



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Good Afternoon Chairpersons Carney and Kuhn. My name is Representative Kenneth W. Fredette, and I am an attorney representing House District 33, including the towns of Newport, Corinna, Plymouth, Etna and Dixmont.

I am here today, or in my place Senator Haggan, as I am in Court for a trial today, to speak on behalf of my bill, LD 535, "An Act to Authorize Judicial Disposition of a Juvenile Adjudicated of Murder or a Class A Crime to a Term of Commitment Extending Beyond the Juvenile's 21st Birthday."

The purpose of this bill is to allow Judges the discretion to sentence juveniles who commit a Class A crime, such as murder, to a term of punishment beyond a juvenile's 21st birthday.

I present this bill today based upon a case in which a juvenile, then age 16, was sentenced to five, yes, five years at Portland's Long Creek Youth Development Center after admitting that he murdered his 14 year old girlfriend.

The sentencing Judge in that case stated during sentencing that he had no choice but to sentence the juvenile to a five year term because the current law did not given him the discretion to sentence him beyond that term.

This bill does not mandate a longer sentence, but it does give the sentencing judge to weigh all the factors in the case, and the law, and impose a proper sentence.

Murder, and other Class A crimes, are the highest rated crimes in our state, and in egresses cases, I strongly believe that the Maine Legislature ought to give our judges the discretion to properly sentence a person for the crime they commit, and yes, even if the person committing that crime is a juvenile.

Thank you, and I look forward to working with you during the work session on this bill.