



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 365

Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign S7843/A4888, in relation to conditional release for eligible offenders who complete post-secondary degrees or programs.

By Council Members Fariás, Louis, Williams, Krishnan, Nurse, Won and Hudson

Whereas, Earned Eligibility is built on the idea that incarcerated individuals engaging in designated programs are more likely to reintegrate successfully into their families and communities after release; and

Whereas, The system encourages participation in rehabilitation programs by offering tangible benefits in the form of potential early release, reflecting a belief in the power of rehabilitation and reintegration efforts to reduce recidivism and enhance public safety; and

Whereas, Limited Credit Time Allowance (“LCTA”) was established in 2009 as a six-month benefit against their sentence for incarcerated individuals who do not qualify for traditional Merit Time for certain non-violent crimes, intended to incentivize participation in rehabilitation and educational programs; and

Whereas, According to the RAND Corporation, in the largest ever meta-analysis of correctional educational studies, participating in correctional education programs reduces inmates' chances of returning to prison by 43%, translating to a 13% decrease in the risk of recidivism and improves post-release employment opportunities by 13%, in addition to being a cost-effective way to reduce recidivism rates; and

Whereas, Eligibility for the LCTA program plan requires completing one of twelve designated program criteria, which includes two individual components of two years of successful college programming or a master’s degree issued at Sing Sing Correctional Facility; and

Whereas, Under Correction Law §803-b(1)(c)(ii), earning an associate, bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree is considered a significant programmatic accomplishment for LCTA eligibility, however, additional degrees beyond the first do not result in further time allowances under the current statute; and

Whereas, The law should be amended to promote greater engagement in college education by introducing additional rewards for consecutive achievements; and

Whereas S7843/A4888 sponsored by New York State Senator Julia Salazar and New York State Assemblymember Harvey Epstein, respectively, amends Correction Law §803-b to provide that an incarcerated individual eligible for a limited time credit allowance, upon obtaining an associate's, bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree, becomes eligible for release 12 months prior to completing the mandated minimum period of imprisonment; and

Whereas, The City Council believes that supporting initiatives that promote education and facilitate successful reentry into society contributes to public safety and community well-being; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign S7843/A4888, in relation to conditional release for eligible offenders who complete post-secondary degrees or programs.

CMB
LS#16642
4/12/24