

HOUSE No. 2335

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Carlos González

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act to reduce recidivism through evidence-based programs.

PETITION OF:

| NAME: | DISTRICT/ADDRESS: | DATE ADDED: |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| <i>Carlos González</i> | <i>10th Hampden</i> | <i>1/17/2023</i> |
| <i>Bud L. Williams</i> | <i>11th Hampden</i> | <i>1/20/2023</i> |
| <i>Russell E. Holmes</i> | <i>6th Suffolk</i> | <i>1/25/2023</i> |
| <i>Vanna Howard</i> | <i>17th Middlesex</i> | <i>1/31/2023</i> |

HOUSE No. 2335

By Representative González of Springfield, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2335) of Carlos González and others for legislation to reduce recidivism through evidence-based programs. Public Safety and Homeland Security.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 2469 OF 2021-2022.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)**

An Act to reduce recidivism through evidence-based programs.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 27 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following
2 section:-

3 Section 8. There shall be established in the department of correction an office of
4 recidivism reduction research. The office shall evaluate the effects that prison programs,
5 including, but not limited to, work, education and recovery programs, have on reducing
6 recidivism in the commonwealth and the cost such programs save through recidivism reduction.
7 The office shall make recommendations to the commissioner of the department of correction as
8 to how such programs may be improved and expanded across the correctional system, in
9 particular how to expand program engagement strategy and cognitive behavioral therapy
10 programs to correctional facilities across the commonwealth.

11 SECTION 2. Chapter 127 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the
12 following section:-

13 Section 170. Every medium and maximum security correctional facility in the
14 commonwealth shall establish a program engagement strategy, or PES, which shall utilize
15 incentives and consequences in an effort to increase prisoner participation in prison programs
16 and decrease program refusal or termination. The programs eligible for inclusion in PES may
17 include, but shall not be limited to, any educational, work-related, substance abuse, recovery,
18 treatment, self-improvement, violence or recidivism reduction, reentry, reintegration, and
19 behavioral management programs; provided, that cognitive behavioral therapy modeled
20 programs shall be eligible for PES inclusion.

21 Incentives to increase program participation may include, but shall not be limited to,
22 good time sentence reductions and reduced prisoner classification rating. Consequences for
23 refusing to participate in or termination from a program may include, but not be limited to, loss
24 of preferred housing, work assignment, seniority or program placement. The department of
25 correction may promulgate rules and regulations as necessary to implement this section.

26 SECTION 3. Every medium and maximum security correctional facility shall offer at
27 least 1 program engagement strategy eligible cognitive behavioral therapy modeled program
28 pursuant to section 170 of chapter 127 of the General Laws by January 1, 2025.