

Second Regular Session  
Seventy-first General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO

**PREAMENDED**

*This Unofficial Version Includes Committee  
Amendments Not Yet Adopted on Second Reading*

LLS NO. 18-0559.01 Richard Sweetman x4333

**HOUSE BILL 18-1109**

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**HOUSE SPONSORSHIP**

**Weissman,**

**SENATE SPONSORSHIP**

**Cooke,**

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**House Committees**  
Judiciary

**Senate Committees**

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**A BILL FOR AN ACT**

101 **CONCERNING DISCRETIONARY PAROLE OF SPECIAL NEEDS OFFENDERS.**

**Bill Summary**

*(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)*

Current law provides 2 definitions by which an offender in the custody of the department of corrections (department) may be considered a "special needs offender". The first definition describes a person "who is 60 years of age or older and has been diagnosed by a licensed health care provider who is employed by or under contract with the department as suffering from a chronic infirmity, illness, condition, disease, or behavioral or mental health disorder and the department or the state board of parole (parole board) determines that the person is incapacitated to the

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing statute.  
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

extent that he or she is not likely to pose a risk to public safety". The bill amends this definition by changing "60 years" to "55 years".

The bill also adds a third definition by which such an offender may be considered a "special needs offender". That is, an offender who, as determined by a licensed health care provider who is employed by or under contract with the department, on the basis of available evidence, not including evidence resulting from a refusal of the person to accept treatment, does not have a substantial probability of being restored to competency and is not likely to pose a risk to public safety.

Under current law, if the department recommends to the parole board that an offender be released to parole as a special needs offender, the parole board may deny parole only by a majority vote of the parole board. The bill states that to deny parole under such conditions, the parole board must also make a finding that granting parole would create a threat to public safety and that the offender is likely to commit an offense.

The bill states that if, prior to or during any parole hearing, the parole board or any member of the parole board has a substantial and good-faith reason to believe that the offender is incompetent to proceed, the parole board shall suspend all proceedings and notify the trial court that imposed any active sentence, and the court shall determine the competency or incompetency of the offender.

For any offender who is granted special needs parole, the parole board shall set the length of the parole for an appropriate time period of at least 6 months but not exceeding 36 months. At any time during such an offender's parole, the parole board may revise the duration of the offender's parole. However, in no case may such an offender be required to serve a period of parole in excess of the period of parole to which he or she would otherwise be sentenced, or 36 months, whichever is less.

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1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 17-1-102, **amend**  
3 (7.5)(a)(I) and (7.5)(a)(II); and **add** (7.5)(a)(IV) as follows:

4 **17-1-102. Definitions.** As used in this title 17, unless the context  
5 otherwise requires:

6 (7.5) (a) "Special needs offender" means a person in the custody  
7 of the department:

8 (I) Who is ~~sixty~~ FIFTY-FIVE years of age or older and has been  
9 diagnosed by a licensed health care provider who is employed by or under

1 contract with the department as suffering from a chronic infirmity, illness,  
2 condition, disease, or behavioral or mental health disorder and the  
3 department or the state board of parole determines that the person is  
4 incapacitated to the extent that he or she is not likely to pose a risk to  
5 public safety; ~~or~~

6 (II) Who, as determined by a licensed health care provider who is  
7 employed by or under contract with the department, suffers from a  
8 chronic, permanent, terminal, or irreversible physical illness, condition,  
9 disease, or a behavioral or mental health disorder that requires costly care  
10 or treatment and who is determined by the department or the state board  
11 of parole to be incapacitated to the extent that he or she is not likely to  
12 pose a risk to public safety; OR

13 (IV) WHO, AS DETERMINED BY A LICENSED HEALTH CARE  
14 PROVIDER WHO IS EMPLOYED BY OR UNDER CONTRACT WITH THE  
15 DEPARTMENT, ON THE BASIS OF AVAILABLE EVIDENCE, NOT INCLUDING  
16 EVIDENCE RESULTING FROM A REFUSAL OF THE PERSON TO ACCEPT  
17 TREATMENT, DOES NOT HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL PROBABILITY OF BEING  
18 RESTORED TO COMPETENCY FOR THE COMPLETION OF ANY SENTENCE AND  
19 IS NOT LIKELY TO POSE A RISK TO PUBLIC SAFETY. AS USED IN THIS  
20 SUBSECTION (7)(a)(IV), "COMPETENCY" HAS THE SAME MEANING AS  
21 "COMPETENT TO PROCEED", AS DEFINED IN SECTION 16-8.5-101 (4).

22 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 17-22.5-403.5,  
23 **amend** (4)(d) and (5); and **add** (4.5) and (7) as follows:

24 **17-22.5-403.5. Special needs parole.** (4) (d) The state board of  
25 parole shall make a determination of whether to grant special needs  
26 parole within thirty days after receiving the referral from the department.  
27 The board may delay the decision in order to request that the department

1 modify the special needs parole plan. IF, PRIOR TO OR DURING ANY  
2 PAROLE HEARING, THE BOARD OR ANY MEMBER OF THE BOARD HAS A  
3 SUBSTANTIAL AND GOOD-FAITH REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE OFFENDER  
4 IS INCOMPETENT TO PROCEED, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 16-8.5-101 (11),  
5 THE BOARD SHALL SUSPEND ALL PROCEEDINGS AND NOTIFY THE TRIAL  
6 COURT THAT IMPOSED ANY ACTIVE SENTENCE, AND THE COURT SHALL  
7 DETERMINE THE COMPETENCY OR INCOMPETENCY OF THE DEFENDANT  
8 PURSUANT TO SECTION 16-8.5-103. THE COURT SHALL APPOINT COUNSEL  
9 TO REPRESENT THE OFFENDER WITH RESPECT TO THE DETERMINATION OF  
10 COMPETENCY OF THE OFFENDER, BUT THE PRESENCE OF THE OFFENDER IS  
11 NOT REQUIRED FOR ANY COURT PROCEEDINGS UNLESS GOOD CAUSE IS  
12 SHOWN.

13 (4.5) IF AN OFFENDER IS DETERMINED TO BE INCOMPETENT TO  
14 PROCEED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (4) OF THIS SECTION, THE COURT MAY  
15 ORDER THE DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE OR ARRANGE FOR THE DELIVERY OF  
16 APPROPRIATE RESTORATION SERVICES IN ANY SETTING AUTHORIZED BY  
17 LAW, BY AN ORDER OF THE COURT, OR BY ANY OTHER ACTION AS  
18 PROVIDED BY LAW. IF THE COURT DETERMINES THAT THERE IS NOT A  
19 SUBSTANTIAL PROBABILITY OF THE OFFENDER BEING RESTORED TO  
20 COMPETENCY, THE DEPARTMENT MAY REFER THE INMATE FOR SPECIAL  
21 NEEDS PAROLE WITH A SPECIAL NEEDS PAROLE PLAN PURSUANT TO THE  
22 PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION.

23 (5) The board may consider the application for special needs  
24 parole pursuant to the proceedings set forth in section 17-2-201 (4)(f) or  
25 17-2-201 (9)(a). If the department recommends to the state board of  
26 parole that an offender be released to parole as a special needs offender  
27 pursuant to the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, the board may

1 deny parole only by a majority vote of the board AND ONLY IF THE BOARD  
2 MAKES A FINDING THAT GRANTING PAROLE WOULD CREATE A THREAT TO  
3 PUBLIC SAFETY AND THAT THE OFFENDER IS LIKELY TO COMMIT AN  
4 OFFENSE.

5 (7) FOR ANY OFFENDER WHO IS GRANTED SPECIAL NEEDS PAROLE  
6 PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, THE STATE BOARD OF PAROLE SHALL SET THE  
7 LENGTH OF THE PAROLE FOR AN APPROPRIATE TIME PERIOD OF AT LEAST  
8 SIX MONTHS BUT NOT EXCEEDING THIRTY-SIX MONTHS. AT ANY TIME  
9 DURING THE OFFENDER'S PAROLE, THE STATE BOARD OF PAROLE MAY  
10 REVISE THE DURATION OF THE PAROLE. HOWEVER, IN NO CASE MAY SUCH  
11 AN OFFENDER BE REQUIRED TO SERVE A PERIOD OF PAROLE IN EXCESS OF  
12 THE PERIOD OF PAROLE TO WHICH HE OR SHE WOULD OTHERWISE BE  
13 SENTENCED PURSUANT TO SECTION 18-1.3-401 (1)(a)(V)(A), OR  
14 THIRTY-SIX MONTHS, WHICHEVER IS LESS.

15 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 16-8.5-101, **amend**  
16 the introductory portion and (7) as follows:

17 **16-8.5-101. Definitions.** As used in this ~~article~~ ARTICLE 8.5,  
18 unless the context otherwise requires:

19 (7) "Criminal proceedings" means trial, sentencing, SATISFACTION  
20 OF THE SENTENCE, execution, and any pretrial matter that is not  
21 susceptible of fair determination without the personal participation of the  
22 defendant.

23 **SECTION 4.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 16-8.5-102, **amend**  
24 (2)(c); and **add** (2)(d) as follows:

25 **16-8.5-102. Mental incompetency to proceed - how and when**  
26 **raised.** (2) The question of a defendant's competency to proceed shall be  
27 raised in the following manner:

1 (c) By the affidavit of any chief officer of an institution having  
2 custody of a defendant awaiting execution; OR

3 (d) BY THE STATE BOARD OF PAROLE WHEN A BOARD MEMBER HAS  
4 A SUBSTANTIAL AND GOOD-FAITH REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE  
5 OFFENDER IS INCOMPETENT TO PROCEED, AS DEFINED IN SECTION  
6 16-8.5-101 (11), AT A PAROLE HEARING CONDUCTED PURSUANT TO  
7 SECTION 17-22.5-403.5.

8 **SECTION 5.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 16-8.5-103, **add** (9)  
9 as follows:

10 **16-8.5-103. Determination of competency to proceed. (9)** IN  
11 ALL PROCEEDINGS UNDER THIS ARTICLE 8.5, WHEN COMPETENCY HAS BEEN  
12 RAISED BY THE PAROLE BOARD PURSUANT TO SECTION 16-8.5-102 (2)(d),  
13 THE COURT SHALL PAY FOR ANY EVALUATION TO DETERMINE COMPETENCY  
14 PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, AND THE EVALUATION MUST BE CONDUCTED  
15 AT THE PLACE WHERE THE DEFENDANT IS IN CUSTODY.

16 **SECTION 6. Applicability.** This act applies to applications for  
17 special needs parole that are received by the state board of parole on or  
18 after the effective date of this act.

19 **SECTION 7. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds,  
20 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate  
21 preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.