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(Neb.)-Governor Heineman Signs State Juvenile Sentencing Bill



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 05/09/2013 10:13 AM

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) - Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman has signed a bill that ends mandatory life sentences for juveniles who commit first-degree murder.

Heineman signed a measure Wednesday that requires a sentencing range of 40 years to life for the juveniles. The law was introduced in the wake of a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that declared mandatory life-without-parole sentences for juvenile killers unconstitutional.

Nebraska had previously enacted a mandatory sentencing law.

The measure by Sen. Brad Ashford, of Omaha, still allows judges to impose life sentences. But judges must also consider mitigating factors, including a juvenile's age at the time of the crime, family life and mental health.

The bill is LB44.