After Charlotte Moccia's kidnapping, it's time to toughen kidnapping laws in Massachusetts

As a fan of Cold Case television shows, blogs and podcasts, I've learned that men who kidnap little girls almost always sexually abuse them before killing them. Since they are cold cases, many get away with the crime or it takes decades to get justice for the families. When 11-year-old Charlotte Moccia was allegedly forcibly abducted by a man shortly after getting off her school bus, I immediately thought the worst but hoped for the best. Thanks to our AMAZING police officers with help from tips from the Massachusetts public Charlotte was saved, but the entire ordeal begs the questions; what do we do with the kidnapper?

24-year-old Miguel Rodriguez of Springfield, Massachusetts was arrested with Charlotte Moccia in the back seat of his vehicle. While everyone deserves a fair trial, this one should be easy to prosecute – although I'm sure his defense attorney will claim insanity, he grew up in a bad home or some other pathetic excuse. Let's be clear – there is only one reason a 24-year old man kidnaps an 11-year old girl and monsters that kidnap children need to forfeit their life – through execution or life in prison. I don't care about their background.

Unfortunately, the last time a person was executed in Massachusetts was on May 9, 1947, when the state executed gangsters Philip Bellino and Edward Gertson for the murder of Robert Williams, a former U.S. Marine. Massachusetts politicians have ensured the death penalty is not an option even when police officers are murdered. The only exception is when the federal government gets involved and the kidnapping

of Charlotte Moccia will be prosecuted at the state level because he didn’t cross state lines.

Based on **Massachusetts kidnapping law**, Miguel Rodriguez is facing 15-years in prison:

“Whoever, without lawful authority, forcibly or secretly confines or imprisons a child under the age of 16 within the commonwealth against his will or forcibly carries or sends such person out of the commonwealth or forcibly seizes and confines or inveigles or kidnaps a child under the age of 16 with the intent either to cause him to be secretly confined or imprisoned in the commonwealth against his will or to cause him to be sent out of the commonwealth against his will or in any way held to service against his will, shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for **not more than 15 years**. The provisions of the preceding sentence shall not apply to the parent of a child under 16 years of age who takes custody of such child.”

Miguel Rodriguez is facing “no more than 15 years” for kidnapping Charlotte (though he’ll likely face other charges). Even if Miguel Rodriguez gets the maximum sentence and doesn’t get paroled, he will be out of prison at 39 years old. Prisons don’t rehabilitate child predators. 15 years from now, parents of young children don’t need a 39-year old Miguel Rodriguez driving around their neighborhoods. It’s time for our legislators to at least consider life in prison without the possibility of parole for people who kidnap children.