

SENATE BILL 2216

By Harris

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 40  
and Title 41, relative to sentence reduction credits  
for educational achievements.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 40-35-501, is amended by adding the following as a new subsection:

(t) Except as provided in subsections (g), (h), (i), and (l), the percentage of sentence that an inmate is required to serve prior to becoming eligible for release shall be reduced by fifteen percent (15%) if the inmate successfully receives a graduate equivalency diploma (GED®) or a high school diploma while incarcerated, pursuant to § 41-21-236(k). The high school completion credit shall be in addition to any other sentence reduction credits awarded.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 41-21-236, is amended by deleting the language "a graduate equivalency diploma (GED®) or a high school diploma," from subdivision (a)(2)(B)(i).

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 41-21-236, is further amended by adding the following as a new subsection:

(k) In addition to the educational good time credit awarded pursuant to subdivision (a)(2)(B), the department shall provide a high school completion credit equivalent to fifteen percent (15%) of the prisoner's total sentence to any qualifying prisoner who successfully receives a graduate equivalency diploma (GED®) or a high school diploma. No credit shall be given for any diploma unless the particular course of study, including the institution or entity through which it is offered, has received the prior

approval of the department. This high school completion credit shall not be available to any prisoner whose release eligibility status is subject to § 40-35-501(g), (h), (i), or (l).

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2016, the public welfare requiring it.