

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 207 Session of
2005

INTRODUCED BY WASHINGTON, STABACK, WHEATLEY, YOUNGBLOOD,
HERSHEY, BLACKWELL, CALTAGIRONE, CRUZ AND DENLINGER,
MARCH 29, 2005

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, MARCH 29, 2005

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Council of the City of Philadelphia to authorize the
2 council's Committee on Public Safety to conduct public
3 hearings to examine and analyze the community reentry process
4 of ex-offenders and persons under authority of the criminal
5 justice system, hear testimony and collect data on related
6 public, private and community-based programs and policy
7 efforts so as to determine what actions council may take to
8 help deliver the resources and support required to operate
9 and promote such programs and policies.

10 WHEREAS, Incarceration rates in America--an estimated 680 per
11 100,000, second highest in the world--and the United States
12 prison population--now more than 2 million--have experienced
13 massive increases and have reached record levels continuously
14 over the last 20 years according to numerous studies and
15 reports, resulting in devastating economic and social impact and
16 consequences for millions of individuals and families, hundreds
17 of communities and municipalities and countless public and
18 private entities; and

19 WHEREAS, National figures report corrections and associated
20 criminal justice expenditures exceeding \$50 billion a year, and
21 in 2003 a record 6.9 million adults in the United States were

1 incarcerated, on parole or probation, comprising 3.2% of the
2 total population or 1 out of every 32 United States citizens,
3 along with a record 4.8 million adults under some form of
4 criminal justice supervision, representing a per annum release
5 rate of more than 774,500 persons; and

6 WHEREAS, Released offenders/prisoners head for and back to a
7 concentrated number of large states, like Pennsylvania, and
8 specific concentrated counties within those states, like
9 Philadelphia, that are already suffering economic and social
10 stress and strain with dwindling budget dollars and mounting
11 public safety, health, education and employment concerns; and

12 WHEREAS, These populations are primarily comprised of
13 economically and socially disadvantaged or depressed
14 individuals, the realities being that at midyear 2003 there were
15 4,834 black male prisoners per 100,000 black males in the United
16 States in prison or jail, compared to 1,778 Hispanic male
17 inmates per 100,000 Hispanic males, and 681 white male inmates
18 per 100,000 white males; the overall rate for males was 1,309
19 per 100,000 and for females was 113 per 100,000, with
20 approximately 120,000 females in prison and with females
21 comprising 13% of all persons in the criminal justice system;
22 and

23 WHEREAS, Nationwide more than half of all incarcerated adults
24 and two-thirds of all adults involved in the criminal justice
25 system are parents to more than 100 million minor children, and
26 58% of those minor children of incarcerated parents are ten
27 years of age or under; and

28 WHEREAS, Conservative estimates report more than 78,000 men
29 and women are incarcerated in Pennsylvania State and county
30 prisons, and the latest available estimates report the average

1 expenditure for incarceration in the Philadelphia Prison System
2 per person is over \$75 a day, with an average head count of over
3 7,600 per day--amounting to nearly \$573,000 per day in
4 corrections costs and climbing to an approximate total of \$44
5 million for the average 76.1-day stay of inmates in the
6 Philadelphia Prison System population; and

7 WHEREAS, When the estimated 35,000 prisoners who are rotating
8 through the Philadelphia Prison System every year are added to
9 the 75 people released by the Philadelphia Prison System each
10 day and that total is combined with the numbers of others
11 already in Philadelphia communities under correctional
12 constraint or supervision, on any given day 51,000 individuals
13 are circulating in Philadelphia with active connection to the
14 criminal justice system; and

15 WHEREAS, These factors and other findings make the mission to
16 establish effective ways and means to facilitate long-term
17 successful reentry and reintegration of prisoners and offenders
18 into our communities a critical government priority; and

19 WHEREAS, The Congress of the United States has recently
20 allocated approximately \$100 million toward reentry program
21 strategy and development through some 23 governmental
22 departments and agencies, reflecting a national trend in many
23 areas around the country to seek innovative methods for meeting
24 the challenge and reaping the benefits of reentry program
25 management; and

26 WHEREAS, The Re-entry Oversight Board and Committee of the
27 Philadelphia Prison System and the Philadelphia Consensus Group
28 on Re-entry--both groups comprised of over 30 public/private
29 agency and organizational reentry stakeholders--along with the
30 Philadelphia Prison Society and numerous other groups and

1 programs involved in educational, vocational and other essential
2 social services delivery have taken initiatives to focus
3 attention, garner advocacy and coordinate efforts around this
4 tremendously important issue; therefore be it

5 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives urge the Council
6 of the City of Philadelphia to authorize the council's Committee
7 on Public Safety to conduct public hearings to examine and
8 analyze the community reentry process of ex-offenders and
9 persons under authority of the criminal justice system, hear
10 testimony and collect data on related public, private and
11 community-based programs and policy efforts so as to determine
12 what actions council may take to help deliver the resources and
13 support required to operate and promote such programs and
14 policies.