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Ks Governor Signs 'Hard 50' Bill

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) - Gov. Sam Brownback has signed legislation revising the Kansas law allowing convicted murderers to be sentenced to at least 50 years in prison.

Lawmakers approved the measure this week during a two-day special session. Brownback signed it Friday and delivered it to the secretary of state's office.

The law will take effect Sept. 12 when it is printed in the Kansas register, the state's official digest for legal notices, which is published each Thursday.

The measure provides for juries rather than judges to determine whether a defendant convicted of premeditated, first-degree murder gets the "Hard 50" sentence.

Kansas judges have traditionally made the decision, but the U.S. Supreme Court ruled earlier this year in a Virginia case that juries must do so.