

# HB5287/SB3354 - CREDIT FOR CHANGE

Rep. Justin Slaughter & Rep. Barbara Hernandez/Sen. Robert Peters

## BACKGROUND:

Credit for Change **resets Illinois sentencing laws** by motivating rehabilitation from the first day of a person's prison sentence, **offering day-for-day credit** for good behavior and access to sentence credits for *all* incarcerated people who are not serving a natural life sentence.

When someone is convicted of a crime, the majority of our fellow Illinoisians want to both **hold them accountable** AND **help them change**.<sup>1</sup> These values are even written into our Constitution.<sup>2</sup>

When we reward good behavior and participation in treatment and programs for incarcerated people, **everyone benefits**.

## CREDIT FOR CHANGE BENEFITS:

**People who live and work in prisons:** Participation in treatment and programming makes prisons safer by rewarding good behavior and improving staff morale.<sup>3</sup>

**Crime survivors:** Many survivors report finding safety and closure when the person who harmed them changes meaningfully.<sup>4</sup>

**People leaving prison:** Programming helps people build the stable foundation they need to build safe, secure, and fulfilling lives after release.<sup>5</sup>

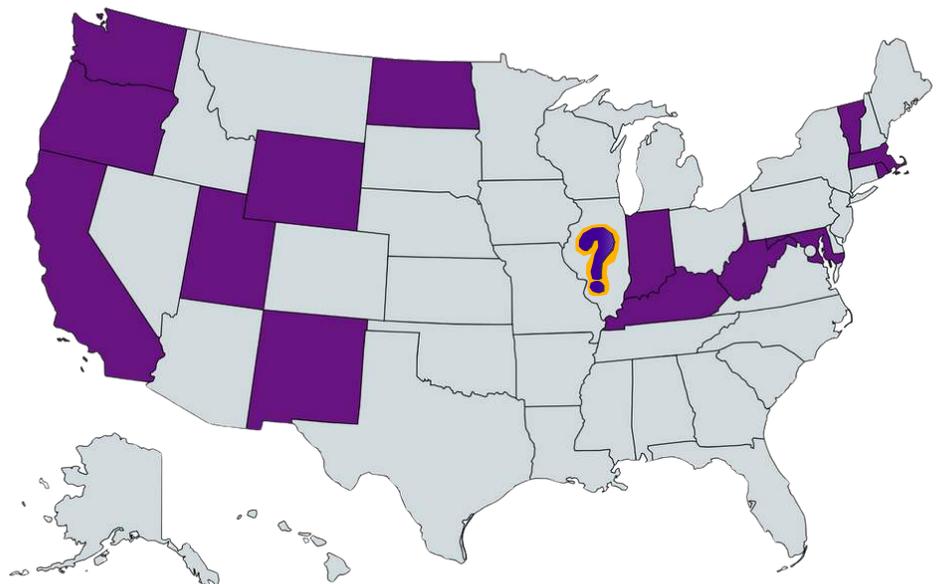
**People with serious convictions:** Research and people's lived experience show most people convicted of serious offenses can and do change, have one of the lowest recidivism rates, and contribute positively to their communities upon release.<sup>6</sup>

**Illinois's prison system:** With crumbling facilities, understaffing for the current population, and an almost \$3 billion deferred maintenance bill, incentivizing change will safely reduce the prison population.<sup>7</sup> This reduction prioritizes staff wellness allowing the Illinois Department of Correction to return to its core mission of "promoting positive change for those in custody."<sup>8</sup>

**Illinois taxpayers:** Credit for Change saves over \$1 billion for Illinois tax payers over three years.<sup>9</sup> We all benefit when the state spends less money on prisons and more on housing, education, and healthcare.

Fourteen other states—both red and blue—have committed to creating a safer, more just future by offering credit for change to all or most charges.<sup>10</sup>

**NOW, IT'S TIME FOR ILLINOIS TO DEMONSTRATE OUR VALUES BY MAKING THAT CHANGE, TOO.**



# CONTACT:

Marshan Allen  
(708)-483-7737  
marshan@illinoisprisonproject.org

John Amdor  
(773)-420-6322  
john@nekritzamdor.com



# ENDNOTES:

