

1. The Department estimates that approximately 60% to 80% of its entire prison population are incarcerated for either sex offenses or alcohol or drug related offenses. In other words, the vast majority of the population would have to be provided such programs during the last year of their incarceration in order to earn “good time.” The Department currently has insufficient staff and/or other resources to provide this amount of programming.
2. Many inmates may refuse to actively participate in such programming and thus lengthier prison sentences will result in more cost to the Department.
3. If the bill contained funding for an increase in substance abuse and sex offender programming, the bill could have a positive impact upon Department parole programs, because more inmates would receive treatment before release from prison. Since the bill does not contain the funding necessary to create the “mandatory” level of programming in prison, it could dilute and negatively impact existing substance abuse and sex offender programs.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The Corrections Department is concerned there is no appropriation in the bill to cover the substantial increase in costs. The Department currently has the ability to provide substance abuse and sex offender programming to only about 10% of the 40% inmate population targeted by this bill. The Department would need additional funding for either more F.T.E. or additional contracts to provide such treatment.

In the long term, there will be a substantial increase in costs due to larger prison populations resulting from longer periods of incarceration. The cost for each additional male inmate is \$64.53 per day or \$23,553 per year and \$68.82 per day or \$25,119 per year for each additional female inmate.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

In both the short term and the long term, the bill would result in a dramatic increase in the administrative burden upon substance abuse treatment staff, mental health staff and others in order to provide services to a much greater number of inmates.

RELATIONSHIP

Relates to HB839 which expands the list of offenses for a serious violent offense and amends eligibility formula for earned meritorious deductions.

PRF/njw