

Death of Infant Inspires Justice Reform Bill Sponsored by Senator Paul D. Corderman



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Annapolis, MD: Senator Paul Corderman and advocates from [Justice's S.A.K.E.](#) are bringing attention to [SB640](#), a Maryland bill aimed at strengthening protections for young victims by limiting postconviction release in the most serious cases. The legislation, introduced and sponsored by Washington County Senator Paul Corderman, would prohibit a court from releasing a defendant after conviction, pending sentencing or the completion of appellate review, when the crime resulted in the death of a child under 14.

The bill states: "A court may not release a defendant after conviction pending sentencing or exhaustion of any appellate review if... the crime resulted in the death of a victim under the age of 14 years." It applies to individuals convicted of either a crime of violence as defined in Criminal Law §14-101 or child neglect under §3-602.1

The need for clearer postconviction safeguards became especially visible following a widely reported [Washington County case](#) in 2025 in which an infant died from severe malnutrition. The child's mother was found guilty after evidence showed prolonged neglect leading to the baby's death. She later failed to appear for her sentencing hearing and [remains a fugitive](#), a development that further underscored gaps in Maryland's postconviction release framework and intensified statewide discussion about how the justice system should respond when a young child loses their life.

"SB640 addresses a critical gap in Maryland's postconviction process," said Senator Corderman. "When a child loses their life, the justice system must reflect the seriousness of that harm. Our collaboration with Justice's S.A.K.E. has been essential in highlighting why this reform matters. This bill is also about affirming the dignity of every child's life and ensuring that our justice system responds with the gravity and accountability such a loss deserves."

If enacted, SB640 would take effect October 1, 2026. The bill is being heard today, February 17, 2026, in the [Judicial Proceedings Committee](#) in the Maryland State Senate.

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