

So, I would like to address the floor on the reasoning for making a change to Ballot Measure 11's Mandatory Minimum Sentencing Scheme. With currently 4 different bills in the legislature this year, it is abundantly clear that there is a need for some form of change. Whether that change be some form of earnable good time or doing away with the unjustifiable measure all this together. That is what you are here to figure out.

However, I am here as I want to ask this floor as to why or what is behind the push for this change? It is my understanding that it is a need to give incarcerated individuals an ability to not feel worthless. That someone whom is incarcerated will have the ability to earn something for their efforts to reform & rehabilitate. So, that you do not have one incarcerated individual actively causing problems, getting into trouble, extorting & beating up people, and, another doing everything that person can to be a better person & citizen when they are inevitably released, yet, the person doing everything right gets nothing for their efforts due to BM11, while the other individual gets out early. In fact, hear it all the time, "Why should I be good when I get nothing for it? No one out there cares. We are just a paycheck for people whom cannot get a job working anywhere else. We are nothing more than the State's new welfare care. In fact, the local prison is the first place the unemployment office ends you. They will never change anything, because we are their money pot & that is all they care about". I have heard this a thousand times. In fact, gang members use that reasoning all of the time to get prospects to do bad things for them, because you have nothing to lose anyways. Good, bad or ugly, your day for day under BM11, so, you might as well make yourself amongst "family" that can protect you during your stay. And, at the end of the day, the majority of us were kids when we came to prison, scared & left for dead really, so, the reasoning sounds worthwhile, because thanks to BM11, nothing else is.

So, what is the reasoning behind this effort to reform or even do away with BM11 has anything to do with giving incarcerated individuals an ability to have self worth & actually earn something for their efforts, then, I ask you "How can you achieve this if you do not make any change to BM11 retroactive?" Because, if it is not retroactive are you not only telling the 7,000 currently incarcerated individuals that they are worthless? So therefore I believe the only Bill that addresses this is Senate Bill 191. Even if SB401 passes, which is not retroactive, at least people who are already incarcerated would have SB191 to give them hope