

**As Passed by the House**

**135th General Assembly**

**Regular Session**

**2023-2024**

**Sub. H. B. No. 234**

**Representatives Williams, Rogers**

**Cosponsors: Representatives Schmidt, Willis, Hillyer, Upchurch, Humphrey, Seitz, Blackshear, Brennan, Brewer, Dell'Aquila, Demetriou, Denson, Dobos, Isaacsohn, Jarrells, Miller, A., Robb Blasdel, Russo, White, Young, T.**

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**A BILL**

To amend sections 2929.12 and 2929.22 of the  
Revised Code to prohibit a court imposing a  
sentence on an offender for a felony or  
misdemeanor from considering whether the  
offender who entered an Alford plea shows  
genuine remorse for the offense.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:**

**Section 1.** That sections 2929.12 and 2929.22 of the  
Revised Code be amended to read as follows:

**Sec. 2929.12.** (A) Unless otherwise required by section  
2929.13 or 2929.14 of the Revised Code, a court that imposes a  
sentence under this chapter upon an offender for a felony has  
discretion to determine the most effective way to comply with  
the purposes and principles of sentencing set forth in section  
2929.11 of the Revised Code. In exercising that discretion, the  
court shall consider the factors set forth in divisions (B) and  
(C) of this section relating to the seriousness of the conduct,  
the factors provided in divisions (D) and (E) of this section

relating to the likelihood of the offender's recidivism, ~~and the~~ 18  
factors set forth in division (F) of this section pertaining to 19  
the offender's service in the armed forces of the United States, and 20  
and the factors set forth in division (G) of this section 21  
relating to Alford pleas and, in addition, may consider any 22  
other factors that are relevant to achieving those purposes and 23  
principles of sentencing. 24

(B) The sentencing court shall consider all of the 25  
following that apply regarding the offender, the offense, or the 26  
victim, and any other relevant factors, as indicating that the 27  
offender's conduct is more serious than conduct normally 28  
constituting the offense: 29

(1) The physical or mental injury suffered by the victim 30  
of the offense due to the conduct of the offender was 31  
exacerbated because of the physical or mental condition or age 32  
of the victim. 33

(2) The victim of the offense suffered serious physical, 34  
psychological, or economic harm as a result of the offense. 35

(3) The offender held a public office or position of trust 36  
in the community, and the offense related to that office or 37  
position. 38

(4) The offender's occupation, elected office, or 39  
profession obliged the offender to prevent the offense or bring 40  
others committing it to justice. 41

(5) The offender's professional reputation or occupation, 42  
elected office, or profession was used to facilitate the offense 43  
or is likely to influence the future conduct of others. 44

(6) The offender's relationship with the victim 45  
facilitated the offense. 46

(7) The offender committed the offense for hire or as a 47  
part of an organized criminal activity. 48

(8) In committing the offense, the offender was motivated 49  
by prejudice based on race, ethnic background, gender, sexual 50  
orientation, or religion. 51

(9) If the offense is a violation of section 2919.25 or a 52  
violation of section 2903.11, 2903.12, or 2903.13 of the Revised 53  
Code involving a person who was a family or household member at 54  
the time of the violation, the offender committed the offense in 55  
the vicinity of one or more children who are not victims of the 56  
offense, and the offender or the victim of the offense is a 57  
parent, guardian, custodian, or person in loco parentis of one 58  
or more of those children. 59

(C) The sentencing court shall consider all of the 60  
following that apply regarding the offender, the offense, or the 61  
victim, and any other relevant factors, as indicating that the 62  
offender's conduct is less serious than conduct normally 63  
constituting the offense: 64

(1) The victim induced or facilitated the offense. 65

(2) In committing the offense, the offender acted under 66  
strong provocation. 67

(3) In committing the offense, the offender did not cause 68  
or expect to cause physical harm to any person or property. 69

(4) There are substantial grounds to mitigate the 70  
offender's conduct, although the grounds are not enough to 71  
constitute a defense. 72

(D) The sentencing court shall consider all of the 73  
following that apply regarding the offender, and any other 74

relevant factors, as factors indicating that the offender is 75  
likely to commit future crimes: 76

(1) At the time of committing the offense, the offender 77  
was under release from confinement before trial or sentencing; 78  
was under a sanction imposed pursuant to section 2929.16, 79  
2929.17, or 2929.18 of the Revised Code; was under post-release 80  
control pursuant to section 2967.28 or any other provision of 81  
the Revised Code for an earlier offense or had been unfavorably 82  
terminated from post-release control for a prior offense 83  
pursuant to division (B) of section 2967.16 or section 2929.141 84  
of the Revised Code; was under transitional control in 85  
connection with a prior offense; or had absconded from the 86  
offender's approved community placement resulting in the 87  
offender's removal from the transitional control program under 88  
section 2967.26 of the Revised Code. 89

(2) The offender previously was adjudicated a delinquent 90  
child pursuant to Chapter 2151. of the Revised Code prior to 91  
January 1, 2002, or pursuant to Chapter 2152. of the Revised 92  
Code, or the offender has a history of criminal convictions. 93

(3) The offender has not been rehabilitated to a 94  
satisfactory degree after previously being adjudicated a 95  
delinquent child pursuant to Chapter 2151. of the Revised Code 96  
prior to January 1, 2002, or pursuant to Chapter 2152. of the 97  
Revised Code, or the offender has not responded favorably to 98  
sanctions previously imposed for criminal convictions. 99

(4) The offender has demonstrated a pattern of drug or 100  
alcohol abuse that is related to the offense, and the offender 101  
refuses to acknowledge that the offender has demonstrated that 102  
pattern, or the offender refuses treatment for the drug or 103  
alcohol abuse. 104

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| (5) The offender shows no genuine remorse for the offense.           | 105 |
| (E) The sentencing court shall consider all of the                   | 106 |
| following that apply regarding the offender, and any other           | 107 |
| relevant factors, as factors indicating that the offender is not     | 108 |
| likely to commit future crimes:                                      | 109 |
| (1) Prior to committing the offense, the offender had not            | 110 |
| been adjudicated a delinquent child.                                 | 111 |
| (2) Prior to committing the offense, the offender had not            | 112 |
| been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a criminal offense.           | 113 |
| (3) Prior to committing the offense, the offender had led            | 114 |
| a law-abiding life for a significant number of years.                | 115 |
| (4) The offense was committed under circumstances not                | 116 |
| likely to recur.                                                     | 117 |
| (5) <del>The</del> <u>Except as provided in division (G) of this</u> | 118 |
| <u>section, the</u> offender shows genuine remorse for the offense.  | 119 |
| (F) The sentencing court shall consider the offender's               | 120 |
| military service record and whether the offender has an              | 121 |
| emotional, mental, or physical condition that is traceable to        | 122 |
| the offender's service in the armed forces of the United States      | 123 |
| and that was a contributing factor in the offender's commission      | 124 |
| of the offense or offenses.                                          | 125 |
| <u>(G) If the offender enters an Alford plea, the sentencing</u>     | 126 |
| <u>court shall not consider whether the offender showed genuine</u>  | 127 |
| <u>remorse for the offense.</u>                                      | 128 |
| <b>Sec. 2929.22.</b> (A) Unless a mandatory jail term is required    | 129 |
| to be imposed by division (G) of section 1547.99, division (B)       | 130 |
| of section 4510.14, division (G) of section 4511.19 of the           | 131 |
| Revised Code, or any other provision of the Revised Code a court     | 132 |

that imposes a sentence under this chapter upon an offender for 133  
a misdemeanor or minor misdemeanor has discretion to determine 134  
the most effective way to achieve the purposes and principles of 135  
sentencing set forth in section 2929.21 of the Revised Code. 136

Unless a specific sanction is required to be imposed or is 137  
precluded from being imposed by the section setting forth an 138  
offense or the penalty for an offense or by any provision of 139  
sections 2929.23 to 2929.28 of the Revised Code, a court that 140  
imposes a sentence upon an offender for a misdemeanor may impose 141  
on the offender any sanction or combination of sanctions under 142  
sections 2929.24 to 2929.28 of the Revised Code. The court shall 143  
not impose a sentence that imposes an unnecessary burden on 144  
local government resources. 145

(B) (1) In determining the appropriate sentence for a 146  
misdemeanor, the court shall consider all of the following 147  
factors: 148

(a) The nature and circumstances of the offense or 149  
offenses; 150

(b) Whether the circumstances regarding the offender and 151  
the offense or offenses indicate that the offender has a history 152  
of persistent criminal activity and that the offender's 153  
character and condition reveal a substantial risk that the 154  
offender will commit another offense; 155

(c) Whether the circumstances regarding the offender and 156  
the offense or offenses indicate that the offender's history, 157  
character, and condition reveal a substantial risk that the 158  
offender will be a danger to others and that the offender's 159  
conduct has been characterized by a pattern of repetitive, 160  
compulsive, or aggressive behavior with heedless indifference to 161

the consequences; 162

(d) Whether the victim's youth, age, disability, or other 163  
factor made the victim particularly vulnerable to the offense or 164  
made the impact of the offense more serious; 165

(e) Whether the offender is likely to commit future crimes 166  
in general, in addition to the circumstances described in 167  
divisions (B) (1) (b) and (c) of this section; 168

(f) Whether the offender has an emotional, mental, or 169  
physical condition that is traceable to the offender's service 170  
in the armed forces of the United States and that was a 171  
contributing factor in the offender's commission of the offense 172  
or offenses; 173

(g) The offender's military service record. 174

(2) In determining the appropriate sentence for a 175  
misdemeanor, if the offender enters an Alford plea, the 176  
sentencing court shall not consider whether the offender showed 177  
genuine remorse for the offense. 178

(3) In determining the appropriate sentence for a 179  
misdemeanor, in addition to complying with division (B) (1) of 180  
this section, the court may consider any other factors that are 181  
relevant to achieving the purposes and principles of sentencing 182  
set forth in section 2929.21 of the Revised Code. 183

(C) Before imposing a jail term as a sentence for a 184  
misdemeanor, a court shall consider the appropriateness of 185  
imposing a community control sanction or a combination of 186  
community control sanctions under sections 2929.25, 2929.26, 187  
2929.27, and 2929.28 of the Revised Code. A court may impose the 188  
longest jail term authorized under section 2929.24 of the 189  
Revised Code only upon offenders who commit the worst forms of 190

the offense or upon offenders whose conduct and response to 191  
prior sanctions for prior offenses demonstrate that the 192  
imposition of the longest jail term is necessary to deter the 193  
offender from committing a future criminal offense. 194

(D) (1) A sentencing court shall consider any relevant oral 195  
and written statement made by the victim, the victim's 196  
representative, the victim's attorney, if applicable, the 197  
defendant, the defense attorney, and the prosecuting authority 198  
regarding sentencing for a misdemeanor. This division does not 199  
create any rights to notice other than those rights authorized 200  
by Chapter 2930. of the Revised Code. 201

(2) At the time of sentencing for a misdemeanor or as soon 202  
as possible after sentencing, the court shall notify the victim 203  
of the offense of the victim's right to file an application for 204  
an award of reparations pursuant to sections 2743.51 to 2743.72 205  
of the Revised Code. 206

**Section 2.** That existing sections 2929.12 and 2929.22 of 207  
the Revised Code are hereby repealed. 208