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(Wyo.)-Lawmakers Advance Juvenile Life Sentence Bill



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 01/11/2013 09:53 AM

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) - A bill to bring Wyoming law into compliance with a recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling that outlawed mandatory life sentences for juvenile killers has cleared its first hearing.

The House Judiciary Committee on Thursday recommended changing Wyoming law so that juveniles convicted of first-degree murder would be eligible for parole after serving 25 years.

The U.S. Supreme Court last year threw out mandatory life in prison without parole for juveniles.

Cheyenne District Attorney Scott Homar noted that second-degree murder carries a sentence of 20 years to life. He said first-degree murder should carry substantially more punishment.

Sen. Bruce Burns, a Sheridan Republican, serves on the Senate Judiciary Committee. He urged the House committee to keep the maximum penalty at 25 years noting that people change as they grow up.