

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO.

Senate Bill 1161

PRINTER'S NO.

1538

AMOUNTNet Savings to the Commonwealth**FUND**

General Fund

Year #1: \$6.3 Million
Year #2: \$26.5 Million
Year #3: \$31.4 Million

DATE INTRODUCED

December 14, 2009

PRIME SPONSOR

Senator Greenleaf

HISTORY OF BILL

Referred to JUDICIARY, Dec. 14, 2009
Reported as committed, Dec. 15, 2009
First consideration, Dec. 15, 2009
Re-referred to APPROPRIATIONS, Feb. 1, 2010
Re-reported as committed, May 24, 2010

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF BILL

Senate Bill 1161 amends Title 61 (Prisons and Parole Code) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes by adding §3705 entitled "Inmates serving short minimum sentences."

Specifically, this legislation provides that if an inmate is within 18 months of completing his or her minimum sentence when the inmate is committed to the supervision of the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (Department), the Department, under its own discretion, may transfer the inmate to a prerelease center regardless of the length of time that the inmate has been under the supervision of the Department. While confined in the prerelease center, the inmate may complete the prescribed programming as part of the inmate's prerelease plan.

This legislation essentially overturns a departmental regulation that an inmate may not be transferred to a prerelease center until the inmate has served at least nine months in a state correctional institution.

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Additionally, this legislation provides that an inmate nearing parole who cannot be paroled because there is no access to complete prescribed programming within the correctional institution, the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole may release the inmate on parole with the condition that the inmate complete the prescribed programming while on parole. This shall not apply to offenders who are serving a term of imprisonment for a crime of violence for a second or subsequent offense or for a crime requiring registration as a sexual offender.

FISCAL IMPACT:

According to the Department of Corrections, the enactment of this legislation alone would result in substantial savings/cost avoidance to the Commonwealth over time. Following is a 3-year estimate of State Correctional Institutions (SCI) population reduction and cost savings, Prerelease Centers (CCC) population increase and cost increases and the net savings to the Department and the Commonwealth.

	<u>Year #1</u>	<u>Year #2</u>	<u>Year #3</u>	<u>Totals:</u>
SCI Population Reduction:	1,480	1,879	1,958	
SCI Cost Savings:	\$9.4 M	\$35.4 M	\$41.5 M	\$86.3 M
CCC Population Increase:	1,001	1,200	1,240	
CCC Cost Increase:	\$3.1 M	\$8.9 M	\$10.1 M	\$22.1 M
Total Net Savings to DOC & Commonwealth:	\$6.3 M	\$26.5 M	\$31.4 M	\$64.2 M

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It should be noted that, according to the Department, the first year savings may not be as significant as succeeding years due to several reasons. First, as with many other new programs, it takes time to get them implemented, therefore the Department would not realize a full year savings from the saved beds in the first year. Secondly, it takes 1,000 or more inmates before the Department can realize more than the fractional daily rate of \$14 per day. This rate is the savings realized if you take one inmate out of the state system. Once you reach 1,000 or more inmates then you can start bringing inmates back from out-of-state institutions and the savings begin to increase more quickly.