

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2155 Session of 2015

INTRODUCED BY THOMAS, JUNE 13, 2016

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, JUNE 13, 2016

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 61 (Prisons and Parole) of the Pennsylvania
 2 Consolidated Statutes, in miscellaneous provisions,
 3 establishing the Pennsylvania Interagency Council on Inmate
 4 Reentry.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
 6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Title 61 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated
 8 Statutes is amended by adding a section to read:

9 § 5907. Pennsylvania Interagency Council on Inmate Reentry.

10 (a) Establishment.--The Pennsylvania Interagency Council on
 11 Inmate Reentry is established.

12 (b) Membership.--The council shall consist of the following
 13 members:

14 (1) The secretary, or a designee.

15 (2) The Secretary of Community and Economic Development,
 16 or a designee.

17 (3) The Secretary of Education, or a designee.

18 (4) The Secretary of Labor and Industry, or a designee.

19 (5) The Secretary of Human Services, or a designee.

1 (6) The Director of Homeland Security, or a designee.

2 (7) The Director of the Pennsylvania Emergency
3 Management Agency, or a designee.

4 (8) The Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Housing
5 Finance Agency, or a designee.

6 (9) The Adjutant General of the Department of Military
7 and Veterans Affairs, or a designee.

8 (10) The victim advocate of the Office of Victim
9 Advocate, or a designee.

10 (11) The Chairman of the Pennsylvania Board of Probation
11 and Parole, or a designee.

12 (12) An elected county commissioner selected by the
13 County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania.

14 (13) An elected district attorney selected by the
15 Pennsylvania District Attorney's Association.

16 (14) The chairman of the Pennsylvania Commission on
17 Crime and Delinquency, or a designee.

18 (c) Quorum.--A majority of the members shall constitute a
19 quorum and a vote of the majority of the members present shall
20 be sufficient for all actions.

21 (d) Chairperson.--The secretary or his designee shall serve
22 as the chairperson of the council. A member of the council shall
23 be designated by the chairperson of the committee as vice
24 chairperson and shall preside at meetings in the absence of the
25 chairperson.

26 (e) Meetings.--The council shall meet at the call of the
27 chairperson but no less than six times per year.

28 (f) Reimbursement.--Members of the council shall serve
29 without compensation but may be reimbursed for necessary and
30 reasonable expenses incurred in attending meetings of the

1 council and in the performance of their duties under this
2 section.

3 (g) Support.--The department shall provide staff and
4 administrative support for the council. The council may enter
5 into a memorandum of understanding with the Pennsylvania
6 Commission on Crime and Delinquency for additional necessary
7 support.

8 (h) Duties.--

9 (1) The council shall examine:

10 (i) Methods of:

11 (A) Improving the process of reentering inmates
12 into the community.

13 (B) Strengthening the educational and vocational
14 skills of inmates while incarcerated.

15 (C) Establishing and implementing effective and
16 consistent reentry plans prior to inmates' scheduled
17 release into the community.

18 (D) Incentivizing employers to hire former
19 inmates through financial or other economic
20 incentives.

21 (ii) The impediments to successful reentry plans,
22 such as the use of employer background checks and
23 statutory and regulatory bars to employment.

24 (2) The council may rely on studies and reports that
25 have already been prepared by other state entities or private
26 organizations in its examination under this subsection.

27 (i) Report to General Assembly.--The council shall submit a
28 report to the General Assembly that provides the results of its
29 examination and findings under subsection (h) and shall file its
30 report with recommendations no later than one year from the

1 effective date of this section.

2 (j) Expiration.--This section shall expire 365 days from the
3 effective date of this section.

4 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.