



### Support a Meaningful Opportunity for Release for Youth Sentenced to Adult Facilities

Currently, youth under the age of 18 who commit certain crimes are routinely sentenced to life, with no opportunity for parole for 40 years.

- Extreme sentences for youth do no account for the fact that their brains are not fully developed. Tremendous growth and maturity often occur in a person's late teens through mid-20s.
- In part, this lack of maturity is why the U.S. Supreme Court has recognized that it is wrong to deny someone who commits a crime under the age of 18 the opportunity to demonstrate rehabilitation.
- It costs taxpayers \$2.5 million to incarcerate one juvenile for life – an enormous expense considering most such young people should be rehabilitated long before their 40-year parole eligibility date. Current Texas law does not provide a path to redemption for those who can prove that they merit a second chance.

### Support the Second Look Bill

Texas should provide a "second look" to people convicted of crimes before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday through earlier parole eligibility.

- An early parole hearing can focus on how the person has shown rehabilitation and maturity and consider factors such as childhood trauma and the hallmark features of youth.
- This is in line with the national trend moving away from extreme punishments of children.
- With this policy change, Texas could save between \$4 million and \$12 million per year following implementation.
- By providing an option for early release for rehabilitated, mature individuals, Texas will encourage young offenders to focus on rehabilitation, while saving taxpayer dollars without compromising public safety. This policy will also allow people to fulfill their true potential and become contributing members of the community.

### Broad-based Support for Second Look

The following organizations, including Texas Smart-On-Crime Coalition members, are supportive of "Second Look" reform:

*Texas Criminal Justice Coalition  
Texas Association of Business  
Texans Care for Children  
Goodwill Central Texas  
ACLU of Texas*

*Texas Public Policy Foundation  
Texas Appleseed  
Christian Life Commission  
Prison Fellowship  
R Street Institute*