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News From The Assembly Democrats

MAINOR & MUKHERJI BILL TO TEST EFFECTIVENESS OF STATE'S PROBATION & REHABILITATION PROGRAMS ADVANCED BY ASSEMBLY PANEL

(TRENTON) – Legislation sponsored by Assembly Democrats Charles Mainor and Raj Mukherji (both D-Hudson) to measure the effectiveness of the state's probation and rehabilitation programs was released Thursday by the Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee.

The bill (A-2417) requires the Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts to establish a program to record and analyze recidivism rates for adults sentenced to a period of probation.

"When done right, probation can be a useful tool in rehabilitating and preventing further crime," said Mainor. "This bill will help give us a better idea of how the program is working and whether it is meeting its intended purpose, which is to keep people out of trouble and out of jail."

"Probation, in lieu of incarceration, is a second chance to get it right," said Mukherji. "Analyzing recidivism rates and related data will help determine what is or is not working so that we can ensure we are effectively helping ex-offenders reenter and ensure public safety is not compromised."

Under the bill, the program would record data regarding the types of crimes that result in a sentence of probation, the arrests for all offenses committed by probationers within three years following their sentence of probation and any convictions resulting from the arrests, crimes committed while on probation, the number of repeat offenders and the number of probationers concurrently serving a parole sentence. This data would be analyzed to determine whether the rates and nature of re-arrests and convictions differ according to the criminal histories and personal characteristics of probationers, the treatment they received while on probation, participation and involvement in rehabilitation initiatives and programs, and such other factors as may be relevant, including, but not limited to, race, gender, ethnicity, and age, but without referencing personally identifying information.

The bill is modeled on a similar program established in 2009 to record and analyze recidivism rates for adult and juvenile inmates released from incarceration. The purpose of that program was to measure the effectiveness of the State's reentry initiatives and programs.
