
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 978

AN ACT CONCERNING PAROLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS SERVING LENGTHY SENTENCES FOR CRIMES COMMITTED BEFORE THE INDIVIDUAL TURNED TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF AGE.

SUMMARY

This bill extends to certain 18-, 19-, and 20-year-old offenders alternative parole eligibility rules that currently apply to specific offenders age 17 or younger.

Under these alternative rules, the offenders are eligible for parole, at the discretion of the Board of Pardons and Paroles panel for the institution where he or she is confined, after serving:

1. the greater of 12 years or 60% of a prison sentence that is up to 50 years (provided it is more than 10 years); or
2. 30 years of a sentence that is more than 50 years.

Under existing law and the bill, these alternative rules apply if they make someone eligible for parole sooner than under the general rules (see BACKGROUND), and they also apply to someone convicted of a crime who would otherwise be ineligible for parole.

Under current law, a person is eligible for the alternative rules if he or she (1) committed one or more crimes when he or she was under age 18, (2) was incarcerated on or after October 1, 2015, and (3) was sentenced to more than 10 years in prison for those crimes. The bill extends eligibility to offenders incarcerated on or after October 1, 2021, who committed crimes when they were under age 21 and were sentenced to more than 10 years in prison for those crimes.

The bill also makes conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2021

BACKGROUND

General Parole Eligibility Rules

By law, someone is generally eligible for parole, regardless of age, after serving (1) 50% of his or her sentence minus any risk reduction credits earned if convicted of a nonviolent crime and (2) 85% of his or her sentence if convicted of a violent crime, home invasion, or 2nd degree burglary. Someone convicted of certain crimes, such as murder, is generally ineligible for parole (CGS §§ 54-125a(a) & (b)).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 25 Nay 13 (04/05/2021)