# Over 500 Prisoners in Scotland to be Released Early to Address Overcrowding



More than 500 prisoners in Scotland are set to be released early under emergency plans to address overcrowding, as announced by Justice Secretary Angela Constance. The proposal, detailed in the Early Release of Prisoners and Prescribed Victim Supporters Regulations, will soon be voted on by Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs). The plan will target those serving sentences of less than four years who are scheduled to be released within the next six months. Ineligible prisoners include those serving life sentences and those convicted of crimes related to terrorism, sexual offenses, or domestic violence. Prison governors also have veto power to prevent any release deemed an immediate risk to individuals or groups.

This measure comes in response to an unexpected surge of around 400 inmates since March, pushing the prison population to 8,313. The regulations are planned to be enacted on June 13, 2024, if approved. Scottish Conservatives have opposed the plan, citing public safety concerns. However, Ms. Constance emphasized that the releases will occur in phases to ensure the safe reintegration of these individuals back into the community while maintaining public safety as a priority.