



MARTIN O'MALLEY  
GOVERNOR

ANTHONY G. BROWN  
LT. GOVERNOR

**OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER  
ADMINISTRATION  
WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER TOWER  
6 SAINT PAUL STREET, SUITE 1400  
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21202**

*Ph. (410) 767-8460*

*Fax (410) 333-8496*

*Toll Free: 1 (877) 430-5187*

**PAUL B. DeWOLFE**  
PUBLIC DEFENDER

**CHARLES H. DORSEY, III**  
DEPUTY PUBLIC DEFENDER

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Baltimore, MD (July 10, 2013)** – The Office of the Public Defender, in partnership with the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law Clinic and members of the private bar, have been assisting persons convicted in the 1960's and 1970's in challenging convictions that resulted from trials where the juries were told they did not need to follow rules designed to protect the innocent from wrongful convictions. As a result of the state Court of Appeals decision in *Unger v. State*, 420 Md. 383 (2012), numerous trial judges around the state have ruled that inmates convicted before 1981 were entitled to new trials.

The majority of the inmates affected by this ruling are in their sixties or seventies, and many suffer from significant health problems. Although convicted of serious crimes several decades ago, most affected inmates – like most older inmates nationwide – have demonstrated through their behavior and achievements while incarcerated that they would not pose a danger to the public if released. In light of the compelling legal argument that these inmates are entitled to a new trial, State's Attorneys in some jurisdictions have agreed to dispositions under which defendants who do not pose a danger to the public would be released on probation.

“The travesty here is not that some elderly rehabilitated people might be released on probation after more than three decades,” said Public Defender Paul B. DeWolfe. “The travesty is that they were locked up after trials where the most basic rules to protect the innocent were not followed, and that it has taken the criminal justice system more than three decades to do anything about it.”