

HOUSE BILL NO. 68

INTRODUCED BY M. MACDONALD

BY REQUEST OF THE LAW AND JUSTICE INTERIM COMMITTEE

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ESTABLISHING A STATEWIDE MULTIAGENCY REENTRY TASK FORCE FOR PAROLED OFFENDERS AT HIGH RISK OF RECIDIVISM; SPECIFYING DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS DUTIES; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

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

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

(a) an effective reentry program targeting inmates at greatest risk of recidivism while on parole 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 informational resources is an important component of reentry planning prior to parole; and

(d) studies have shown that offenders who participate in 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).

NEW SECTION. 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 being paroled 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;



- 1 (iv) the department of labor and industry established in 2-15-1701;
2 (v) the department of public health and human services established in 2-15-2201;
3 (vi) the department of commerce established in 2-15-1801;
4 (vii) the department of justice established in 2-15-2001; and
5 (viii) the board.
- 6 (b) Other agencies may participate as appropriate.
- 7 (3) Other members of the task force may include:
- 8 (a) a representative from community-based organizations that assist in the reentry process;
9 (b) a representative of community-based adult restorative justice programs;
10 (c) a representative of crime victims who is a crime victim;
11 (d) a representative of faith-based organizations that assist in the reentry process;
12 (e) a representative of community businesses interested in partnering with the department concerning
13 reentry; and
14 (f) a state legislator.
- 15 (4) The task force shall meet regularly at the call of the department director, who serves as the presiding
16 officer. Task force members are entitled to compensation and expenses as provided in 2-15-122.

17
18 **NEW SECTION. Section 3. Department duties.** The department, in consultation with the reentry task
19 force, shall:

- 20 (1) examine and implement programs that will help bring community resources into prisons to support
21 inmate reentry planning and preparation;
- 22 (2) develop partnerships with and contract with community-based organizations that provide needed
23 aftercare services for inmates released on parole;
- 24 (3) coordinate with community restorative justice programs to ensure victim concerns and opportunities
25 for restorative justice practices, including restitution, are considered during an offender's reentry; and
- 26 (4) collect data, conduct program evaluation, and develop findings and any recommendations about
27 reentry and recidivism and include this information in an annual report to be made available to the law and justice
28 interim committee provided for in 5-5-226.

29
30 **NEW SECTION. Section 4. Appropriation.** There is appropriated from the general fund to the

1 department of corrections \$500,000 in each year of the biennium for the purposes of [sections 1 through 3].

2

3 **NEW SECTION. Section 5. Codification instruction.** [Sections 1 through 3] are intended to be codified
4 as an integral part of Title 46, chapter 23, and the provisions of Title 46, chapter 23, apply to [sections 1 through
5 3].

6

7 **NEW SECTION. Section 6. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2013.

8

- END -