

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2859

As Reported By House Committee On:
Corrections

Title: An act relating to juvenile offenders.

Brief Description: Providing for literacy training for juvenile offenders.

Sponsors: Representatives Romero, Morris, Wolfe, Moak, Cothorn, Jones, Caver, Holm, Jacobsen, Conway, R. Meyers, Quall and Anderson.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Corrections, February 3, 1994, DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Morris, Chair; Mastin, Vice Chair; Long, Ranking Minority Member; Edmondson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; G. Cole; L. Johnson; Moak and Padden.

Staff: Kristen Lichtenberg (786-7156).

Background: Juvenile offenders receive schooling while committed to state facilities, but the law does not specifically mandate juvenile offender literacy programs.

When a juvenile is committed to a state facility, the Department of Social and Health Services determines the juvenile's release date. The release date is required to be within the standard range for the offense. Unlike adults, juveniles do not receive reduced sentences for good behavior.

Summary of Bill: The Department of Social and Health Services will develop and implement a literacy testing and training program for juveniles. The bill requires the department to test entering juveniles.

When the department sets the juvenile's release date, the department will consider progress made by the juvenile in the literacy program.

Fiscal Note: Requested January 26, 1994.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill was passed.

Testimony For: Improving literacy among juvenile offenders will reduce recidivism. Volunteers can be used to reduce costs. Literacy training will supplement current residential schooling.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Pat Hanson, Department of Social and Health Services (pro).