

House Bill 5377 of 2018

Objective Parole

Why we need it:

- Incarcerated people who have paid their debt to society should be allowed to rejoin their families, go back to work and become contributing members of society.
- State law says that an incarcerated person should be paroled at their ERD unless there is a "substantial and compelling reason" to deny it, but since that phrase is undefined, the granting of parole is a subjective and arbitrary process.
- Meanwhile, the state Corrections Budget has swollen to \$2 billion annually, and nearly 40,000 people are currently incarcerated at the cost of about \$35,000 per person.

What it will do:

- Provide evidence-based data to the state parole board to guide decision-making.
- End arbitrary, subjective parole decisions that result in substantially longer sentences for low-risk people.
- Define the "substantial and compelling" reasons for denying parole, and empower the parole board to apply them to incarcerated people who pose a risk to public safety.
- Reduce the prison population by 1,800-2,400 people and the Corrections Budget by as much as \$40 million over five years.
- Require the parole board to conduct a review of non-lifers who are scored as having a high or average probability of parole at least once a year.

What it won't do:

- Guarantee parole to any incarcerated person — even those with good behavior.
- Require the parole board to grant parole to anyone without adequate assurance that they are not a risk to public safety.
- Apply to anyone sentenced prior to the effective date. *However*, the Department of Corrections has said the parole board may apply these standards to everyone serving a term of years, although the law doesn't require it.

Questions? Contact John Cooper, Associate Director of Policy & Research for Safe & Just Michigan, at 517.258.1134 or john@safeandjustmi.org

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