

HCS HB 49 & 50 -- EARLY RELEASE OF OFFENDERS

SPONSOR: Byrd (Jolly)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Judiciary by a vote of 10 to 0 with 2 present.

This substitute repeals a provision that allows first-time, nonviolent class C or class D felony offenders to petition the court for early release after serving 120 days of their sentence. Currently, crime victims and witnesses are required to be notified when a parole or release hearing is scheduled and when the Board of Probation and Parole makes a decision to release an offender. The substitute specifies that notice must also be given to crime victims and witnesses when an offender petitions for early release after the completion of a drug and alcohol treatment program, as well as when the circuit court releases an offender after the completion of a treatment program.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Income on General Revenue Fund of Less than \$100,000 in FY 2006, FY 2007, and FY 2008. No impact on Other State Funds in FY 2006, FY 2007, and FY 2008.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill ensures that victims and witnesses are able to be heard at probation and parole hearings. It also ensures that victims and witnesses are notified when a probation and parole hearing is scheduled and when a decision is made to release an offender.

Testifying for the bill were Representatives Jolly and Harris (23); Office of the Attorney General; Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Violence; and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD).

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that there are differences in existing law that allow offenders to file a petition for early release and the laws relating to the early release of offenders who successfully complete drug and alcohol treatment programs.

Others testifying on the bill was Department of Corrections.

Amy Woods, Senior Legislative Analyst