

HB 1986 -- INMATE EMPLOYMENT UPON RELEASE

SPONSOR: Ellington

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Corrections and Public Institutions by a vote of 7 to 0.

This bill requires, subject to appropriation, the Department of Corrections to participate in the Federal Bonding Program so that all working inmates are bonded prior to release, review the types of jobs available for inmates while incarcerated to determine which jobs would be eligible for certification and ensure that any inmate who has completed the necessary requirements for certification in a particular field does receive certification, and issue a worker certificate to any inmate who has worked in one or more types of jobs that are not eligible for certification containing information regarding each job and a list of the skills acquired or demonstrated.

This bill is similar to HB 508 (2017).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this will help reduce the recidivism rate plaguing the state. The rate usually increases to 50% after the first three years because individuals have trouble providing for their families. There are no mandates in the legislation other than having to ensure that inmates are certified properly for available jobs for eligible inmates.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Ellington.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.