



OLR RESEARCH REPORT

November 9, 2007

2007-R-0642

PROPOSAL 9:

AN ACT CONCERNING THE BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES AND REENTRY FURLOUGHS

By: Christopher Reinhart, Senior Attorney

You asked us to summarize Proposal 9, *An Act Concerning the Board of Pardons and Paroles and Reentry Furloughs*, for the Judiciary Committee public hearing scheduled for November 27, 2007.

SUMMARY

This bill ends the terms of Board of Pardons and Paroles members on December 31, 2007 and requires new appointments starting January 1, 2008. The bill requires the new members of the board to be qualified by experience in administering community corrections, parole, or pardons; evaluating or supervising offenders; providing mental health or other services to offenders; criminal justice; or criminology. The bill also applies this standard to the board chairman. Under prior law, the chairman had to be qualified by education, experience, and training in administering community corrections, parole, or pardons.

The bill requires all board members, rather than just the chairman, to devote full time to performing their duties after January 1, 2008. It eliminates the \$110 per diem and reimbursement for necessary expenses that members currently receive for performing their duties. Instead, as for the chairman, it requires the Administrative Services commissioner to set their compensation.

The bill prohibits the board from holding a hearing on someone's suitability for parole release or holding a meeting to consider a board employee's recommendations for release based on the employee's administrative review unless the panel members have the person's complete file.

The bill defines a "reentry furlough" as a furlough to reintegrate an inmate into the community that allows the inmate to serve a period immediately before parole release or discharge into the community. It limits reentry furloughs to non-violent offenders and sets other requirements for release.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the provision on full-time board members and their pay is effective January 1, 2008.

COMPLETE FILE

The bill prohibits the board from holding a hearing on someone's suitability for parole release or holding a meeting to consider a board employee's recommendations for release based on the employee's administrative review unless the panel members have the person's complete file, including the:

1. sentencing hearing transcript that the law requires prosecutors to deliver to the board,
2. presentence investigation report prepared by a probation officer for the court before sentencing, and
3. person's criminal record required to be sent to the board by the state's attorney within three weeks of a person's commitment to a sentence of more than one year.

The bill requires the board to give each panel member the complete file at least seven business days before the scheduled hearing or meeting date.

REENTRY FURLOUGH

Under current law, the DOC commissioner can allow an inmate to visit a specifically designated place, within or outside the state, under specified conditions for up to 30 days for (1) visiting a dying relative, (2) attending a relative's funeral, (3) obtaining medical services not otherwise available, (4) contacting prospective employers, or (5) other compelling reasons consistent with rehabilitation. The commissioner can renew the furloughs.

The bill provides that a reentry furlough can only be granted to inmates who (1) have demonstrated good conduct and obedience to the rules where they were confined; (2) have a low-level security risk classification; and (3) are not confined for an offense involving the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force against another. Inmates released for a reentry furlough who were also sentenced to probation must, at a minimum, be subject to the same conditions and supervision that they would be subject to while on probation. The bill prohibits granting reentry furloughs solely to reduce a facility's population.

CR:dw