1	COURT OF APPEALS
2	STATE OF NEW YORK
3	THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK,
4	EX REL ALLEN,
5	Appellant,
6	-against- NO. 138
7	BRUCE YELICH,
8	Respondent.
9	
10	20 Eagle Street Albany, New York
11	November 14, 2018 Before:
12	CHIEF JUDGE JANET DIFIORE
13	ASSOCIATE JUDGE JENNY RIVERA
	ASSOCIATE JUDGE LESLIE E. STEIN ASSOCIATE JUDGE EUGENE M. FAHEY
14	ASSOCIATE JUDGE MICHAEL J. GARCIA ASSOCIATE JUDGE ROWAN D. WILSON
15	ASSOCIATE JUDGE PAUL FEINMAN
16	Appearances:
17	
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23	
24	Amber Minton
25	Official Court Transcriber



1	CHIEF JUDGE DIFIORE: Next appeal on the calendar
2	is appeal number 138, People ex rel. Allen v. Yelich.
3	Good afternoon, counsel.
4	MR. CASSIDY: Good afternoon. My name is Michael
5	Cassidy from Prisoner's Legal Services of New York, on
6	behalf of appellant Erick Allen. I'd like to request two
7	minutes, please, for rebuttal.
8	CHIEF JUDGE DIFIORE: You may, sir.
9	MR. CASSIDY: Thank you. Mr. Allen seeks
LO	concurrent out-of-state sentence credit against a
L1	previously imposed and undischarged New York State sentence
L2	for the time that her served in New Jersey.
L3	JUDGE GARCIA: Counsel counsel, if you
L4	could clarify a little bit of the facts for me here. As I
L5	understand it, this defendant your client is out on
L6	PRS. He absconds. He commits a crime in Jersey. He's
L7	sentenced.
L8	MR. CASSIDY: Yes.
L9	JUDGE GARCIA: In my mind there are two things
20	now going on in New York. There is a violation of the PRS,
21	in which case he's going to get some type of incarceration,
22	right. And then there's the unfinished PRS term, right?
23	MR. CASSIDY: Yes.
24	JUDGE GARCIA: The Jersey sentence as I
25	understand it again I'm not 100 percent clear But

the Jersey term of incarceration is run concurrently with 1 2 the time he gets for the violation in New York? 3 MR. CASSIDY: With the undischarged New York 4 sentence. Which - - - which includes the period of the 5 arrest for the - - -6 JUDGE GARCIA: Which is essentially a penalty for 7 the violation, right. So he violates and they put him back 8 in to prison for a certain amount of time? 9 MR. CASSIDY: Yes. 10 JUDGE GARCIA: And that is offset by the Jersey time. So let's just give an example. Let's say it was two 11 12 years here and the Jersey sentence was two years, those two 13 years would run concurrently. 14 MR. CASSIDY: Yes. 15 JUDGE GARCIA: And now what you're asking for, as 16 I understand it is the Jersey sentence of incarceration to 17 be run against the unexpired PRS time? 18 MR. CASSIDY: Yes, because he had served the - -19 - there's - - - when - - - in the determinant sentence 20 situation, there's the determinant of prison term, and then there's also the PRS - - -21 22 JUDGE GARCIA: Right. 23 MR. CASSIDY: - - - as part of that. So at this 24 point in his sentence, he was - - - owed - - - owed the PRS 25 time, which becomes his new maximum term that he can be

held.

JUDGE GARCIA: Let's say in my hypothetical that a two year sentence in Jersey, two years incarceration on the - - - finish the sentence here, and you have eighteen months left on the PRS, would you run them all together, so you get - - - the two year incarceration term in New Jersey covers both your incarceration that you get as a violation and your unfinished PRS time?

MR. CASSIDY: It - - - it would. It - - - I mean

JUDGE GARCIA: But what kind of - - -

MR. CASSIDY: - - - had he been sentenced here in New - - - New York, if he committed the crime on this side of the Hudson River and been - - - been sentenced here, there - - - there probably wouldn't have been a time - - - a time assessment anyway. He would have served that new term. That would've been applied against the PRS that he owed.

JUDGE GARCIA: The - - - the time that he serves in New York, is that for the violation being he goes to New Jersey and commits another crime, or is it because he absconded?

MR. CASSIDY: That - - I'm not certain how - - how the - - -

JUDGE FAHEY: I thought it was the absconded.



MR. CASSIDY: - - - parole considered that.

JUDGE FAHEY: Yeah. In 2013, right.

MR. CASSIDY: Right.

JUDGE GARCIA: Because what I'm struggling with is the policy of getting credit for all of this essentially washes out any type of penalty for the other, right. So you - - - you've got a sentence in New Jersey that's going to run concurrently with a sentence being finished in New York and concurrently against a PRS term that he violated it by absconding. So by absconding and committing a crime in New Jersey, you get to do this term in New Jersey and wipe out your entire New York sentence at the same time?

MR. CASSIDY: Well, as running concurrently would the - - - what was left owed on the New York sentence, which at that time was the PRS, it would - - - it would - - - he would serve both of those at the same time, which would have happened had he been sentenced here as well.

JUDGE STEIN: So you're not arguing, as I

understand it - - - again, just to clarify your position 
- - that - - - that - - - that New York was required to - 
- to comply with what you see as New Jersey's desire to run

all of this concurrently, right? In other words, you're

not saying that what New York did was illegal, you're just
saying it wasn't fair?

MR. CASSIDY: That's a big part of the argument,



that it was fundamentally unfair not to run that - - - that time - - - credit that time here. Less that - - - I mean, there's no constitutional argument that - - - that he - - - that New York - - - the Department would have to run that time, but it's sort of the reverse, looking at well, why shouldn't this time be run.

And - - - and based on the case law in the - - in the court's - - - particularly in the definite sentence
situation, which - - - which there's a long history and
line of precedent regarding the definite sentence cases,
the - - - the way the Department has sought to distinguish
those cases, there's no - - - there's no reasonable
distinction on that. The Department is denying the credit

JUDGE STEIN: Well, but isn't there a reasonable distinction between the courts of our state deciding what is the fair and proper way to run these sentences, and having another state make that determination? So - - - because as I understand it, and correct me if I'm wrong, and maybe I'll ask your adversary the same question, this is in fact how when New York State wants to run something concurrently to another state, generally they send the defendant to that other state and let the sentence run, and then if there's more time, they come back?

MR. CASSIDY: Right. It would work both ways.



1	JUDGE STEIN: Right. So what what's unfair
2	about letting the state of conviction, if you will, make -
3	make its own determination as to how a sentence is
4	going to run? And and if they want to run it
5	concurrently, send it to the other state.
6	MR. CASSIDY: Well, we we believe we
7	invited the court to look at the Hall decision as as
8	an example of this suggestion.
9	JUDGE STEIN: Yeah, but Hall, it was clear. The
10	state the state court and the federal court were
11	- expressly said that they wanted the same thing.
12	MR. CASSIDY: Right. But I would argue that the
13	that the important principle to take from that case
14	is not this this dual situation there, but the idea
15	that, you know, it wasn't New Jersey wanted
16	agreed that its sentence could could run concurrently
17	with the New York sentence. It was through no fault of Mr
18	Allen's that he didn't get returned to New York. New York
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JUDGE WILSON: Well, could Mr. - - -

knew where he was. They knew what was going on.

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MR. CASSIDY: They had a warrant against him.

JUDGE WILSON: - - - could Mr. Allen had asked to be moved to New York?

MR. CASSIDY: But he had no authority or power to compel them to bring them back. And they chose not to act



on the warrant. That - - that's one of the troubling parts of this case, which I - - - I believe contributes to the fundamental unfairness in that they knew where he was, they had the warrant, they could've acted on it.

JUDGE STEIN: Well, maybe they didn't want it to run concurrently.

MR. CASSIDY: Maybe they didn't want to pay for him to - - - to - - - to be incarcerated here. The problem though is he's left languishing there through no fault of his own, to find out once he gets back here he's not getting any credit.

JUDGE STEIN: Wait a minute. He - - - he wasn't left languishing. He was serving time on a New Jersey sentence. And if he served more time there than that sentence was, he - - - I think under our statute, he may have had to be given credit for that time here. But - - - but that's not the case here.

MR. CASSIDY: Well, that's if - - - if you looked at the parole - - - that provision of the parole jail time statute, which is inapplicable in a situation where it's been a concurrent sentence that's been ordered, that - - - that would apply - - -

JUDGE STEIN: Well, that's if there's a concurrent sentence ordered by a New York court, not if there's a concurrent sentence ordered by an out-of-state

court.

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MR. CASSIDY: Well, there's no distinction in the statute about that. And so it was a concurrent sentence. It only makes sense to guard against that - - - that spillover provision that they call it, if the sentences were run consecutively, because then there's a - - - there's a period of time you're trying to ensure that the sentences are being served separately. And - - - and in a situation where the sentence is ordered concurrently, there's no - - no spillover concern to be - - - to guard against.

So - - - so here, the Department could have acted on their warrant, brought him back to New York, given him - - - and they concede that they would - - - would've given him credit, day for day, including against the PRS term for any time that he served in New York. So merely because of how it was administered and where he served the time, he's being penalized and - - - by nearly four years of time that he could've gotten credit if he'd only been brought back.

And it's really through no fault of his own. The burden should be on the Department. If they really have an interest in making - - having him serve the time in New York, they could've acted on it and brought him back. And they didn't do that. And I see I'm out of time.

CHIEF JUDGE DIFIORE: Thank you, counsel.



MR. CASSIDY: Thank you.

CHIEF JUDGE DIFIORE: Counsel?

MR. GINSBERG: Your Honors, and may it please the court. New York has always had the authority to administer New York penal sentences. But on petitioner's theory, New York would've given up a large portion of that authority to its sister states. And in this case - - -

JUDGE RIVERA: Counsel, what - - - what's your position as to what the New Jersey court ordered? What were they running - - - or what did they say they wanted their sentence to run concurrent against?

MR. GINSBERG: Well, as we read the New Jersey court order, the New Jersey court didn't actually order its sentence to run concurrently with petitioner's undischarged PRS term, which would be I guess in colloquial terms, the sentence underlying the PRS violation, then the imminent PRS violation. But what the New York - - what the New Jersey court said is that they wanted the New Jersey sentence to run concurrently with the sentence imposed on the PRS violation.

Now, the sentence imposed on the PRS violation is not the underlying undischarged term, but it's the time assessment. And arguably, that's exactly what DOCs did, because strictly speaking, the time assessment as we point out in footnote 4 of our brief, was styled as for seventy-



one months, but it was backdated as of 2011, when the parole warrant was issued. And so all that time he was in New Jersey custody, DOCs allowed him to essentially tick away on that seventy-one month time sentence.

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JUDGE STEIN: But if - - - if that's what the New Jersey - - - if that's what is determined the New Jersey court intended to do, then is there any - - - anything left to decide on this appeal?

MR. GINSBERG: No. No. We think that's a full alternative ground for affirmance in this case. But I do want to hit the - - - I think the statutory interpretation question, because DOCs certainly wants to be heard on that. Petitioner's PRS was interrupted. It was not running during the entirety of the time when he was in New Jersey custody. Which means that the only time that - - - the only way that that obligation - - - the PRS obligation could be reduced, is through an award of credit. Now, if you look at the PRS framework, such credit, in this case, could only be awarded as Your Honors have pointed out in your colloquy with my friend on the other side, under 70.40(3)(c)(i). Petitioner says that there's an exception to that exclusivity where you have a concurrent sentence as opposed to a consecutive sentence. There's no textual basis for that exception in the order - - - in the - - - in the PRS framework. In fact, in the PRS framework, it says

that, "any time spent in custody" - - - it's intentionally broad, is evaluated through that prism. And there's no dispute that that provision itself does not afford the PRS credit at issue here. Now, petitioner mentioned these lines of lower court cases, again, in the New York order - - - the New York sentencing order context that purport to require DOCs to enforce orders directing a subsequent sentence to run concurrent with a prior interrupted sentence. In the penal law language, that's kind of like dividing by zero. There's just no machinery to do that under the penal law.

By definition, concurrency can only be achieved with a sentence that is running. So with respect, I mean, this court has never passed on that issue. We think that exception, if you will, is wrongly decided by the lower courts. There's just no statutory basis for it. But even embracing that exception to the extent that lower courts like Campbell and Midgley did, the exception simply doesn't apply here. The way the lower courts were able to carve out that exception was on the basis of New York court's inherent authority to direct the operation of New York penal sentences.

We don't have that here. We have a court of New Jersey. New Jersey does not have that same inherent authority, does not have any inherent authority over



administration of New York penal sentences based on the Equal Sovereignty Doctrine and the like.

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And as far as fairness goes, you know, freestanding fairness has never been a dispositive criterion for awarding credit against a - - - in this state anyway, against a interrupted sentence. There has to be some affirmative statutory basis or some overriding constitutional command or the like. We don't have that here. But let's look at where the fairness interests lie. Let's look first at petitioner's circumstances. He was counseled at the New Jersey sentencing hearing.

The Howard case from the Third Department at that time had been on the books for a year. And that case basically counsels people in petitioner's circumstances to ask for - - do something, make yourself known to get the state of conviction - - - of subsequent conviction, to work with the executive authority of the previous state to send you back to get that credit. Howard had been on the books.

But there's no evidence that petitioner asked the New Jersey court or the New Jersey Department of Corrections, or anyone in New Jersey, to arrange for him to serve that sentence in DOCs. Now, we think that's enough to mitigate any unfairness concern. But again, we're dealing with PRS here.

And PRS, although in some ways similar to parole,



it's also subtly different. PRS was enacted as part of a get tough on crime statute, Jenna's Law, in 1998. So if you're going to break ties with fairness, we certainly think that there's a reason to do so in favor of a strict interpretation of PRS credit, as opposed to a permissive interpretation.

JUDGE FAHEY: Let me - - - let me ask this. Are

JUDGE FAHEY: Let me - - - let me ask this. Are you familiar with Ifill, it's a Third Department case of 2017?

MR. GINSBERG: Sure.

JUDGE FAHEY: The way I read that, it seems like the state expert there, who's the same expert as here, said that parole jail time credit can be ordered to run concurrently with PRS violation by a New York court. So do you reconcile it by simply saying that a New York court can do that but New Jersey court can't?

MR. GINSBERG: Well, if we had to reconcile it, that's how I would reconcile it, that New York gets to that - - - that - - - the DOCs attorney in that case got to that result by - - - not through the language of the penal code - - - the penal law, but really outside the penal law and through New York court's inherent authority.

JUDGE FAHEY: Well, the court's authority would trump the penal law authority.

MR. GINSBERG: Exactly.



JUDGE FAHEY: I think that - - - I think that's what our - - - the situation of our jurisprudence is. So - - so that's how you reconcile his statements in Ifill with this testimony before us today?

MR. GINSBERG: Well, the answer is yes to your question if I had to reconcile it. But I do want to push back on your premise with respect as we see it, that's not this court's jurisprudence. That's the lower court's jurisprudence.

The expert in that case, that DOCs attorney was citing Campbell and Midgley, in the like, those are lower court cases from the Third and Fourth Department. Now, to be sure, this court has said in cases like Garner and Sparber that - - -

JUDGE FAHEY: I was going to say, it seems that that principal's been pretty well enunciated and established by this Court. Not in this circumstance, but the principal itself has.

MR. GINSBERG: Well, we don't think we need that to win here, so I don't want to quarrel too much with it. But again, even in the Garner and Sparber case, there the court did not approve the sort of dividing by zero that you'd have to do in order to get - - -

JUDGE FAHEY: These mathematic analogies, you're losing me. I'm just telling you. You know, you've got - -



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MR. GINSBERG: Well, sometimes the lower courts lose us we think with - - - with this. But Garner and Sparber just say DOCs, when you are presented with a definite sentence that does not have a PRS term attached, you have to implement - - - to determine sentence rather, you have to implement that determinant sentence.

JUDGE FAHEY: So let me ask you this. We've got a little time left here. What do you think about the fairness argument?

MR. GINSBERG: Well, I'd like to get to the rest of the fairness argument. I think the fairness argument certainly does not cut in petitioner's favor.

JUDGE FAHEY: Really?

MR. GINSBERG: Really, Your Honor.

JUDGE FAHEY: Tell me why.

MR. GINSBERG: I think it - - - I think it

doesn't cut in petitioner's favor for the reasons I was

discussing before. The fact that he was counseled at the

sentencing hearing. These cases were on the books in terms

of this is the procedure to ask for. But also, you know,

the fairness - - - there are two sides to the fairness

coin. There's fairness to petitioner. But there's also

fairness to the sovereign interest of the State of New York

in controlling how petitioner pays his debt to New York.

And that would be completely subverted here.

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But in any event, this court has never recognized

- - - and we think the appropriate standard, as we point

out in our brief, and the other side didn't dispute in its

reply brief anyway, is that there has to be a clear command

- - -

JUDGE RIVERA: Well, the real - - - the real issue is you have a New Jersey court and they are the ones who are deciding whether or not they want the time to be concurrent or consecutive. And when they've made that intent clear, let's put aside your first argument.

MR. GINSBERG: Right. Suppose they did.

JUDGE RIVERA: (Indiscernible) your first argument. But let's just say with this alternative argument, once they've made that - - - that clear, you may have other arguments about fairness, but you can't say there's not some part of it that seems unfair because that's their sentence and they've decided they want it to run day to day with the New York sentence.

MR. GINSBERG: Oh, but Your Honor, for New Jersey purposes, if this case had arisen in New Jersey, New Jersey in its own courts for New Jersey purposes, could interpret this as day to day running. We are not dictating how New Jersey in its own courts, in its own administrative system, controls how petitioner pays his debt to New Jersey. We



are - - - we are saying - - -

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JUDGE RIVERA: Right. But I - - - I thought - 
- I thought where you end up is because of an

administrative - - - because of administrative issues, he

ends up not getting, for the moment I'll it the benefit, of

that New Jersey court's intent. And that's where the

unfairness lies.

MR. GINSBERG: Well, we don't see it as administrative issues. We see it as that's what the legislative scheme dictates.

JUDGE STEIN: But could the New Jersey court have ordered sua sponte the return of the defendant to New York to ensure that it's - - it ran concurrent to any sentence that New York imposed?

MR. GINSBERG: The New - - - the New Jersey court certainly could have tried to do that. I think New York - - -

JUDGE STEIN: Would have to agree?

MR. GINSBERG: - - - I think New York would have to agree. New York is part of the Interstate Corrections Compact, as is New Jersey. So I think there's good reason to think that they would agree. And if you look at the cases - - and I'll just say this before I sit down, in footnote 6 of our brief where we collect when this happens in other states, you do have examples of courts ordering



defendants sent to other states to - - - to serve out terms like this.

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Sometimes they're accepted, sometimes they're not. That would present a set of different issues. But this is not a unicorn type of issue that happened.

JUDGE RIVERA: So your - - - so your position is no matter what the New Jersey court wanted to do, it didn't - - - it couldn't necessarily actualize that?

MR. GINSBERG: It couldn't - - - yes. The answer to your question is yes, Your Honor. The New Jersey court could not control New York's administration of petitioner's New York penal sentence. And we'd ask that the court below be affirmed.

CHIEF JUDGE DIFIORE: Thank you, counsel.
Counsel?

MR. CASSIDY: Yes, Your Honor. There's at least two points that I'd very much like to respond to. One, as to what the New Jersey court intended. That it intended its sentence to run concurrently with the underlying New York sentence. The time owed here in New York I think is - - is beyond dispute. Now, despite raising doubts about that, both the Supreme Court and the Appellate Division made a factual determination already about what the New Jersey court intended. And it's never been in dispute from the beginning.



Most importantly, Mr. DiSimone, who is the head of Office of Sentence Calculation, he worked from the premise as well that this is what New Jersey intended. And -- and all the arguments in this case have been developed with that premise in mind. So it would be very unfortunate for the case to not even be decided after coming this far on that factual question, which I don't think is genuinely in dispute.

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The other point that I feel important to - - - to - - - to note is that the sentence - - - the definite sentence cases, which DOCs litigated - - - or made prisoners litigate to get the credit for - - - for some forty years, they uniformly lost. To my knowledge, without exception, throughout the supreme courts in the Fourth Department, the Second Department, and the Third Department, beginning in the 1970s right up to 2011, and then finally in 2013, DOCs conceded all right, we'll give this credit.

And those cases were really tethered to the idea that the New York - - - underlying New York sentence had been interrupted. And it was a fiction that it couldn't resume until they returned to DOCs custody. But those definite sentence cases is a typical scenario where the individual would serve that time in the county jail before coming back to DOCs when this - - - this idea that the

sentence would then resume. And that credit was given in those cases.

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And the Howard case is an aberration. And we specifically pointed out the conflict between Howard and that line of cases and DOCs reasoning. Unfortunately, the Appellate Division below didn't - - - didn't address that and simply echoed its language from Howard that it was incumbent that he return to New York without acknowledging the arguments and explaining why that was the case, without any - - any elucidation about that. And - - - and we really feel that that conflict - - - this court has an opportunity to resolve that conflict here. And - - - and it's really to perpetuate this fiction that because the sentence was interrupted, he couldn't get any credit for that.

It just doesn't make any sense in that it's not paroled jail time that's at issue here. It's concurrent sentence credit. And there's an entirely different statute which explains, 70.30, how DOCs is to calculate a sentence involving a concurrent sentence, whether it's a New York sentence or any other state sentence. And so the exclusivity argument about the PRS statute being on PRS instead of ordinary parole, somehow altering that and being an exclusive remedy, that this isn't parole jail time to begin with.



1	And secondly, it doesn't even address the
2	question that set that spillover provision of
3	70.40(3)(c)(3), really only makes sense if it's a
4	consecutive sentence and not a concurrent sentence.
5	CHIEF JUDGE DIFIORE: Thank you, counsel.
6	MR. CASSIDY: Thank you very much.
7	(Court is adjourned)
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## 1 CERTIFICATION 2 3 I, Amber Minton, certify that the foregoing 4 transcript of proceedings in the Court of Appeals of The 5 People of the State of New York, ex rel Allen v. Bruce 6 Yelich, No. 138, was prepared using the required 7 transcription equipment and is a true and accurate record 8 of the proceedings. 9 10 11 12 Signature: 13 14 15 Agency Name: eScribers 16 17 Address of Agency: 352 Seventh Avenue 18 Suite 604 19 New York, NY 10001 20 21 November 20, 2018 Date: 2.2 23 24



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