STATE OF NEW YORK

1995

2019-2020 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 18, 2019

Introduced by Sen. LITTLE -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Codes

AN ACT to amend the penal law and the criminal procedure law, in relation to imposing a mandatory sentence of life imprisonment without parole upon conviction of murder in the first degree; and to repeal sections 270.55 and 400.27 of the criminal procedure law relating to the procedure for determining the sentence for conviction of murder in the first degree

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Section 60.06 of the penal law, as amended by chapter 482 of the laws of 2009, is amended to read as follows:

§ 60.06 Authorized disposition; murder in the first degree offenders; aggravated murder offenders; certain murder in the second degree offenders; certain terrorism offenders; criminal possession of a chemical weapon or biological weapon offenders; criminal use of a chemical weapon or biological weapon offenders.

When a defendant is convicted of murder in the first degree as defined in section 125.27 of this chapter, the court shall[~~, in accordance with the provisions of section 400.27 of the criminal procedure law,~~] sentence the defendant to [~~death, to~~] life imprisonment without parole in accordance with subdivision five of section 70.00 of this title[~~, or to a term of imprisonment for a class A-I felony other than a sentence of life imprisonment without parole, in accordance with subdivisions one through three of section 70.00 of this title~~]. When a person is convicted of murder in the second degree as defined in subdivision five of section 125.25 of this chapter or of the crime of aggravated murder as defined in subdivision one of section 125.26 of this chapter, the court shall sentence the defendant to life imprisonment without parole in accordance with subdivision five of section 70.00 of this title. When

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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a defendant is convicted of the crime of terrorism as defined in section 490.25 of this chapter, and the specified offense the defendant committed is a class A-I felony offense, or when a defendant is convicted of the crime of criminal possession of a chemical weapon or biological weapon in the first degree as defined in section 490.45 of this chapter, or when a defendant is convicted of the crime of criminal use of a chemical weapon or biological weapon in the first degree as defined in section 490.55 of this chapter, the court shall sentence the defendant to life imprisonment without parole in accordance with subdivision five of section 70.00 of this title[~~; provided, however, that nothing in this section shall preclude or prevent a sentence of death when the defendant is also convicted of murder in the first degree as defined in section 125.27 of this chapter~~]. When a defendant is convicted of aggravated murder as defined in subdivision two of section 125.26 of this chapter, the court shall sentence the defendant to life imprisonment without parole or to a term of imprisonment for a class A-I felony other than a sentence of life imprisonment without parole, in accordance with subdivisions one through three of section 70.00 of this title.

§ 2. Subparagraph (i) of paragraph (a) of subdivision 3 of section 70.00 of the penal law, as amended by chapter 107 of the laws of 2006, is amended to read as follows:

(i) For a class A-I felony, such minimum period shall not be less than fifteen years nor more than twenty-five years; provided, however, that (A) where a sentence[~~, other than a sentence of death or life imprisonment without parole,~~] is imposed upon a defendant convicted of murder in the first degree as defined in section 125.27 of this chapter [~~such minimum period shall be not less than twenty years nor more than twenty-five years~~]**, the sentence shall be life without parole**, and, (B) where a sentence is imposed upon a defendant convicted of murder in the second degree as defined in subdivision five of section 125.25 of this chapter or convicted of aggravated murder as defined in section 125.26 of this chapter, the sentence shall be life imprisonment without parole, and, (C) where a sentence is imposed upon a defendant convicted of attempted murder in the first degree as defined in article one hundred ten of this chapter and subparagraph (i), (ii) or (iii) of paragraph (a) of subdivision one and paragraph (b) of subdivision one of section 125.27 of this chapter or attempted aggravated murder as defined in article one hundred ten of this chapter and section 125.26 of this chapter such minimum period shall be not less than twenty years nor more than forty years.

§ 3. Subdivision 5 of section 70.00 of the penal law, as amended by chapter 482 of the laws of 2009, is amended to read as follows:

5. Life imprisonment without parole. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a defendant sentenced to life imprisonment without parole shall not be or become eligible for parole or conditional release. For purposes of commitment and custody, other than parole and conditional release, such sentence shall be deemed to be an indeterminate sentence. A defendant [~~may~~] **shall** be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole upon conviction for the crime of murder in the first degree as defined in section 125.27 of this chapter and in accordance with the procedures provided by law for imposing a sentence for such crime. A defendant must be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole upon conviction for the crime of terrorism as defined in section 490.25 of this chapter, where the specified offense the defendant committed is a class A-I felony; the crime of criminal possession of a chemical weapon or biological weapon in the first degree as defined in section 490.45

of this chapter; or the crime of criminal use of a chemical weapon or biological weapon in the first degree as defined in section 490.55 of this chapter[~~; provided, however, that nothing in this subdivision shall preclude or prevent a sentence of death when the defendant is also convicted of the crime of murder in the first degree as defined in section 125.27 of this chapter~~]. A defendant must be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole upon conviction for the crime of murder in the second degree as defined in subdivision five of section 125.25 of this chapter or for the crime of aggravated murder as defined in subdivision one of section 125.26 of this chapter. A defendant may be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole upon conviction for the crime of aggravated murder as defined in subdivision two of section 125.26 of this chapter.

§ 4. Subdivision 5 of section 70.00 of the penal law, as amended by section 40-a of part WWW of chapter 59 of the laws of 2017, is amended to read as follows:

5. Life imprisonment without parole. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a defendant sentenced to life imprisonment without parole shall not be or become eligible for parole or conditional release. For purposes of commitment and custody, other than parole and conditional release, such sentence shall be deemed to be an indeterminate sentence. A defendant [~~may~~] **shall** be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole upon conviction for the crime of murder in the first degree as defined in section 125.27 of this chapter and in accordance with the procedures provided by law for imposing a sentence for such crime. A defendant who was eighteen years of age or older at the time of the commission of the crime must be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole upon conviction for the crime of terrorism as defined in section 490.25 of this chapter, where the specified offense the defendant committed is a class A-I felony; the crime of criminal possession of a chemical weapon or biological weapon in the first degree as defined in section 490.45 of this chapter; or the crime of criminal use of a chemical weapon or biological weapon in the first degree as defined in section 490.55 of this chapter[~~; provided, however, that nothing in this subdivision shall preclude or prevent a sentence of death when the defendant is also convicted of the crime of murder in the first degree as defined in section 125.27 of this chapter~~]. A defendant who was seventeen years of age or younger at the time of the commission of the crime may be sentenced, in accordance with law, to the applicable indeterminate sentence with a maximum term of life imprisonment. A defendant must be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole upon conviction for the crime of murder in the second degree as defined in subdivision five of section 125.25 of this chapter or for the crime of aggravated murder as defined in subdivision one of section 125.26 of this chapter. A defendant may be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole upon conviction for the crime of aggravated murder as defined in subdivision two of section 125.26 of this chapter.

§ 5. Paragraph (d) of subdivision 2 of section 490.25 of the penal law, as added by chapter 300 of the laws of 2001, is amended to read as follows:

(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, when a person is convicted of a crime of terrorism pursuant to this section, and the specified offense is a class A-I felony offense, the sentence upon conviction of such offense shall be life imprisonment without parole[~~; provided, however, that nothing herein shall preclude or prevent a~~

~~sentence of death when the specified offense is murder in the first degree as defined in section 125.27 of this chapter~~].

§ 6. Paragraph (e) of subdivision 5 of section 220.10 of the criminal procedure law, as amended by chapter 1 of the laws of 1995, is amended to read as follows:

(e) A defendant may not enter a plea of guilty to the crime of murder in the first degree as defined in section 125.27 of the penal law; provided, however, that a defendant may enter such a plea with both the permission of the court and the consent of the people when the agreed upon sentence is [~~either~~] life imprisonment without parole [~~or a term of imprisonment for the class A-I felony of murder in the first degree other than a sentence of life imprisonment without parole~~].

§ 7. Subparagraph (vii) of paragraph (b) of subdivision 3 of section 220.30 of the criminal procedure law, as amended by chapter 1 of the laws of 1995, is amended to read as follows:

(vii) A defendant may not enter a plea of guilty to the crime of murder in the first degree as defined in section 125.27 of the penal law; provided, however, that a defendant may enter such a plea with both the permission of the court and the consent of the people when the agreed upon sentence is [~~either~~] life imprisonment without parole [~~or a term of imprisonment for the class A-I felony of murder in the first degree other than a sentence of life imprisonment without parole~~].

§ 8. Section 270.55 of the criminal procedure law is REPEALED.

§ 9. Section 400.27 of the criminal procedure law is REPEALED.

§ 10. This act shall take effect immediately and shall apply to offenses committed on or after such effective date; provided, that section four of this act shall take effect on the same date and in the same manner as section 40-a of part WWW of chapter 59 of the laws of 2017, takes effect.