



AB 926: Jones-Sawyer

PAROLE CREDITS & REINVESTMENT

(Version dated 3.10.15)

Summary

This bill creates an earned compliance credit program that provides eligible parolees with the opportunity to reduce their period of parole supervision upon compliance with their parole conditions. Savings from the reduced parole supervision shall be reinvested into job training and housing support for state parolees to reduce recidivism.

Background

For the more than 130,000 people currently incarcerated in California's state prisons, 95% of them will be returning to their homes and communities. Making the transition from life behind bars to life in society is often a difficult and isolating experience. According to the 2013 California Department Corrections and Rehabilitation Outcome Evaluation Report, of all parolees who will return to prison, a full 74% recidivate within the first twelve months after their release. The number of people that are returned to prison significantly drops thereafter, with 19.3% recidivating in the second year and 6.6% in the third year. Criminal justice experts have concluded that, "if prisoners can remain completely arrest-free for the first year after release, they have low probabilities of recidivism thereafter."

If a greater proportion of resources were concentrated in the first year of parole supervision, when parolees are most vulnerable to recidivism, the state could more efficiently utilize scarce resources, while helping to reduce recidivism and overall prison spending. Currently, about 44,000 Californians are in a parole system that remains plagued with efficiency and service delivery problems. Providing unnecessary supervision for compliant parolees dilutes the effectiveness of parole as a crime-prevention strategy, when resources could be better spent on

reentry services like housing and employment supports.

There is a growing momentum among states seeking to safely reduce corrections costs and reduce recidivism. Since 2007, more than a dozen states have implemented earned credit mechanisms for people on parole or probation. The impact of these policies has yielded substantial savings without harming public safety. California has the opportunity to take this policy one step further by reinvesting resources to ensure greater reductions in recidivism and improve outcomes for individuals, families and communities.

Existing Law

Pursuant to Penal Code §3000 et seq., and §3040 et. seq., individuals released from a CDCR prison are subject to a period of parole based on the date and type of the commitment offense.

This Bill

AB 926 would:

- Award parolees with credits for every 30 days of compliance.
- Reinvest savings from decreased parole supervision into jobs and housing for state parolees to reduce recidivism.
- Exclude a parolee that has a citation or arrest as a result of a violation of the conditions of parole supervision from receiving credits.
- Exclude a parolee subject to lifetime parole from participating in the earned compliance credit program.

Support

- Ella Baker Center for Human Rights (sponsor)