

Public Affairs

From: Executive Director <execdir@mdsheriffs.org>
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To: Public Comment
Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Comments on Changes to the Definition of "Violent Crime"

Importance: High

To the Members of the U. S. Sentencing Commission:

The Sheriffs in Maryland have been notified that the Sentencing Commission is considering deleting the crimes of felony robbery and felony assault from the definition of "violent crime" that is used to determine the appropriate sentences for those who commit these serious crimes. While one can be guilty of a felony robbery or assault without true "violence" being committed (e.g. the threat of violence or harm may be persuasive to a victim) these crimes are more often committed with violence or violent intent. Given that the perpetrator may use or threaten to use a weapon or other violent means to commit these serious crimes, they should not be deleted from the Commission's definition, and a judge should be required to consider the offender's propensity to commit violence for unlawful ends.

Any victim of a felony robbery or assault would be shocked to learn that the Commission does not view these crimes as serious enough to be treated as violent crimes. The members of the Maryland Sheriffs' Association implore the Commission to rethink this proposal and retain felony robbery and felony assaults within the definition of "violent crime."



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