

PROBATION REFORM BILLS PASS THE SENATE

Comprehensive Probation Reform Approved by Senate

By Michael Ortoski

HARRISBURG - The Senate approved probation reform measures aimed at reducing the amount of taxpayer dollars spent on the system while better integrating probationers into society. The bills will be sent to the House of Representatives for consideration.

Senate Bill 913 provides an opportunity for early release from probation and ensures fewer individuals return to prison by offering incentives that reward positive behavior and participation in education, employment, vocational and drug treatment programming shown to reduce recidivism.

Among other goals, the measure is intended to prevent cases in which technical violations, such as a minor traffic offense, can perpetually extend the clock on an offender's term and result in re-confinement.

The Senate also approved Senate Bill 904, to allow probation meetings to be held remotely, and Senate Bill 905, to improve the scheduling of probation and parole meetings.

Senate Acts to Provide Parents with Online Access to their Children's School Curriculum

By State Rep. Joe Emrick

BANGOR - Parents would have greater ability to review what their children are being taught in school through curriculum transparency legislation approved by the Senate.

House Bill 1332 would require K-12 schools to post curricula online in a standardized, user-friendly manner. Under the bill, beginning with the 2022-23 school year, school districts must post on their websites an internet link or title for: Every textbook used by the schools.

A course syllabus or a written summary of each instructional course.

The state academic standards for each instructional course offered.

To prevent placing another burden on teachers, the bill stipulates that a school administrator or designee would be required to post the curricula online. House Bill 1332 is on its way to the Governor.



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