



**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

April 2, 2018

Governor's Veto Message Regarding House Bill 143

By the authority vested in me, pursuant to part II, Article 44 of the New Hampshire Constitution, on March 30th, 2018, I have vetoed House Bill 143, relative to recommittal of a prisoner by the Parole Board.

Current law provides that when a prisoner who is out on parole has their parole revoked, that prisoner must be recommitted for at least 90 days. RSA 651-A:19, VII allows the Parole Board to impose a term of recommittal of less than 90 days under certain conditions, including situations where the Parole Board determines that a lesser period of recommittal will aid in the rehabilitation of the parolee. House Bill 143 would expand these conditions by allowing the Parole Board to impose a recommittal period of less than 90 days for a prisoner who enters and successfully completes a residential substance abuse treatment program deemed acceptable by the Board.

While based on good intentions, this bill will have concerning consequences. It does not distinguish between individuals who have committed a crime related to substance abuse and those who have committed an unrelated crime. The bill also does not require the Parole Board to determine that a shorter recommittal period is necessary to assist a prisoner with their recovery efforts.

I fully support efforts to reduce recidivism among those suffering from substance abuse disorders by ensuring that such individuals have access to treatment. However, current law already gives the Parole Board the option of imposing shorter recommittal periods if they determine it will aid in the parolee's rehabilitation. Importantly, those who are incarcerated have access to many of the same treatment programs as those who are not.

It is concerning that there is strong opposition to this bill by law enforcement and at the same time, there are members of the recovery community who still have questions about its impacts. This only reinforces the conclusion that more due diligence is needed before we change current law.

For the reasons stated above, I have vetoed House Bill 143.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christopher T. Sununu".

Christopher T. Sununu
Governor