
By Mr. Farnam of Medford (by request), petition of Helen Mejan for legislation relative to reduction of maximum sentences of prisoners because of good behavior. Public Welfare.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty-Five.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO REDUCTION OF MAXIMUM SENTENCES OF PRISONERS.

1 *Whereas*, The deferred operation of this act would
2 tend to defeat its purpose which is to make its provisions
3 relative to the reduction of maximum sentences of
4 prisoners effective forthwith, it is hereby declared to be
5 an emergency law, necessary for the immediate preser-
6 vation of the public convenience.

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 127 of the General Laws is hereby
2 amended by striking out the first and second paragraphs
3 of section 129, as amended by section 1 of chapter 450
4 of the acts of 1948 and inserting in place thereof the
5 following two paragraphs: —

6 *Section 129.* The officer in charge of each prison or
7 other place of confinement, except a defective delin-
8 quent department, shall keep a record of the conduct of
9 each prisoner in his custody whose term of imprison-
10 ment is four months or more. Every such prisoner whose
11 record of conduct shows that he has faithfully observed
12 all the rules of his prison or other place of confinement,
13 and has not been subjected to punishment, shall be en-
14 titled to have the term of his imprisonment reduced by
15 a deduction from the maximum term for which he may
16 be held under his sentence or sentences, which shall be

17 determined as follows:— Upon a sentence of not less
18 than four months and less than life, six days for each
19 month. If a prisoner has two or more sentences to be
20 served concurrently or otherwise, the maximum period
21 of time for which he may be held under his sentences
22 shall be the basis upon which the deduction shall be
23 determined. If a prisoner violates any of the rules of
24 his prison or other place of confinement, the commis-
25 sioner of correction, the county commissioners, and in
26 Suffolk county, the penal institution commissioner of
27 Boston, upon the recommendation and evidence sub-
28 mitted to them, respectively, in writing by the warden,
29 superintendent or officer in charge, shall decide what
30 part, if any, of such good conduct deduction from sen-
31 tence or sentences shall be forfeited by such violation of
32 the rules of his prison or other place of confinement.

33 For the satisfactory and diligent performance of work
34 assigned to a prisoner, he shall be entitled to a further
35 deduction from the maximum term for which he may be
36 held under his sentence or sentences, which shall be de-
37 termined as follows:— Upon a sentence of not less than
38 four months and less than life, four days for each month.
39 If a prisoner has two or more sentences to be served
40 concurrently or otherwise the maximum period of time
41 for which he may be held under his sentences shall be
42 the basis upon which the deduction shall be determined.
43 If a prisoner fails so to perform such work, the com-
44 missioner of correction, the county commissioners, and
45 in Suffolk county, the penal institution commissioner
46 of Boston, upon the recommendation and evidence sub-
47 mitted to them, respectively, in writing by the warden,
48 superintendent or officer in charge, shall decide what
49 part, if any, of such further deduction from sentence or
50 sentences shall be forfeited by such failure.

1 SECTION 2. The provisions of this act shall be ap-
2 plicable to prisoners sentenced before, as well as to those
3 sentenced on or after, its effective date.