
DIGEST

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Elbert Guillory

HB No. 334

Abstract: Creates the inmate rehabilitation and workforce development program.

Proposed law creates the inmate rehabilitation and workforce development program to be administered by DPS&C.

Proposed law creates the inmate rehabilitation and workforce development advisory council to function as an advisory body for DPS&C in administering the program.

Proposed law provides that the council shall be composed of 11 members, selected from various state agencies, the legislature, and lists submitted to the governor by certain associations.

Proposed law provides that members, other than the secretaries, or their designees, or employees of the state, may receive a \$75 per diem for each day spent in actual attendance of meetings of the council. Members may also receive a mileage allowance for mileage traveled in attending meetings.

Proposed law provides that DPS&C may enter into cooperative endeavors or contracts with the La. Dept. of Labor, the La. Dept. of Education, and the La. community and technical colleges, educational institutions, training facilities, and employers to provide the intensive training programs necessary for proper certification or licensing of skilled craftsmen and to provide substance abuse treatment and counseling or halfway housing to inmates who participate in the program.

Proposed law provides for the administration of this program by the secretary and the assistance of the council.

Proposed law provides that DPS&C shall adopt all rules necessary to implement the provisions of proposed law and that those rules shall be adopted in accordance with the APA.

Proposed law provides that if the secretary has previously adopted rules or regulations which can be used to satisfy the requirements of proposed law, then the secretary shall not be required to adopt new or duplicative rules or regulations.

Proposed law provides criteria for an inmate's eligibility for participation in the program.

Proposed law provides that the following inmates are not eligible to participate in the program:

- (1) A person convicted of a sex offense.
- (2) A person convicted of a crime of violence.
- (3) A person sentenced as a habitual offender.

Proposed law provides separate criteria for an inmate to be considered for participation in the program.

Proposed law further provides that the participating inmate shall be evaluated by the program staff on a continual basis.

Proposed law requires the program to last for two years and requires DPS&C to assist each inmate in selecting a craft.

Proposed law provides that eligible inmates who have been admitted to the program shall participate in one-year intensive training in a selected craft. Upon completion of the program, the inmate shall qualify for any necessary examination to become a skilled craftsman. The inmate shall take any necessary examination for certification or licensing as a skilled craftsman and shall begin a one-year workforce development work release program. Upon completion of the program, the inmate shall be placed upon supervised parole for the remainder of his sentence.

Proposed law provides criteria for the removal of the inmate from the program.

Proposed law provides that prior to acceptance into the program, an inmate shall submit to a drug test for the presence of controlled dangerous substances and, once accepted into the program, he agrees to random drug testing to verify that he remains drug free.

Proposed law authorizes DPS&C and sheriffs to administer a workforce development work release program for graduates of the inmate rehabilitation and workforce development program.

Proposed law provides for the distribution of the wages earned by the inmate.

Proposed law provides that the wages of an inmate so employed shall be not less than the customary wages for an employee performing similar services. Deductions for room, board, and other administrative costs resulting from participation in a workforce development work release program shall not exceed 75% of the wages received by an inmate.

Proposed law requires that as a condition of supervised parole that the inmate maintain employment as a skilled craftsman at a location approved by the department.

Proposed law provides that the annual report to the legislative auditor be prepared by June 30 each year.

Proposed law requires efforts be coordinated with Dept. of Labor so that programs are consistent

and not duplicated.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 15:1199.1-1199.16)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Administration of Criminal Justice to the original bill.

1. Requires DPS&C and Dept. of Labor to work together so that programs are coordinated and not duplicated.

House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill.

1. Makes multiple technical changes.
2. Changes the term "service providers" to "employers".
3. Changes the term "work-release" to "work release".
4. Provides that previously adopted rules and regulations may be sufficient to implement the program without the necessity of adopting new rules or regulations.
5. Makes changes to drug testing provisions.
6. Requires that as a condition of supervised parole, the inmate maintain employment as a skilled craftsman at a location approved by the department.
7. Makes bill effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.
8. Provides that the annual report to the legislative auditor be prepared by June 30 each year.
9. Changes the length of time an inmate is committed to DPS&C and is eligible for participation in the program from five years or less to seven years or less.