

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 271

BY REPRESENTATIVE BILLIOT

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

PROBATION: Extends the length of probation for defendants participating in drug court or sobriety court

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact Code of Criminal Procedure Articles 893(A), (B)(1)(a)(iv)(aa) and
3 (bb), and (B)(1)(b) and 894(A)(6) and (7), (B)(1), and (D)(1), relative to probation;
4 to provide relative to the duration of probation for a defendant participating in a drug
5 division probation program or a driving while intoxicated or sobriety court program;
6 to increase the maximum duration of the probation period for these defendants to
7 eight years; and to provide for related matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. Code of Criminal Procedure Articles 893(A), (B)(1)(a)(iv)(aa) and (bb),
10 and (B)(1)(b) and 894(A)(6) and (7), (B)(1), and (D)(1) are hereby amended and reenacted
11 to read as follows:

12 Art. 893. Suspension and deferral of sentence and probation in felony cases

13 A. When it appears that the best interest of the public and of the defendant
14 will be served, the court, after a first or second conviction of a noncapital felony,
15 may suspend, in whole or in part, the imposition or execution of either or both
16 sentences, where suspension is allowed under the law, and in either or both cases
17 place the defendant on probation under the supervision of the division of probation
18 and parole. The court shall not suspend the sentence of a conviction for a crime of
19 violence as defined in R.S. 14:2(B)(1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (9), (10), (11), (12), (13),
20 (14), (15), (16), (18), (20), (21), (22), (26), (27), or (28), or of a second conviction
21 if the second conviction is for a violation of R.S. 14:73.5, 81.1, or 81.2. ~~The~~ Except

1 as provided in Subitems (B)(1)(a)(iv)(aa) and (bb) of this Article, the period of
2 probation shall be specified and shall not be less than one year nor more than five
3 years. The suspended sentence shall be regarded as a sentence for the purpose of
4 granting or denying a new trial or appeal. Supervised release as provided for by
5 Chapter 3-E of Title 15 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950 shall not be
6 considered probation and shall not be limited by the five-year period for probation
7 provided for by the provisions of this Paragraph.

8 B.(1)(a) The court may suspend, in whole or in part, the imposition or
9 execution of the sentence when the following conditions exist:

10 * * *

11 (iv) The court orders the defendant to do any of the following:

12 (aa) Enter and complete a program provided by the drug division of the
13 district court pursuant to R.S. 13:5301; et seq. When a case is assigned to the drug
14 division probation program pursuant to the provisions of R.S. 13:5301 et seq., with
15 the consent of the district attorney, the court may place the defendant on probation
16 for a period of not more than eight years if the court determines that successful
17 completion of the program may require that period of probation to exceed the five-
18 year limit. If necessary to assure successful completion of the drug division
19 probation program, the court may extend the duration of the probation period. The
20 period of probation as initially fixed or as extended shall not exceed eight years.

21 (bb) Enter and complete an established ~~DWI~~ driving while intoxicated court
22 or sobriety court program, as agreed upon by the trial court and the district attorney.
23 When a case is assigned to an established driving while intoxicated court or sobriety
24 court program, with the consent of the district attorney, the court may place the
25 defendant on probation for a period of not more than eight years if the court
26 determines that successful completion of the program may require that period of
27 probation to exceed the five-year limit. If necessary to assure successful completion
28 of the drug division probation program, the court may extend the duration of the

Present law (C.Cr.P. Art. 894(A)(1)) authorizes the court to suspend the imposition or execution of a sentence for a defendant convicted of certain misdemeanor offenses and place the defendant on probation for a period not to exceed two years.

Present law (C.Cr.P. Art. 894(A)(6) and (7)) provides if a case is assigned to a drug division probation program or to an established driving while intoxicated or sobriety court program for a misdemeanor offense, with the consent of the district attorney, the court may place the defendant on supervised probation for a maximum of four years if the court determines that successful completion of the program may require that the period of probation exceed the two-year limit.

Present law (R.S. 13:5304) authorizes defendants who commit certain alcohol- or drug-related offenses to participate in a drug division probation program or a driving while intoxicated or sobriety court program when certain eligibility requirements are met. If accepted into the program, the defendant must enter a plea of guilty to the charge, the defendant's sentence is suspended, and the defendant is placed on supervised probation under the usual conditions of probation and under special conditions of probation related to the completion of such substance abuse treatment programs as are ordered by the court.

Present law (R.S. 13:5304) further provides that if the defendant successfully completes the probation program, the court may set aside the conviction and the prosecution may be dismissed in accordance with the provisions of present law.

Proposed law (C.Cr.P. Art. 893(A) and (B)) increases the maximum duration of the probation period for a person participating in a drug division probation program or a driving while intoxicated or sobriety court program for a felony offense from five years to eight years.

Proposed law (C.Cr.P. Art. 894(A)(6) and (7)) increases the maximum duration of the probation period for a person participating in a drug division probation program or a driving while intoxicated or sobriety court program for a misdemeanor offense from four years to eight years.

(Amends C.Cr.P. Arts. 893(A), (B)(1)(a)(iv)(aa) and (bb), and (B)(1)(b) and 894(A)(6) and (7), (B)(1), and (D)(1))