



NEW MEXICO CORRECTIONS DEPARTMENT

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Rep. Cadena, Corrections Department introduce probation reform legislation *House Bill 201 headed to House Judiciary Committee*

SANTA FE – Representative Micaela Lara Cadena and the New Mexico Corrections Department introduced legislation that would allow for automatic release of minimum or medium risk defendants from probation early under certain circumstances.

“Our agency is grateful to Representative Cadena for bringing this important legislation forward,” Cabinet Secretary Alisha Tafoya Lucero said, “This probation reform bill is a crucial step in the process of enacting meaningful justice reform in New Mexico. This bill incentivizes early success on supervision for minimum and medium level individuals and ensures that staff resources are concentrated where they belong, on high risk and high needs offenders that require closer supervision within our communities.”

House Bill 201, sponsored by Representative Cadena, provides a path to early release from supervision for minimum and medium risk offenders, as determined by the Department’s evidence-based scoring instrument, once they have completed all the obligations of their probation and served at least half of their probation term. The passing of this legislation would reduce the burden on the court system and reduce caseloads for probation and parole officers in the communities. Studies show that reduced caseloads in combination with evidenced-based scoring tools lead to improved recidivism outcomes.

“I am proud to introduce this common-sense probation reform bill,” said Representative Cadena. “This bill provides a non-biased approach to reform that will allow individuals on supervision to focus on rehabilitation, employability, and paying their debt to society while remaining in their communities as contributing members.”

The possibility of early discharge provides strong encouragement for low and medium level persons to succeed on supervision and is likely to reduce future criminal involvement. Sex offenders, people convicted of violent crimes, and felony level DUI/DWI offenders would not be eligible for early discharge under this bill.

House Bill 201 received a do pass in the House Consumer and Public affairs Committee and will now head to House Judiciary. The bill has received full support from members of the New Mexico Sentencing Commission.

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