Valerie Newman RE: Media inquiry re: juvenile lifers in Michigan ‏

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| From: | **Valerie Newman** (VNewman@sado.org) This sender is in your [contact list](https://snt149.mail.live.com/mail/Contacts.mvc?SearchEmailKeyword=VNewman%40sado.org&n=1909251411). |
| Sent: | Thu 4/07/16 4:15 PM |
| To: | 'Diane Bukowski' (diane\_bukowski@hotmail.com) |

Sorry for the delay. Happy to chat as this is all quite complicated but below are the basic answers to the questions

**From:** Diane Bukowski [mailto:diane\_bukowski@hotmail.com]   
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 05, 2016 12:02 PM

Hi, Valerie, I see from today's Detroit News article linked below that you are certainly busy with many cases including especially the current situation with JLWOP.   
   
<http://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/michigan/2016/04/05/hundreds-michigan-juvenile-lifer-sentences-reviewed/82640408/>   
   
I had put a call in to Deborah LaBelle about this Friday, because Voice of Detroit is also doing a story on the Montgomery v. Louisiana Supreme Court ruling in which the court finally declared their 2012 decision on JLWOP retroactive, based on substantive issues. Of course, Michigan is one of the last four states that hadn't conceded this yet.  
   
Deb hasn't answered me back yet. I have read two other stories on MLive related to this, at

<http://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2016/01/high_court_ruling_opens_door_t.html>

<http://www.mlive.com/news/index.ssf/2016/03/database_of_juvenile_lifers_wi.html>  
   
I see from the first MLive article that prosecutors are pursuing this first pursuant to a Michigan law with an automatic trigger sending it to them. The second MLive article includes a database of 367 juvenile lifers.  
   
My question: Does the Michigan law preclude the juvenile lifers themselves and their attorneys from proceeding forward with their own motions for re-sentencing? It seems like a lot of leeway is being left open to the Prosecutors to decide who gets a chance, which I can't see as the intent of either Supreme Court ruling. I know that earlier LaBelle's office assigned attorneys for each juvenile lifer in the state after the 2012 ruling.

Answer: Every juvenile lifer is entitled to resentencing so there is no leeway being afforded to the prosecutors. The prosecutors unilaterally get to decide whether to seek another life without parole sentence but again, that is nothing special or new.

   
Can you please enlighten me on this matter, and whether SADO plans to pursue a more aggressive role rather than leaving it to the Prosecutors? I have done numerous stories on JLWOP, including several that included Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy and Oakland County Prosecutor Jessica Cooper vehemently opposing re-sentencing for juvenile lifers.  (If you want to see them, just bring up [http://voiceofdetroit.net](http://voiceofdetroit.net/) and put "juvenile lifers" in the search engine.)

Answer: See answer above. SADO is actively assessing the cases assigned to the office. We are diligently working on gathering the information to move forward in as expeditious a manner as possible.

   
Whatever comments you can provide whether officially from SADO or not will be helpful for my current story. I know a number of the juvenile lifers and their family members from my years of covering JLWOP, and also because my ex is a former offender who was a childhood friend of some of them. I will be including their remarks as well.  
   
Thank you most kindly for your ongoing dialogue with me. I did not expect to be contacting you so soon until I saw today's article.  
   
Sincerely,  
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