 and the child is convicted of a class A or B felony pursuant to
284 such transfer, or in the case of any other person who has not yet attained
285 the age of twenty-six years at the time the crime or crimes were
286 committed for which such person is convicted of a class A or B felony,
287 at the time of sentencing, the court shall:

288 (1) Consider, in addition to any other information relevant to
289 sentencing, the defendant's age at the time of the offense, the hallmark
290 features of adolescence and young adulthood, and any scientific and
291 psychological evidence showing the differences between a child's or
292 young adult's brain development and [an] a mature adult's brain
293 development; and

294 (2) Consider, if the court proposes to sentence the child or other
295 person to a lengthy sentence under which it is likely that the child or
296 other person will die while incarcerated, how the scientific and
297 psychological evidence described in subdivision (1) of this subsection
298 counsels against such a sentence.

299 (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 54-91a, no presentence
300 investigation or report may be waived with respect to a child or other
301 person described in subsection (a) of this section convicted of a class A
302 or B felony. Any presentence report prepared with respect to a child or
303 other person described in subsection (a) of this section convicted of a
304 class A or B felony shall address the factors set forth in subparagraphs
305 (A) to (D), inclusive, of subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section.

306 (c) Whenever a child or other person is sentenced pursuant to
307 subsection (a) of this section, the court shall indicate the maximum
308 period of incarceration that may apply to the child or other person and
309 whether the child or other person may be eligible to apply for release on
310 parole pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (f) of section 54-125a, as
311 amended by this act.

312 (d) The Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch shall
313 compile reference materials relating to adolescent and young adult
314 psychological and brain development to assist courts in sentencing
315 children or other persons pursuant to this section.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	54-125a
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	54-91g

Statement of Purpose:

To expand provisions concerning the sentencing of a child who committed a class A or B felony and parole of persons who committed a crime under the age of twenty-one years, to those persons who were under twenty-six years of age when they committed such crimes.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]