Bill No.: HB-5526
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING GOOD TIME CREDITS AND THE EARNED RISK REDUCTION CREDIT PROGRAM.
Vote Date: 4/9/2019
Vote Action: Joint Favorable
PH Date: 3/6/2019
File No.: 773

Disclaimer: The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.

SPONSORS OF BILL:
Judiciary Committee
Representative Themis Klarides, 114th District
Representative Tom O’Dea, 125th District
Representative Noreen S. Kokoruda, 101st District
Representative Craig C. Fishbein
Representative Vincent J. Candelora, 86th District
Representative Arthur J. O’Neill, 69th District
Representative Lezlye Zupkus, 89th District
Representative Mike France, 42nd District
Representative William A. Petit, 22nd District
Senator Rob Sampson, 16th District

REASONS FOR BILL:
The purpose of this bill is to modify a person’s participation in the Earned Risk Reduction Credit program for any person sentenced after October 1, 1994. This bill would include any person sentenced before 1994 to be grouped with the current Earned Risk Reduction Credit program of not earning more than five days of “good credit” per month.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:
None provided.
NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

22nd District, State Representative, William A. Petit Jr.
Representative Petit noted in his testimony that this bill has passed previously out of committee in 2017 and 2018. This bill has also passed the house chamber in the 2017 legislative session. He further testified that this bill would be a “sensible reform” to our current justice system. Representative Petit stated the purpose of our judicial system is to protect and prosecute. He stated victims are able to hear a given sentence, but under our current system of honoring earned risk reduction credit, the sentenced is overruled and decreased by 15-50%.

House Republican Office
The House Republican Office wrote in support of HB 5526, testified that their goal is to reform the current legislation by moving inmates sentenced before 1994 into our current earned risk reduction credit program. The caucus highlighted David Weinberg as an example of a person who benefited from the lack of this bill, despite the urges of the victim’s family.

Marianne Heffernan is in support of H.B. 5526.
Len Suzio is in support of H.B. 5526.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut, Executive Director, David McGuire
The ACLU-CT Testifies that this bill would create a change that makes the state less safe, increase prison overcrowding, make state prisons more dangerous, and expose the state to civil rights lawsuits. The change in the earned risk reduction credit program would potentially change behaviors and lower chances of successful rehabilitation and recovery. The ACLU-CT also testified the earned risk reduction credit program lowers cost of incarceration and a change to the bill would have a fiscal impact on the state.

One Standard of Justice, Board Member, Rev. Andrew G. Osmun
Rev. Andrew G. Osmun testifies that this bill would exclude certain people and further add to a punishment. This bill would remove any incentive for the prisoner to work hard and accept responsibility.

Reported by: Cassandra Gallion
Date: 04/30/2019