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'Good Time' is a 'no brainer' for Michigan Prisons
Unfortunately, just being incarcerated isn't reason enough for most prisoners to change their 'bad' behaviors.

Although the current Michigan system does offer some avenues of learning for rehabilitation - only 'bad' behavior is given any kind of reward: albeit negative. The key is^{isn't} catching the undesirable behaviors, being done, because most prisoners don't believe they will be caught, aren't concerned with that possibility, and have no incentive to care. So catching them offending means no more than the offending behaviors did that got them into prison in the first place. And they just continue to break the rules. (Their attitude: what are they going to do to me - put me in prison.) With out dates so far out without any possible change to them - they have no incentive to change.

So how do you incentivize a prisoner to practice desirable behaviors? You reward the appropriate, beneficial, rule following behaviors with the only incentive that makes any difference - a shorter sentence! Nothing else can give a powerful ~~an~~ motivation to change: because ^{all that} ~~that~~ matters to a prisoner is getting out!!!

When rules aren't enforced (or can't be) it is ~~perceived~~ perceived that they don't matter and it, in effect, promotes the rule breaking behavior and, as said above, negative consequences don't seem to matter. Negative reinforcement does not lead to higher self-esteem which positive reinforcement gives.

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The negative reinforcement of the current Michigan Prison system is not working. With the 'positive' reinforcement offered by the MPRCA (proposed) bill, Michigan Prisoner Rehabilitation ~~and~~ Credit Act, prisoners progressively earn more time off their sentences as their desirable behaviors continue and improve. They are rewarded for 'good' behavior! They learn to make better choices, follow rules, improve themselves - leading to better self-worth, improved skills, and socially acceptable behaviors.

Most prisoners will practice behaviors that lead to change, knowing the reward is earlier release. Practice leads to habit and learning leads to better choices which all gives the desired changes to become socially acceptable persons.

So give the incentive of 'good time' for learning and practicing acceptable behaviors, but also give the needed avenues for the learning without having to wait so long to get them. (I've been (waiting) trying to get into a college program, for years, to finish up what I started years ago - but my earliest release date (requirement for participation) is always too far out.) Teach acceptable behavior, give the tools needed: schooling, trade school, college, psychological counseling, programs with the added incentive for active, effective participation in them - offered without long waiting lists.

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Start using positive reinforcement, rather than/ or in addition to the negative used now. More desirable results will follow: less recidivism, more productive citizens, more socially acceptable behaviors from better choices. These 'good time' incentives of that positive reinforcement should be all inclusive and retroactive: all should benefit from their previous good behaviors too.

The costs saved by early releases, here, are more than just dollars: Families consolidated, improved job force, contributing members of society (and more).

So YA, its a 'no brainer': 'good time' incentives are needed to promote socially advantageous, rule following behaviors. This should be retroactively implemented and all inclusive to anyone with an out date ~~release date~~ (ERD). Thus enabling the immediate reaping of cost savings and social benefits implementation will bring. (And true prison reform!)