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Minnesota Passes Prosecutor-Initiated Resentencing Law, Enabling Prosecutors to Revisit Past Cases in the Interest of Justice

Governor Walz Has Signed the Historic Bill Supported by State Victim Coalitions into Law Thanks to Leadership from County Attorney Choi, Representative Moller, and Senator Latz

ST. PAUL, MN — Today, Minnesota became the sixth state in the nation to enact a Prosecutor-Initiated Resentencing (PIR) law, furthering the interests of justice and public safety. Governor Tim Walz signed [Omnibus Bill SF 2909](#) into law on **May 19th, 2023**, providing prosecutors across Minnesota the authority to look back at past cases, should they choose to do so in their county.

Prosecutor-Initiated Resentencing allows prosecutors to review past sentences and determine whether a person can be safely released and reunited with their families. Whether the sentence is outdated, or the incarcerated person has rehabilitated, prosecutors have found that some past sentences may merit a second look. In states where Prosecutor-Initiated Resentencing laws are enacted, they have provided relief for [youth charged as adults](#), aging populations [who are no longer a threat to public safety](#), and incarcerated people whose outdated sentences [would not be given out under today's policies](#), among others.

“Healing for victims and the rehabilitation and re-entry of the person who is convicted and sentenced is an important part of maintaining justice in our society, and the role of a prosecutor doesn’t end after someone has been sent to prison”, said Ramsey County Attorney John Choi. “This new law provides a direct path for elected prosecutors who are accountable to their community to ask the court to reconsider the sentence based on current circumstances, including the input of victims.”

The PIR process requires a prosecutor’s careful review of the incarcerated person’s history, in-prison behavior, and reentry planning. The process also centers victims, ensuring proper notice and an opportunity to participate. The Court then examines the prosecutor’s recommendation and makes the decision whether a person should be resentenced.

“This is an innovative and balanced step towards smarter justice and public safety,” said Representative Kelly Moller. “As an Assistant County Attorney, I know that this law will enable prosecutors to prioritize public safety, victims’ rights, and promote rehabilitation.”

“For The People conceptualized and helped pass the nation’s first Prosecutor-Initiated Resentencing law,” said Hillary Blout, Executive Director and Founder of For The People.

“We are grateful to the Minnesota lawmakers who introduced and helped to pass the PIR law. PIR has had such positive impacts already in other states and we are eager to see its benefits to families and communities across Minnesota.”

“I’m pleased Minnesota has joined other states that recognize the role of prosecutors in working with their communities to ensure sentences continue to be appropriate and just,” said Senator Ron Latz, “Along with other changes in the Senate and House judiciary and public safety bills, it reflects the growing recognition that rehabilitation for those who have committed crimes and restoration for victims are not mutually exclusive, they can be closely connected.”

Two of the State’s largest victim/survivor coalitions, Violence Free Minnesota and the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault supported the legislation. In a letter to legislators they stated, “sentences imposed in the past may no longer be in the interest of justice, including what may be wanted by someone victimized by the crime. This legislation takes a step toward providing some support to victims/survivors by allowing locally elected prosecutors to recommend prison sentences for judicial review and downward adjustment based on the input of victims.” They also highlighted that the new law can provide relief to those who committed crimes due to histories of abuse and having been victims themselves, “we know that people who experience domestic violence or trafficking are at a higher risk of committing an offense – often in defense of their own safety.”



About For The People

For The People is a national nonprofit that supports prosecutors who are implementing Prosecutor-Initiated Resentencing in their jurisdiction through case review, data analysis and coordination with criminal justice stakeholders. For The People works with prosecutors, victims, defense attorneys, system-impacted people, and community organizations with the goal of reuniting families and restoring communities. In 2018, the organization worked to pass the nation’s first Prosecutor-Initiated Resentencing law, enabling prosecutors to evaluate past sentences. Now, For The People works to expand this vision of justice nationwide, providing policy and technical support. To learn more, visit forthepppl.org, or follow For The People on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Facebook](#).