

State House  
Annapolis MD 21401

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I have today vetoed House Bill 501.

This bill alters the procedures used by judicial sentence review panels. Specifically, the bill: (1) requires a panel to hold a hearing prior to ordering a change of sentence; (2) requires a panel to provide notice to the parties and to any victim before a sentence may be changed; and (3) specifies rights and entitlements at panel hearings for the State, a defendant, a victim and a victim's representative. In addition, the bill provides that a sentence of life without parole may not be increased to death by a sentence review panel.

Senate Bill 280, which was passed by the General Assembly and signed by me on May 12, 1998, accomplishes the same purpose. Therefore, it is not necessary for me to sign House Bill 501.

Sincerely,  
Parris N. Glendening  
Governor

**House Bill No. 501**

AN ACT concerning

**Criminal Sentencing - Judicial Review Panels - Victim Notification**

FOR the purpose of modifying the procedures a judicial review panel uses for reviewing a defendant's sentence; providing that the panel need not hold a hearing under certain circumstances; providing that a sentence of life imprisonment without the possibility of parole may not be increased to death by a judicial review panel; requiring certain persons to be notified before a judicial review panel increases, modifies, or reduces a sentence; allowing a victim or a victim's representative to attend the proceedings and address the panel under certain circumstances; and generally relating to victims' rights in postconviction proceedings.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article 27 - Crimes and Punishments

Section 645JC and 645JE

Annotated Code of Maryland

(1996 Replacement Volume and 1997 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

**Article 27 - Crimes and Punishments**