AB 717 (Stone) Community Fact Sheet - Starting Point Reentry Act

AB 717 will expand the in-prison CAL-ID program to ensure 100% of people released from the state prison have a chance to receive a government photo identification before they reenter our communities.

Why We Need to Pass AB 717

- AB 717 will ensure that every person can receive an ID before they come home, so they have a chance to overcome reentry barriers and thrive once they return to their communities.

- AB 717 will increase the eligibility for the CAL ID program, including those serving life or long sentences. In 2019, Only 29% of people were released with IDs, leaving 71% of these individuals without identification upon return home, creating an onerous reentry process to obtain an ID.

- During typical circumstances, a photo ID often takes around six weeks to obtain, given the need to first obtain a social security card and birth certificate. The current pandemic led to months of DMV closures for processing new Cal-ID cards. Yet, people do not have weeks or months to wait for a government-issued photo ID, if they need a Covid-19 vaccine, a place to live, or a job to make ends meet.

- An ID is more vital than ever amidst the COVID-19 pandemic because it allows people to obtain healthcare and visit their primary care providers, instead of visiting local emergency rooms overburdened by the pandemic, as well as avoid crowded DMVs.

- AB 717 will help incarcerated individuals to obtain necessary identifying documents, including birth certificates and social security cards. Also, AB 717 allows incarcerated people to take the written DMV exam.

- AB 717 will uplight the dignity of formerly incarcerated people leaving prison who will now have a valid ID in hand as valued community members of California who are on the path to reentry success.

Personal Stories

“Even before COVID, the biggest challenge is documentation. People who have been gone a long time do not have an ID or documentation. In order to get a birth certificate, you have to go to the Hall of Records, pay for a birth certificate, then make an appointment to get an identification. It can be an overwhelming process,” - ARC member & Reentry Life Coach Harvey Knight.

Support

A New Way of Life (co-sponsor)
Anti-Recidivism Coalition (co-sponsor)
California Coalition for Women Prisoners (co-sponsor)
Los Angeles Regional Reentry Partnership (co-sponsor)
Our Road Prison Project (co-sponsor)
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