

Reps. Warren, Shaffer, Alma Smith, Meadows, Condino, Bieda, Clack, Kathleen Law, Leland, Tobocman and Vagnozzi offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 405.

A resolution to express the sense of the House that the sentence of life without parole for those under 18 is an important issue that requires serious consideration and deliberation by the Legislature.

Whereas, Michigan youth may be sentenced to life without the possibility of parole. Such a sentence condemns the youth to a miserable and dangerous existence, and where the goal of rehabilitation is realized, does nothing to enhance public safety; and

Whereas, Sentencing youth as adults violates the core principle of the juvenile justice system, which traditionally recognizes that juveniles are less mature socially and biologically than adults, and therefore should not be held to the same standards as adults. Science, especially brain and child development studies, demonstrates that the parts of the brain that regulate aggression and impulse inhibition are not fully developed in juveniles; and

Whereas, These life sentences have extreme social and monetary costs. The opportunity for such young persons to reform and make a positive contribution to society is severely, if not completely eliminated. A life sentence for persons who are so young puts a tremendous burden on taxpayers, who must pay tens of thousands of dollars per year to house each prisoner for decades; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we express the sense of the House that the sentence of life without parole for those under 18 is an important issue that requires serious consideration and deliberation by the Legislature.