

SUBMIT INDIVIDUAL OR ORGANIZATIONAL LETTER OF SUPPORT TO THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Instructions:

- Submit your testimony in the text of your email or as an attachment on organizational letterhead (if applicable)
- If you submitted testimony to the Judiciary Committee for the Sep 2025 hearing, update the letter: (1) Make reference to **18-year-olds only** to reflect the current bill; (2) change all references from the original bill numbers (H.1923/S.1061) to **“S.3221/H.5562”**; and (3) address your email to the six conference committee members (see below).
- If you are supportive of the Clean Slate campaign, feel free to add talking points in support of that bill and reference support for **“S.3217”**
- Download and attach the [fact sheet](#) or copy this URL in your email text: <https://www.cfjj.org/s/FACT-SHEET-RTA19-EcoDev.pdf>

via email

To: Aaron.M.Michlewitz@mahouse.gov; Michael.Rodrigues@masenate.gov;
Carole.Fiola@mahouse.gov; Barry.Finegold@masenate.gov; michael.soter@mahouse.gov;
peter.durant@masenate.gov

Organizations cc: Karen.Spilka@masenate.gov; Ronald.Mariano@mahouse.gov

Individuals cc: your [State Representative and State Senator](#)

Subject: Testimony in support of Raise the Age (S.3221) in Economic Development Conference Committee bill (H5562)

ORGANIZATIONAL LETTERHEAD (if applicable)

Dear Chair Michlewitz, Chair Rodrigues, Chair Fiola, Chair Finegold, Rep. Soter and Sen. Durant,

[Introduce yourself or your organization in 1-3 sentences: Say who you are, a brief description of your organization, and what makes you an expert on this topic or population. Remember: personal experience counts as an expertise.]

We respectfully ask that the Economic Development Conference Committee adopt raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction to include 18-year-olds as passed by the Senate (S.3221). This policy will improve Massachusetts' economy by ensuring more young people are engaged in education and employment while improving public safety in our communities.

Add one or two paragraphs on why you support this bill: Refer to 1 – 2 talking points below and expand on them with your expertise and programmatic focus.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at *[email and phone]*.

Sincerely,
Name and Position *(if applicable)*
Organization *(if applicable)*
Address

Talking points to Raise the Age of Juvenile Jurisdiction to Include 18-year-olds
(choose 1 or 2 from these talking points to expand on)

- ☐ *Personalize your testimony by giving examples of how you have seen or experienced the **harm** to young people who went through the adult system when they were 18 whose outcomes would have been **better** if they had been in the juvenile system.*
- ☐ Adult legal system involvement creates significant barriers to young people in obtaining education, skills building, and career development opportunities, essentially excluding a cohort from each generation from participating in Massachusetts' economy to their full potential. By raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction to include 18-year-olds into the juvenile justice system, this bill **will improve economic outcomes for young people themselves and for the Commonwealth.**
- ☐ **We're making things worse.** An overly punitive approach towards young people can actually cause more offending, resulting in the highest recidivism rate of any other age group. **This reform will decrease crime and the state's long-term spending on the legal system and its associated costs to taxpayers.** Older teens are highly amenable to rehabilitation. Their development is influenced – positively or negatively – by their environment.

- Annually, Massachusetts spends approximately \$1.4 billion on corrections, [surpassing the spending of 80% of other states in the nation](#). Between FY 2018 and FY 2025, state spending on adult corrections grew at a rate of [23-25%](#). By comparison, DYS spending grew by only 1% during this same time period.
- Shifting legal system-involved youth from the adult criminal legal system into **the juvenile system improves young people's access to education and skills training, even if they are never incarcerated**. Young people's prosecution as adults during their late adolescence derails their education, which can have serious effects on their ability to attain employment during these critical adolescent years, diminishing their lifetime earnings, and preventing them from contributing fully to the Massachusetts economy.
- **The labor market needs more young people, not less, to maintain and expand growth in our economy. However, involvement in the legal system for a young person decreases their likelihood to actively participate in the workforce for decades.** Economists have warned of the risks to Massachusetts's economic growth due to a tight labor market – driven by an aging workforce and low unemployment. These issues pre-dated the COVID-19 pandemic but have only been exacerbated since.
- **Reducing the adult legal system's footprint in the lives of young people will have a positive impact on their communities' economies, tackling one of the drivers of the racial wealth gap in the Commonwealth.** Young people are over-represented in our criminal justice system, and legal system involvement is concentrated in particular communities — especially low-income, Black and brown communities. This concentration depresses communities' economic potential [as a whole](#). Incarceration results in \$326 billion in lifelong lost earnings every year for people who have spent any time in jail pre-trial or prison due to extremely high unemployment or employment instability (\$111 billion) and for their children's future earnings (\$215 billion).
- You can find additional talking points at the [RTA Coalition's letter](#) to the committee.