
SAMPLE TESTIMONY ON ORGANIZATIONAL LETTERHEAD
Italics are instructions on what to include in these paragraphs

via mail

Committee on the Judiciary
The State House
Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

via email

Subject: Testimony in Support of
H.1923/S.1061

To: Talia.Quinn@mahouse.gov;
Eduardo.MorenoMendez@masenate.gov;
Christianna.Golden@masenate.gov.

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

Testimony to the Joint Committee on the Judiciary in Support of H.1923 / S.1061
“An Act to Promote Public Safety and Better Outcomes for Youth”

[Insert Date]

Dear Chair Day, Chair Edwards, and members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of “An Act to Promote Public Safety and Better Outcomes for Young Adults” (H.1923/S.1061). *[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.]*

[insert organization name] is dedicated to *[workforce development/economic development/etc.]* and support the campaign to raise the age at which an adolescent is automatically charged as an adult. We respectfully ask that the Committee report out ***An Act to Promote Public Safety and Better Outcomes for Youth (H.1923 / S.1061)*** favorably due to this bill’s potential economic benefit to our state.

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 considering our testimony. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at *[email and phone]*.

Sincerely,
Name and Position

Talking points to Raise the Age of Juvenile Jurisdiction to Include 18-20 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, 19, or 20 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 gradually raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction to include 18, then 19, and then 20-year-olds into the juvenile justice system over a five-year-period, 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.** Young adults are highly amenable to rehabilitation. Their development is influenced – positively or negatively – by their environment.
- 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.
- 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. **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.**
- Young adults are overrepresented 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. **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.**