



Outlook

Governor Scott's position on the Raise the Age bill in his own words

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Good evening all – thank you again for the opportunity to outline the Governor’s legislative package to the committee last Thursday morning. I know Senator Baruth was particularly interested in the history of Act 201 and the Governor’s role. I just wanted to flag for you his remarks from the 2024 budget address:

"Let's start with something you don't hear too often in this building: I may have been wrong. I've supported, and signed, some of the very legislation I'll ask you to change today.

I agree people deserve second chances, and maybe even third or fourth, especially when it comes to mistakes made as a young adult or when struggling with addiction.

But I wish I had better anticipated the challenge of implementing laws to raise the age of criminal accountability. Because we weren't ready. We put the policy idea ahead of the fundamentals, the real work of actually helping our youth.

Like many other areas, we moved too far and too fast into a policy experiment. And we didn't plan for, or build, the system needed to address extreme cases, or have the workforce to support it. We focused so much on our well-intentioned goals that we didn't think through all the possible consequences. Like what adding older, more violent youth to DCF caseloads would do. Or how traffickers would exploit young adults to run their deadliest drugs and expand their markets in Vermont.

I'll admit the same for bail reform, which I signed because I agreed with the goals. But again, there were negative consequences because we limited a valuable tool. And on top of that, conditions of release aren't effective, which makes it harder to prevent people from harming their neighbors and communities, over and over and over."

- Governor Phil Scott, [FY25 Budget Address](#), January 23, 2024

I would appreciate it if Kayla could please add this to the record. Thank you. Jaye

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Vermonters, businesses and communities impacted by the July 2024 flood should report damage to [Vermont 211](#). Find resources, guidance and referral information at vermont.gov/Flood. [Volunteer to help](#) or [donate to the Vermont Flood Response & Recovery Fund](#) to

support all those impacted.