
Postsecondary Education & Workforce Committee

HB 1338

Brief Description: Concerning education and vocational programs in state correctional institutions.

Sponsors: Representatives Reeves, Waters, Walen, Senn, Simmons, Kloba, Reed, Lekanoff, Gregerson, Doglio, Tharinger, Springer, Fosse, Davis and Orwall.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Changes requirements relating to postsecondary education programs at state correctional institutions.
- Changes membership requirements of the Correctional Industries Advisory Committee.

Hearing Date: 1/25/23

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

Postsecondary Education Programs in State Institutions.

The Department of Corrections (DOC) may implement postsecondary degree or certificate programs at state correctional institutions. Programs that may be considered for inclusion include any education program from an institution of higher education, up to a bachelor's degree, and state-recognized apprenticeship programs.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The DOC may select an incarcerated individual to participate in a postsecondary education program based on priority criteria determined by the DOC. Priority should be given to incarcerated individuals who do not already possess a postsecondary education degree and individuals with reentry plans that include participation in a postsecondary degree or certificate program that is offered at the individuals' correctional institutions, approved by the DOC as eligible and effective, and limited to a postsecondary degree or certificate program.

The Correctional Industries Advisory Committee.

The Correctional Industries Advisory Committee (Committee) makes recommendations to the DOC on the Correctional Industries Program. The Committee consists of nine voting members and four nonvoting legislative members. The nine voting members must include three representatives from labor, three representatives from business, and three members from the general public. The business members must represent cross sections of industries and all sizes of employers.

Summary of Bill:

Postsecondary Education Programs in State Institutions.

The postsecondary education program must have the goal of increasing participation so that at least 50 percent of incarcerated individuals are participating in the program by January 1, 2026. When selecting programs for inclusion, the Department of Corrections (DOC) must prioritize programs that result in vocational credentials or qualifications for living wage jobs once a participating individual is released from incarceration. The DOC may give priority to program participants based on earliest release date, but no more than 90 percent of program participants may be prioritized in this manner.

The Correctional Industries Advisory Committee.

The business members of the Correctional Industries Advisory Committee must represent businesses that employ formerly incarcerated individuals.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 23, 2023.

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