

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 50th Legislature (2006)

HOUSE BILL 3037

By: Cargill

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to prisons and reformatories; providing short title; creating Reentry Policy Council; providing for appointment of members; providing duties; creating the Restorative Justice Interagency Task Force; providing for membership; stating duties; creating the Reintegration of Inmates Revolving Fund; stating purpose of fund; providing for the development of rules and policies; providing for codification; providing for noncodification; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law not to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes reads as follows:

Sections 1 through 3 of this act shall be known and may be cited as the "Restorative Justice Act of 2006".

SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 521.1 of Title 57, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. Upon the effective date of this act, a Reentry Policy Council shall be created for the purpose of providing oversight of the reentry policies and programs operated by the Department of Corrections. The Council shall consist of nine (9) members and shall be appointed as follows:

1. Three members shall be appointed by the Governor;
2. Three members shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; and
3. Three members shall be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

The Council shall include victims of crime, persons previously convicted of a crime, representatives from faith-based organizations, representatives from nonprofit entities, corrections officials, and local law enforcement officers.

B. The Council shall:

1. Review corrections policies, programs and procedures to ensure that the primary purpose of each is public safety during imprisonment and after release;

2. Identify gaps in reentry programs and services as well as overlapping efforts, and recommend changes to address those issues;

3. Review policies to ensure that corrections facilities recruit and welcome volunteers;

4. Review the licensing procedures within this state to eliminate barriers to employment that are unrelated to the conduct underlying the conviction; and

5. Report annually to the Legislature and the Governor on the progress of the reentry initiative including the impact on recidivism, effectiveness of agency coordination and communications, and the implementation of reentry plans and use of funding.

SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 521.2 of Title 57, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. There is hereby created until July 1, 2009, the Restorative Justice Interagency Task Force. The Restorative Justice Interagency Task Force shall be composed of the following members:

1. The Director of the Department of Corrections, or a designee;

2. The Executive Director of the Office of Juvenile Affairs, or a designee;

3. The Attorney General, or a designee;

4. The Commissioner of the State Department of Health, or a designee;

5. The Director of the Department of Human Services, or a designee;

6. The Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, or a designee;

7. The Commissioner of the Department of Labor, or a designee; and

8. The Executive Coordinator of the District Attorneys Council, or a designee.

B. The Restorative Justice Interagency Task Force shall:

1. Coordinate the reentry programs of the state to help inmates find jobs, housing, substance abuse treatment, medical care, and mental health services;

2. Ensure that those who supervise offenders in prison are linked to those that will supervise them after release;

3. Identify methods to improve collaboration and coordination of reentry programs and services, including cross-training, management information systems that are accessible to partner agencies, screening procedures to assess and refer efficiently across federal, state and local boundaries, and policies and procedures that measure offender reentry management with well defined performance-based outcomes;

4. Seek partnerships with faith-based and community groups to provide programs and services;

5. Identify effective evidence-based practices in reentry support, treatment and intervention programs;

6. Encourage expansion of family-based treatment centers that offer family-based comprehensive treatment services for parents and their children as a complete family unit;

7. Establish collaboration among corrections and community corrections, technical schools, community colleges, and the workforce development and employment service sectors to:

- a. promote, where appropriate, the employment of people released from prison and jail, through federal efforts such as educating employers about existing financial incentives and facilitate the creation of job opportunities, including transitional jobs, for this population that will benefit communities,
- b. connect inmates to employment, including supportive employment and employment services, before their release to the community, and
- c. address barriers to employment;

8. Include victims in the reentry process and facilitate victim-offender dialogue when the victim is willing; and

9. Communicate regularly with local agencies and faith-based and community groups.

C. There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving fund for the Office of Faith-Based Initiatives to be designated the "Reintegration of Inmates Revolving Fund". The fund shall be a continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations, and shall consist of monies received from appropriated funds to be used for grants to volunteer organizations including, but not limited to, faith-based organizations which provide health, educational or vocational training and programs that assist the reintegration efforts of the Reentry Policy Council. All monies accruing to the credit of the fund are hereby appropriated and may be budgeted and expended by the Office of Faith-Based Initiatives. Expenditures from the fund shall be made upon warrants issued by the State Treasurer against claims filed as prescribed by law with the Director of State Finance for approval and payment.

D. The Department of Corrections shall develop rules and policies which ensure that recidivism rates are included in the performance reviews, promotions and compensation adjustments of correctional officers.

SECTION 4. This act shall become effective November 1, 2006.

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