



Wednesday, February 17, 2021

Dear members of the Georgia State Senate Judiciary Committee,

We write in support of Senate Bill 105 (LC 28 0043), legislation that clarifies the 2017 probation reforms and streamlines the various processes for early termination of probation. The Metro Atlanta Chamber supports clarifying those important reforms and streamlining the various processes for early termination of probation so individuals that have met the requisite conditions of early termination can access employment and housing and contribute to their communities. Therefore, we encourage the Georgia State Senate Judiciary Committee to pass SB 105.

Between 35k and 48k probationers are eligible for early termination under the 2017 guidelines, meaning they have paid all restitution, met all conditions of probation, and not been charged with any new crimes. However, only 213 have actually had their probation terminated early as a result of the 2017 reforms.

Lengthy probation periods and myriad reporting requirements make it difficult for many people on probation to keep a job, maintain stable housing, participate in drug or mental health treatment, or fulfill financial obligations, such as child support. During these long probation sentences, the state spends hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars supervising individuals who are unlikely to recidivate and reincarcerating individuals for technical violations. Such violations include missing a curfew or failing to report an address change, but not breaking a criminal law.

Not only will SB 105 reduce barriers to employment and housing for returning citizens, it will reduce crime and recidivism costs and help our economy and communities thrive. By passing SB 105, we will further our efforts to keep Georgia the No. 1 state to do business and foster a more inclusive economy.

Sincerely,

Marshall Guest  
Sr. Vice President, Public Policy

Amy Lancaster-King  
Sr. Director, Workforce

Natasha DiFiore  
Director, Legal Affairs