

HB 1579 -- GOOD TIME CREDIT

SPONSOR: Franks Jr.

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Corrections and Public Institutions by a vote of 9 to 0.

Currently, certain offenders committed to the Department of Corrections may receive additional credit upon recommendation by the offender's institutional superintendent when the offender meets certain requirements specified in the bill. This bill specifies that such offenders shall instead receive additional credit, according to the provisions specified in the bill, if the offender meets the certain requirements, and it removes the requirement that the institutional superintendent recommends such credit.

The bill also revises the requirements relating to the policy for awarding credit, and it requires the Department of Corrections to adopt rules specifying programs or activities for which credit may be earned as well as creating criteria relating to participation in and completion of such programs or activities.

The accumulated credit of every offender shall be tallied monthly and maintained by the institution where the term of imprisonment is being served. A record of such accumulated credit shall be sent to the records office of the department on a quarterly basis, forwarded to the Division of Probation and Parole, and provided to the offender.

This bill is similar to HB 1038 (2017).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this legislation is intended to reward inmates who complete voluntary programs by awarding them "good time credit." Those who are proactive about their rehabilitation should be given time off their sentences. Even when they are released, they are still under supervision, and that would not change. The rate of incarceration needs to be slowed, and this legislation addresses that issue. This would help individuals who are trying to better themselves.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Franks Jr.; James Robnett Jr.; and Amy Plisco.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say the changes discussed for a proposed amendment would reduce the cost of implementing this legislation.

Testifying on the bill was the Missouri Department of Corrections.