



## **MEDIA CONTACT**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **TENNESSEE DISTRICT ATTORNEYS DENOUNCE GOV. LEE'S VETO OF BILL AIMED AT EXPANDING THE BOARD OF PAROLE'S AUTHORITY TO DENY EARLY RELEASE**

*Tennessee's Top Prosecutors Respond to Governor Bill Lee's Veto of HB 527 / SB 455*

On Monday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, Governor Bill Lee issued his first and only veto from his time as governor – HB 527 / SB 455. Tennessee's District Attorneys General denounce this decision and strongly urge the Tennessee General Assembly to vote to override the Governor's action.

HB 527 / SB 455 expands the Board of Parole's authority to deny early release when the severity of the offense demands it or where it sends a critical message that serious crimes carry serious consequences. These are not abstract concepts – they are the bedrock of public safety, justice for victims, and confidence in the rule of law. To ignore the gravity and specific facts of an offender's crime when determining early release eligibility is not only irresponsible, it is dangerous. It disregards the suffering of victims, erodes trust in the criminal justice system, and places our communities at greater risk.

Every individual sentenced to prison will eventually be released once they serve their sentence. Tennessee District Attorneys support this legislation because we believe there are crimes where the facts are so egregious the defendant should not be let out early. We believe the Board of Parole should have the authority to deny early release for someone who nearly strangles another individual to death. We believe there are times when someone who trafficked enough fentanyl into a community to kill over 75,000 people should in fact serve every day they are sentenced as should someone convicted of the continuous sexual abuse of a child. We support HB 527 / SB 455 because we believe someone who burglarizes a home disqualified themselves from getting out early the day they chose to rob a family of their entire sense of safety.

This legislation strikes the right balance. It supports rehabilitation while affirming the seriousness of crime. It protects victims. It promotes public safety. We are disappointed Governor Lee has chosen to stand in opposition to these goals. His veto sends the wrong message to victims, to law enforcement, and to the citizens of this state. We implore the legislature to override his decision.

#### **About the TNDAGC**

The Tennessee District Attorneys General Conference was created by the General Assembly in 1961 to provide for a more prompt and efficient administration of justice in the courts of the state. It is composed of the elected District Attorneys General from the state's 32 judicial districts. [www.tndagc.org](http://www.tndagc.org)

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