



Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Office of the Secretary

Office of Government and Legislative Affairs

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STATE OF MARYLAND

LARRY HOGAN
GOVERNOR

BILL: SENATE BILL 86

BOYD K. RUTHERFORD
LT. GOVERNOR

POSITION: SUPPORT

ROBERT L. GREEN
SECRETARY

EXPLANATION: Senate Bill 86 proposes to alter the minimum number of calendar days the Correctional Education Council must require certain inmates in correctional institutions to participate in a certain mandatory education program.

RACHEL SESSA
CHIEF OF STAFF

CHRISTOPHER McCULLY
DEPUTY SECRETARY
ADMINISTRATION

COMMENTS:

WAYNE HILL
ACTING
DEPUTY SECRETARY
OPERATIONS

- The Department's Division of Correction (DOC) operates approximately 17 State correctional facilities, which house offenders sentenced to incarceration for 18 months and longer. The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services also runs the Baltimore City Jail, which houses pretrial detainees and inmates sentenced to incarceration for 18 months and less.

CAROLYN J. SRUGGS
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

- SB 86 proposes to increase the number of mandatory calendar days an inmate must participate in correctional education from 120 to 240 days, which will hopefully lead to an increase in the number of GEDs awarded to the incarcerated population.

GARY W. McLHINNEY
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

- Education has been linked to lower recidivism rates. A 2013 report from Rand Corporation determined "inmates that participate in academic and occupational training programs are 43 percent less likely to return to prison."¹

CATHERINE KAHL
ACTING DIRECTOR

- More GEDs mean more secondary education, vocational, and work opportunities while incarcerated. The DOC has partnered with a number of higher education institutions, offering college classes. Increasing the number of GEDs earned each year will hopefully increase participation in college courses.

- Programs operated by Maryland Correctional Enterprises (MCE) and the Department of Labor require inmates to have a GED (or high school diploma) to be eligible to accept a job or participate in occupational or

¹ RAND Corporation. (2013, August 22). *Education and Vocational Training in Prisons Reduces Recidivism, Improves Job Outlook*. Retrieved from: <http://www.rand.org/news/press/2013/08/22.html>

vocational training. Increasing the minimum number of calendar days inmates are required to participate in educational classes will result in an increase in the number of GEDs issued each year and an increase in the candidate pool for skilled position opportunities.

- More importantly, GED and/or industry certification allows inmates to return to the community with increased knowledge and skills and will assist with maintaining sustainability in the community, thus lowering recidivism rates.

CONCLUSION: The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services urges a **FAVORABLE** committee report on Senate Bill 86.