



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

One East Main, Suite 301 • Madison, WI 53703 • (608) 266-3847 • Fax: (608) 267-6873

May 26, 2009

Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #271

Reintegration of Correctional Employees Returning from Active Duty in the Armed Services (Corrections -- Departmentwide)

[LFB 2009-11 Budget Summary: Page 205, #10]

CURRENT LAW

No provision.

GOVERNOR

Provide \$110,500 GPR in 2009-10 and \$130,000 GPR in 2010-11 for services to support the "successful reintegration of department employees returning to work from active duty in the armed forces." According to the Department, funding would support training institutional staff on issues related to veterans returning from active duty, as well as educating veterans on support resources available for them.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. The Department of Corrections has over 1,623 employees identified as veterans, 121 who are currently on military leave. Corrections does not currently have a department-wide policy on managing the return of employees from military leave.

2. Assembly Bill 75 would provide \$110,500 GPR in 2009-10 and \$130,000 GPR in 2010-11, according to the Governor's Executive Budget, for "services to support the successful reintegration of department employees returning to work from active duty in the armed forces."

3. According to the Department of Corrections, funding would go toward: (a) \$66,700 in 2009-10 and \$88,900 in 2010-11 associated with contracting for payroll and human resource services; (b) \$13,600 in 2009-10 and \$10,200 in 2010-11 for computer programming costs; (c)

\$15,000 annually for informational packets; (d) \$11,900 in 2009-10 and \$15,900 in 2010-11 for other costs, such as training and travel; and (e) one-time costs of \$3,300 in 2009-10 for contracting and computer services.

4. The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) provides on its website the following mission statement:

"The mission of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs is serving Wisconsin veterans, their families, and their survivors with dignity and compassion in recognition of their sacrifices and service to Wisconsin and the nation; serving as their principle advocate in the state; providing outreach, programs and services to ensure they receive the benefits to which they are entitled; developing, coordinating, administering, and maintaining state programs and services that provide health, educational, economic, and social assistance and lasting memorialization, in supplement and complement to those provided by the federal government, and acknowledging, commemorating, and affirming the role of Wisconsin veterans in the United States of America's military past by means of instructive exhibits and other educational programs."

5. On April 29, 2009, the Committee supported the Governor's AB 75 recommendation to provide \$200,300 and 1.0 position to the DVA for its "Mission Welcome Home" program. The Department of Veterans Affairs indicates that the coordinator of that program serves as a liaison to work with public agencies and the private sector to assist returning veterans. It is reasonable to assume the DVA would support Corrections and other agencies with any issues involving the reintegration of state employees to the workplace.

6. Although other state agencies also have employees who are currently on military leave, the Department of Corrections is the only one that is provided funding in AB 75 to support returning veterans.

7. Given that the Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) already provides support to individuals who serve in the military, the Committee may wish to delete this funding [Alternative 3].

8. While the Executive Budget indicates that funding would be utilized to support departmental employees reintegrating to work, funding appears to primarily support the Department's management of payroll issues associated with employees who go on, and return from, active military duty.

9. The Department of Corrections indicates that the "DVA is not positioned in the same way as DOC is as an employer to address issues unique to transitioning returning veterans to the corrections environment, nor does DVA bear the responsibility of ensuring appropriate military pay/DOC salary adjustments." As such, the Committee may wish to provide \$32,300 GPR in 2009-10 and \$38,600 GPR in 2010-11 and 1.0 payroll and benefits two-year project position to support departmental payroll issues for employees in the military, but delete the remaining funding associated with services the DVA can provide. [Alternative 2]

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to provide \$110,500 GPR in 2009-10 and \$130,000 GPR in 2010-11 for services to support the reintegration of correctional employees returning from active duty in the armed services.

2. Provide \$32,300 GPR in 2009-10 and \$38,600 GPR in 2010-11 and 1.0 payroll and benefits two-year project position annually to provide payroll support related to the issues of correctional employees going to and returning from active duty.

| ALT 2 Change to Bill | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| | Funding Positions |
| GPR | - \$169,600 1.00 |

3. Delete provision.

| ALT 3 Change to Bill | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| | Funding |
| GPR | - \$240,500 |

Prepared by: Chris Carmichael