

SB 777 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

Action Date: 04/01/19

Action: Do pass with amendments. Refer to Ways and Means by prior reference. (Printed A-Eng).

Vote: 5-0-0-0

Yeas: 5 - Gelser, Hass, Heard, Thomsen, Wagner

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 4/1

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes Task Force on Prison Education to study existing prisoner education and training programs; barriers to accessing such programs; and options and opportunities for expanding, updating, and improving such programs. Establishes task force membership and requirements. Assigns Legislative Policy and Research Office (LPRO) Director as staff support. Requires task force to submit report to legislature no later than September 15, 2020. Sunsets on December 31, 2020. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Prison education issues
- Prison education task force
- Reentry issues
- University of Oregon's Inside Out Program
- Blue Mountain Community College's prison education programs
- Career and technical education programs
- Effect of educational opportunities on recidivism
- Need for more resources, such as funding for teachers, technology, and classroom space
- Non-credit and credit offerings
- Number of incarcerated students served
- Public safety benefits of prison education programs

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Adds a representative from Higher Education Coordinating Commission and Oregon Corrections Enterprises to the Task Force on Prison Education. Assigns Legislative Policy and Research Director as staff support for task force, rather than Governor's Office.

BACKGROUND:

In 2015, the Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill 969, creating the Joint Interim Task Force on Reentry, Employment and Housing. In 2017, the Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill 689, which continued the work of the task force through the 2017-18 Interim. The task force was formed to identify barriers to the successful reentry of individuals into mainstream society after incarceration and to propose possible solutions. One barrier identified was the need for expanded educational opportunities for incarcerated individuals to help them build their resumes, expand their knowledge and skills, and access jobs upon reentry. Senate Bill 777 A creates a legislative task force to study prisoner education issues.