

HCS HB 138 -- CORRECTIONS OFFICERS CERTIFICATION

SPONSOR: Kelly, 144 (Crawford)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Corrections and State Institutions by a vote of 10 to 0.

This substitute contains provisions relating to the Department of Corrections. The substitute:

- (1) Establishes the Corrections Officers Certification Commission within the department;
- (2) Allows the commission to cause a job task analysis to be made for corrections officers and jailers, both public and private;
- (3) Authorizes the commission to make recommendations to the department, the General Assembly, and the Governor regarding qualifications, training, testing, and certification of corrections officers and jailers;
- (4) Allows for the appointment of commission members, establishes their qualifications, and sets their terms of service;
- (5) Allows the department director to create various classes of corrections officer certification;
- (6) Contains provisions regarding the confidentiality of personnel records of corrections officers;
- (7) Requires that certain information be provided prior to the delivery of prisoners to correctional centers. The county sheriff must provide a certified copy of the sentence, including specifics on statutes violated, probation, restitution, gang affiliation, and any information about the physical and mental health of the prisoner;
- (8) Allows the department to refuse to accept a prisoner without all the required information;
- (9) Requires all offenders under the age of 17 to be emancipated for the purposes of decision making and participation in all department programs; and
- (10) Provides that hearings for violations of correctional facility rules are not considered contested cases according to administrative procedure and review.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that at this time morale within the department is very low and corrections officer turnover is high. It is felt that certification could change this by giving corrections officers a better opportunity to make a career with the department.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Crawford; and Missouri Correctional Officers Association.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Bob Dominique, Legislative Analyst