

One Hundred Seventh Legislature - Second Session - 2022

Introducer's Statement of Intent

LB980

Chairperson: Senator Steve Lathrop

Committee: Judiciary

Date of Hearing: January 26, 2022

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

This bill acknowledges that prison overcrowding is a great concern for the state of Nebraska and attention needs to be given to solutions that address this issue. Overcrowding in prisons affect the ability for states to provide necessary medical care and other essential services. Additionally, it can result in degrading practices like requiring prisoners to sleep on the floor. Many prisons and jails expose prisoners to dangerous environmental conditions like extreme heat or cold, contaminated food, and a lack of basic sanitation. One way to address this issue is to provide compassionate release of prisoners who are suffering from grave illnesses and are no longer a threat to society. Also, if to evaluate prisoners' eligibility for parole after 25 years if they are serving a life sentence.

Under this bill, a person with a terminal illness, permanent incapacity, or debilitating medical condition should be released from the facility to receive medical care and treatment. Such placement for medical treatment may be for a definite or indefinite period of time. The placement can be in a hospital, a hospice, or another housing accommodation that can include the person's family's home. Also, a prisoner who is sentenced to a life sentence can be eligible for parole after serving 25 years. Moreover, a person sentenced to a specific term of years can be eligible for parole after 25 years or after serving half of their prison sentence, whichever is greater.

Principal Introducer: _____

Senator Terrell McKinney