

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 04/21/15

Action: Do Pass And Requesting Referral To Ways And Means.

Meeting Dates: 04/14, 04/21

Vote:

Yeas: 4 - Boquist, Monnes Anderson, Olsen, President Courtney

Prepared By: Cheyenne Ross, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Department of Corrections (DOC) establish pilot program to treat servicemember inmates in intensive addictions alternative incarceration program, who have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Sunsets January 2, 2020.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Current alternative incarceration programs that treat substance abuse
- Substance abuse that can be symptomatic of other issues for many people, including veterans with PTSD
- Potential administrative/programmatic changes needed to identify and/or verify inmates' veteran status
- Responsibility for diagnosis
- Concern about inmate safety

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Alternative incarceration programs (AIPs) are offered by the Department of Corrections (DOC) for qualifying inmates deemed eligible by a court as part of their sentence. There are AIPs that focus on cognitive restructuring, and AIPs that focus on alcohol and drug treatment. Successful completion of an AIP can reduce an inmate's prison term.

AIPs have structured 14-hour days that include work, exercise, and community service. Inmates accepted into an alcohol and drug AIP participate in intensive treatment, among other things, such as preparing for employment, and working on healthy relationships and family skills. Participants live in dedicated housing for about six months, then transition into community settings under close supervision for another 90 days.

Senate Bill 780 directs DOC to create a pilot program to treat inmates for PTSD, if they are veterans participating in an intensive addictions AIP.