

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1922

As Reported By House Committee On:
Corrections

Title: An act relating to creation of a work ethic boot camp.

Brief Description: Creating a work ethic boot camp program within the department of corrections.

Sponsors: Representatives Lemmon, Mastin, Morris, Hansen, Basich, Kessler, Johanson, Scott, Tate, Bray, Campbell, Dunshee, Eide, Orr, Grant, Lisk, Ludwig, R. Meyers, Springer, Finkbeiner, Dorn, Vance, Quall, Kremen, Rayburn, Brough, Foreman, Riley, L. Johnson, Horn, King, Forner, Roland, Ogden, Thomas, Brumsickle, Long, Casada, Ballasiotes, Mielke, Cooke, Van Luven and Karahalios.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Corrections, March 3, 1993, DPS.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Morris, Chair; Mastin, Vice Chair; Long, Ranking Minority Member; G. Cole; L. Johnson; Ogden; Riley; and Padden.

Staff: Antonio Sanchez (786-7383).

Background: The Department of Corrections is responsible for providing services to evaluate, control, and redirect the behavior of adult felony offenders committed to its jurisdiction by the courts. The system provides programs designed to avoid idleness and promote the work ethic and self improvement opportunities.

The Department of Corrections currently does not administer a boot camp program. The department does however, administer a range of offender work programs including four active forest camp programs throughout the state. The forest camp programs house men and women in barrack-style housing and require the offenders to perform hard physical labor in the forest such as fighting fires, tree planting, and tree thinning, and also attending off-work education, drug treatment, and anger management classes.

Currently approximately 14 states are conducting as many as 25 boot camp incarceration programs in the United States. Most of the programs are modeled after the United States military style boot camp; however, work programs are a component in many of the programs. Of the 10 states reportedly initiating a new boot camp program, most are developing their programs with a focus on the work ethic component. Although research information about boot camps is still relatively sparse, the trend nationwide seems to indicate that recidivism may be reduced. Data show that recidivism rates range from about 35 percent in a traditional military style boot camp in Georgia to less than 17 percent in a modified work style boot camp in Idaho. The average national recidivism rate is approximately 45 percent.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The secretary of the Department of Corrections is required to establish, within 120 days after the effective date of the act, a work ethic boot camp program. The department must establish the work ethic boot camp within an already existing department compound or facility or a new facility that is scheduled to be completed. The department is given the authority to set the capacity of the work ethic boot camp.

Offenders are recommended to the Work Ethic Boot Camp Program as a condition of their sentence by the sentencing judge. The secretary of the Department of Corrections determines eligibility based on the following criteria.

The offender:

- A) Is between the ages of 18 and 28;
- B) Has no known physical or mental impairments that would prevent his/her ability to perform the program's mandatory physical and mental activities;
- C) Is not convicted of any sex or violent offenses, or is determined by the department not to be a risk; and
- D) Must agree to the terms and conditions of the program.

The department is required to establish a priority in the program for court ordered offenders. However, the secretary is allowed to place other eligible inmates on a space available basis.

The length of work ethic camp training will be determined by the department in addition to all other major aspects of the

program including: program standards; conduct standards; educational components; drug rehabilitation program parameters; individual and team work goals; and guidelines and timelines for successful program completion.

The boot camp model is designed to provide the offender with intense real world submersion in character building work and training. The Work Ethics Camp Incarceration Program components include:

- A) Real-world vocational job experiences;
- B) Character building work ethic training;
- C) Life management skills development;
- D) Drug rehabilitation;
- E) Literacy training;
- F) Adult basic education; and
- G) An intense range of character and skill building challenges.

The offender can be expelled from the program for failure to comply to program rules as determined by the department. Those offenders expelled from the program are required to be reclassified and serve the remainder of their sentence in another facility. All offenders released from the program may be transferred to a work release program or placed in a community supervision program which could initially include electronic monitoring or other types of monitoring.

The department is required to employ 100 percent of all the offenders in the program in class I, class II, class III, and class IV correctional industries job programs. Initially, no more than 35 percent of the inmates are allowed to work in class III jobs. After the first year, the percentage of class III jobs are required to be reduced by 10 percent until no more than 10 percent of all offenders are employed in this class of work. The department is also given the authority to conduct prison work crews that can conduct litter control and minor emergency repair on public roads. All work done by the work crews must not negatively impact employment for persons with developmental disabilities or have a negative impact on the local labor or business market. The Work Ethics Program is required to emphasize work programs that positively impact the natural environment.

The department and the Office of Financial Management are required to analyze the effectiveness of the program through a review of recidivism rates, program costs, and public safety success. The final outcome evaluation report is due January 15, 1998. Based on this evaluation, the department can recommend termination of the program.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The Department of Corrections is required to seek federal funds to develop, implement and evaluate the work ethic boot camp. Other technical and housekeeping changes.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 18, 1993.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Boot camps offer the offenders a way to learn discipline, gain job and life skills, and prove they can make something of themselves. They are cost-effective, about one-half of what it costs for prisons in Washington. Recidivism is reduced by 50 percent or more.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Dean Allen and Jim Rehder, North Idaho Correctional Institute; Ed Kelly; Jim Hamilton; E. D. Stephens; William Paul; Ruben Cedena, Department of Corrections; and Darrell Russell and Jim Nagle, Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (pro).