



**TESTIMONY ON LD 1113**

**An Act Regarding Fairness in Sentencing for Persons Under 26 Years of Age**

**Judiciary Committee Hearing  
March 31, 2025**

**IN SUPPORT**

Submitted by: [Dr. Brashani Reece](#)

Dear Chairperson Carney, Chairperson Kuhn, and Esteemed Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Dr. Brashani Reece, and I am the Executive Director of Drop LWOP New England. I hold a doctorate in Clinical Psychology with dual specializations in Forensics and Children and Families.

Much of my training was with the incarcerated emerging adult population, those individuals who are under the age of 26 at the time of their offense. And over the last 12 years, I have studied violence, dangerousness, and risk assessment, which is very pertinent to our discussions today.

I am here to express my support for LD 1113.

In recent years, there has been important dialogue surrounding the concept of emerging adults and brain science. I frequently hear people describe the brain as not fully developed until age 26, on average. This is scientifically proven. I would like to expand on that notion for a deeper understanding of why it matters in the context of criminal justice.

When we discuss emerging adults in a forensic psychology context, a few key factors need to be highlighted rather than the entire brain. These include:

1. **Impulse Control:** Young adults may have limited impulse control.
2. **Long-Term Planning:** They often find it challenging to engage in long-term planning and foresee potential consequences, as life can feel quite open-ended at that stage.
3. **Emotional Regulation:** Importantly, emerging adults frequently experience difficulties with emotional regulation in what we refer to as "hot cognition" scenarios. This term describes situations where emotional arousal is particularly heightened—such as during stressful encounters, conflicts with peers, or perceived threats of violence.

These details are important because it suggests targeted areas for assessment and treatment and recognizes brain development as a mitigating factor, legally speaking. What we're really trying to say is that just because a young person has committed a serious act of violence, it does not mean they are an endless threat to public safety.

In fact, persons under the age of 26 are highly impressionable, flexible, and resilient.

For these reasons, I kindly urge the Committee to vote in favor of LD 1113. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding these significant pieces of legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brashani Reece, PsyD". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Dr. Brashani Reece