

STATE OF NEW YORK

4626

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

February 21, 2023

Introduced by M. of A. MCGOWAN -- read once and referred to the Committee on Codes

AN ACT to amend the executive law and the penal law, in relation to clemency

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

1 Section 1. Section 15 of the executive law, as added by chapter 545 of
2 the laws of 1971, is amended to read as follows:

3 § 15. Power of governor to grant reprieves, commutations and pardons.
4 The governor has power to grant reprieves, commutations and pardons,
5 after conviction, for all offenses, except treason, murder, crimes where
6 the defendant is sentenced to life imprisonment without parole or where
7 the defendant acting either alone or with one or more other persons,
8 commits or attempts to commit robbery, burglary, kidnapping, arson, rape
9 in the first degree, criminal sexual act in the first degree, sexual
10 abuse in the first degree, aggravated sexual abuse, escape in the first
11 degree, or escape in the second degree, and, in the course of and in
12 furtherance of such crime or of immediate flight therefrom, he or she,
13 or another participant, if there be any, intentionally causes the death
14 of: a police officer as defined in subdivision thirty-four of section
15 1.20 of the criminal procedure law; a peace officer as defined in para-
16 graph a of subdivision twenty-one, subdivision twenty-three, twenty-four
17 or sixty-two (employees of the division for youth) of section 2.10 of
18 the criminal procedure law; a firefighter; emergency medical technician,
19 ambulance driver, paramedic, physician or registered nurse involved in a
20 first response team, or any other individual who, in the course of offi-
21 cial duties, performs emergency response; or an employee of a state
22 correctional institution or was an employee of a local correctional
23 facility as defined in subdivision two of section forty of the
24 correction law, when such person was engaged in the course of performing
25 their official duties, and cases of impeachment, upon such conditions,

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

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1 and with such restrictions and limitations, as he or she may think prop-
2 er, subject to the regulations provided in this article.

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

6 5. Life imprisonment without parole. Notwithstanding any other
7 provision of law, a defendant sentenced to life imprisonment without
8 parole shall not be or become eligible for commutation, pardon, parole
9 or conditional release. For purposes of commitment and custody, other
10 than parole and conditional release, such sentence shall be deemed to be
11 an indeterminate sentence. A defendant may be sentenced to life impri-
12 sonment without parole upon conviction for the crime of murder in the
13 first degree as defined in section 125.27 of this chapter and in accord-
14 ance with the procedures provided by law for imposing a sentence for
15 such crime. A defendant who was eighteen years of age or older at the
16 time of the commission of the crime must be sentenced to life imprison-
17 ment without parole upon conviction for the crime of terrorism as
18 defined in section 490.25 of this chapter, where the specified offense
19 the defendant committed is a class A-I felony; the crime of criminal
20 possession of a chemical weapon or biological weapon in the first degree
21 as defined in section 490.45 of this chapter; or the crime of criminal
22 use of a chemical weapon or biological weapon in the first degree as
23 defined in section 490.55 of this chapter; provided, however, that noth-
24 ing in this subdivision shall preclude or prevent a sentence of death
25 when the defendant is also convicted of the crime of murder in the first
26 degree as defined in section 125.27 of this chapter. A defendant who was
27 seventeen years of age or younger at the time of the commission of the
28 crime may be sentenced, in accordance with law, to the applicable inde-
29 terminate sentence with a maximum term of life imprisonment. A defendant
30 must be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole upon conviction
31 for the crime of murder in the second degree as defined in subdivision
32 five of section 125.25 of this chapter or for the crime of aggravated
33 murder as defined in subdivision one of section 125.26 of this chapter.
34 A defendant may be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole upon
35 conviction for the crime of aggravated murder as defined in subdivision
36 two of section 125.26 of this chapter.

37 § 3. This act shall take effect on the same date and in the same
38 manner as a chapter of the laws of 2023 proposing an amendment to
39 section 4 of article IV of the constitution, relating to prohibiting
40 persons convicted of murder or sentenced to life without parole from
41 being eligible for commutation of sentence, takes effect.