

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2518

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Public Safety

**Title:** An act relating to the pilot identicard program.

**Brief Description:** Creating the pilot identicard program.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Habib, Walsh, Goodman, Haigh and Roberts.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Public Safety: 1/28/14, 1/29/14 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Creates a two-year pilot identicard program at the Monroe Correctional Complex in order to issue state-issued identification cards to offenders upon release.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Goodman, Chair; Roberts, Vice Chair; Klippert, Ranking Minority Member; Hayes, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Holy, Hope, Moscoso, Pettigrew, Ross and Takko.

**Staff:** Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

**Background:**

The Washington Department of Licensing (DOL) issues driver's licenses, endorsements, and identicards that are valid for up to five years. An identicard is a non-driving Washington identification card (ID) issued by the DOL.

The DOL must issue an identicard, containing a picture, to any applicant provided that the applicant: (1) does not hold a valid Washington driver's license; (2) proves his or her identity; and (3) pays the required statutory \$45 fee. An identicard is generally issued for up

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to five years at a charge of \$45 unless the applicant receives public assistance, in which case the cost is equal to the actual cost to produce the identicard. The cost for an identicard will increase to \$54 and will be valid for six years, effective August 2014.

Identicards are distinctly designed so that they are not confused with an official driver's license and expire on the fifth anniversary of the applicant's birthdate after issuance. An applicant may renew an identicard by means of personal appearance at a DOL office, by mail, or electronic commerce.

#### Issuance of Identicards to Released Offenders.

The DOL and the Department of Corrections (DOC) have an interagency agreement regarding issuing ID cards to offenders released and leaving correctional facilities. Under this agreement, before an offender is released, the DOC electronically notifies the DOL with the offender's identifying information including his or her name, photo, date of birth, Social Security number and any known aliases. Once the offender is released to the community, he or she must take the DOC-issued ID card to a DOL office.

A DOL employee compares the information previously received from the DOC to the DOC ID card, verifies the applicant's Social Security number via the Social Security Administration database, has the person sign an application, takes a photo, and collects the applicable \$45 fee as set in statute. The DOL runs facial recognition on all applicants to prevent identity theft and then the applicant receives a temporary identicard card. The permanent identicard (which is valid for five years) is mailed to the person by the DOL's central issuance vendor.

#### Monroe Correctional Complex.

The Monroe Correctional Complex (also often referred to as MCC or the Washington State Reformatory) opened in 1910 and is one of the DOC's largest correctional facilities in Washington. The facility is located in Monroe, Washington, and has an operating capacity of 2,400 with custody levels ranging from minimum to closed custody levels. The MCC released 755 offenders (excluding those who were deported) in the 2013 calendar year.

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#### **Summary of Substitute Bill:**

By September 1, 2014, the DOL must work in conjunction with the DOC to create a two-year Pilot Identicard Program (program) within the MCC. The goal is to create a program to provide offenders with a state-issued identicard upon release from incarceration.

Each offender is eligible for an original, renewal, or replacement identicard provided he or she:

- meets the DOL's criteria of being able to prove his or her identity (a DOC ID is sufficient proof of identity);
- is under the custody of the DOC;
- had been sentenced to an incarceration period exceeding one year and one day; and
- is incarcerated within the MCC and is within two months or less of release from the correctional institution.

The DOL must waive the requirement that the offender not hold a valid Washington driver's license in order to receive an identicard. Each identicard issued to an offender will expire one year from the date the identicard is issued. The DOL may not charge an offender any fee for an identicard issued under the pilot program.

The DOL, in consultation with the DOC, must review and evaluate the program at the MCC and submit a report to the Governor and the appropriate committees of the Legislature by December 1, 2016.

The program expires on December 1, 2016.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The DOL and the DOC must jointly create and implement the program by September 2014 (instead of July 1, 2014). An offender is eligible for an identicard provided his identity can be verified and a DOC ID is sufficient proof of that identity. The offender must also have been sentenced to an incarceration period exceeding one year and one day. Each identicard will expire on the anniversary of the date it was issued instead of on the offender's birthdate. The DOL cannot charge offenders any fee for issuing an identicard.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) State identicards are incredibly useful for getting such items as employment, housing, and even a library card. However, there are several barriers that impede an offender's ability to get a state ID and in turn, his or her successful re-entry into the community such as: (1) not having a universally accepted ID; (2) there is the financial barrier given the lack of funds that an offender may have; (3) ID cards must currently be mailed to a residential address that an offender may not yet have; and (4) there is the scarlet letter effect when an offender has to go to the DOL and show his or her DOC ID first, before they can be issued a state DOL ID. This bill gives the state the opportunity to try a pilot program in solving a couple of problems under the current system.

The way this program would work is that the DOC will provide the DOL with a photograph and a digital signature of the offender. The identicard will then be sent to the offender's community custody officer or counselor.

This bill is a good idea and has a very minimal impact upon the DOC. It supports offender re-entry and will become part of each offender's release packet. This bill also enhances

public safety and ensures that the DOL and the Washington State Patrol will have access to up-to-date biometric photos and ensures every offender released from MCC will obtain an identicard. We owe offenders a chance to succeed on the outside once they are released from prison.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Habib, prime sponsor; Tony Sermonti, Department of Licensing; Dan Pacholla, Department of Corrections; and Alex Hur, Pioneer Human Services.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.