

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 3122

As Reported By House Committee On:

Criminal Justice & Corrections

Title: An act relating to work ethic camp programs.

Brief Description: Regarding work ethic camp programs.

Sponsors: Representative Ballasiotes.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Criminal Justice & Corrections: 2/20/98, 2/25/98 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Ballasiotes, Chairman; Benson, Vice Chairman; Koster, Vice Chairman; Quall, Ranking Minority Member; O'Brien, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cairnes; Dickerson; Hickel; McCune; Mitchell; Radcliff and Sullivan.

Staff: Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

Background: The Work Ethic Camp was created in 1993 as a pilot alternative incarceration program and has a sunset date of July 1, 1998.

The Work Ethic Camp is a 24-hour total confinement facility where the offender's day begins at 4:40 a.m. and ends at 10:00 p.m. The camp converts a typical prison environment into an employment-based program that requires offenders to quickly learn and adapt their behavior to meet the expectations of employers and society. The entire program is an intensive work and classroom experience that stresses developing work ethic behaviors that will enable the offender to transition immediately, and successfully, to community employment and a crime-free lifestyle upon transition from the confinement portion of the program through community follow-up.

The Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Office of Financial Management (OFM) were directed to monitor and analyze the effectiveness of the Work Ethic Camp program and by January 15, 1998, complete an outcome evaluation study. The DOC also has responsibility for seeking the availability of federal funds for the planning,

implementation, evaluation, and training of staff associated with the work ethic camp program.

Summary of Bill: The statutory section that sets a sunset date of July 1, 1998, requires a study by the DOC and the OFM to be completed by January 15, 1998, and requires the DOC to seek federal funding for implementation is repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The Department of Corrections' Work Ethic Camp is Washington's alternative to an adult boot camp. Male and female offenders are eligible for the program as long as the offenders do not have any history of sex or violent offenses. Offenders go through four months of intense work ethic training, education, and counseling/treatment in lieu of the normal incarceration of twenty or more months in prison. Out of the 2,000 inmates that have entered the Work Ethic Camp Program, approximately 20 percent of the inmates have been terminated from the program. Four out of five inmates remaining in the work ethic camp program actually completed the program and graduated. To date, the recidivism rate for 1994 and 1995 Work Ethic Camp graduates is approximately 6 percent. The DOC considers this pilot project a great success.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Pro: Jackie Campbell, Department of Corrections, Work Ethic Camp.