



AN ACT ESTABLISHING A STATEWIDE MULTIAGENCY REENTRY TASK FORCE FOR RELEASED OFFENDERS AT HIGH RISK OF RECIDIVISM; SPECIFYING DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS DUTIES; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Legislative findings -- definition. (1) The legislature finds that:

(a) an effective reentry program targeting inmates at greatest risk of recidivism would not only save the state money but would enhance public safety;

(b) a successful reentry initiative requires planning and preparation, the support of multiple state agencies and community-based organizations, and targeted funding;

(c) in-prison access to resources is an important component of reentry planning prior to release; and

(d) studies have shown that offenders who participate in reentry and restorative justice programs that hold offenders accountable to victims and community volunteer panels are less likely to reoffend, more likely to find community acceptance and employment, and better able to pay restitution.

(2) As used in [sections 1 through 3], "restorative justice program" has the meaning provided in 2-15-2013(3)(c).

Section 2. Reentry task force. (1) There is a multiagency reentry task force that shall advise the department and help develop and implement reentry programs for offenders within 12 months of release from prison and at highest risk of recidivism.

(2) (a) The following agencies shall participate on the task force:

(i) the department;

(ii) the office of public instruction;

(iii) the university system;

(iv) the department of labor and industry established in 2-15-1701;

(v) the department of public health and human services established in 2-15-2201;

(vi) the department of commerce established in 2-15-1801;

(vii) the department of justice established in 2-15-2001; and

(viii) the board.

(b) Other agencies may participate as appropriate.

(3) Other members of the task force may include:

(a) a representative from community-based organizations that assist in the reentry process;

(b) a representative of community-based adult restorative justice programs;

(c) a representative of crime victims who is a crime victim;

(d) a representative of faith-based organizations that assist in the reentry process;

(e) a representative of community businesses interested in partnering with the department concerning reentry;

(f) a state legislator; and

(g) a representative of a mental health organization.

(4) The task force shall meet regularly at the call of the department director, who serves as the presiding officer. Task force members serving in their capacity as government employees are not entitled to additional compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for travel expenses incurred while engaged in task force activities as provided for in 2-18-501. Task force members who are not employed by the state are not entitled to compensation or travel expenses.

(5) Before July 1 of each even-numbered year, the task force shall report to the law and justice interim committee regarding the development, implementation, and effectiveness of reentry programs.

Section 3. Department duties. The department, in consultation with the reentry task force, shall:

(1) examine and implement programs that will help bring community resources into prisons to support inmate reentry planning and preparation;

(2) develop partnerships with and contract with community-based organizations that provide needed services to released inmates in areas such as mental health, chemical dependency, employment, housing, health care, faith-based services, parenting, relationship services, and victim impact panels;

(3) coordinate with community restorative justice programs to ensure victim concerns and opportunities

for restorative justice practices, including restitution, are considered during an offender's reentry; and

(4) collect data, conduct program evaluation, and develop findings and any recommendations about reentry and recidivism and include this information in an annual report to be made available to the law and justice interim committee provided for in 5-5-226.

Section 4. Codification instruction. [Sections 1 through 3] are intended to be codified as an integral part of Title 46, chapter 23, and the provisions of Title 46, chapter 23, apply to [sections 1 through 3].

Section 5. Effective date. [This act] is effective July 1, 2013.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,
HB 0068, originated in the House.

Chief Clerk of the House

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2013.

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2013.

HOUSE BILL NO. 68

INTRODUCED BY M. MACDONALD

BY REQUEST OF THE LAW AND JUSTICE INTERIM COMMITTEE

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