



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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2017

Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #232

Robert E. Ellsworth Correctional Center (Corrections -- Adult Corrections)

[LFB 2017-19 Budget Summary: Page 139, #6]

CURRENT LAW

The Robert E. Ellsworth Correctional Center (REECC) is a minimum-security facility for female offenders, located in Union Grove, which provides programs, such as education, alcohol/drug abuse treatment, re-entry, family reintegration, grief counselling, religious instruction and other services. The facility was built in 1954 and was originally part of the Southern Wisconsin Center. In 1989, the Department of Corrections converted the then vacant building to a correctional facility. On May 26, 2017, there were 490 inmates at the facility.

GOVERNOR

Provide \$264,100 GPR in 2017-18 and \$308,400 GPR in 2018-19 and 3.0 positions annually for Robert E. Ellsworth Correctional Center to accommodate increases in the female inmate population. The 3.0 positions would include a nurse clinician, psychologist, and social worker.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. The bill would provide \$264,100 GPR in 2017-18 and \$308,400 GPR in 2018-19 and 3.0 positions annually for a recently opened unit at REECC to accommodate increases in the female inmate population. The unit was opened in May, 2016 utilizing 18.0 correctional officer surplus positions.

2. In its agency budget request, the Department of Corrections requested funding of \$1,298,700 GPR in 2017-18 and \$1,343,000 GPR in 2018-19 and 3.0 positions annually for REECC, including: (a) \$1,034,600 annually to fund the 18.0 surplus/pool correctional officer

positions currently being funded with existing resources; and (b) \$264,100 in 2017-18 and \$308,400 in 2018-19 and 3.0 positions annually for a nurse clinician, psychologist, and social worker. The Governor did not approve the Department's request associated with supporting the surplus/pool correctional officer positions. Surplus/pool positions are generally positions authorized to agencies to use for training purposes or for positions with high turnover rates.

3. Under the bill, the estimated population for females would be 1,458 inmates in 2017-18 and 1,496 inmates in 2018-19. However, as addressed in a separate paper, more recent population data indicates a higher estimate of 1,561 females in 2017-18 and 1,647 in 2018-19. [An alternative in the paper were provide an additional \$1.9 million over the biennium to support additional population and inflationary costs.]

4. However, considering how much higher the reestimated number of additional female inmates is (103 in 2017-18 and 178 in 2018-19), the Committee may wish to provide additional resources. One alternative could be to provide the funding requested by the Department to fund 18.0 surplus/pool correctional officer positions (\$1,034,600 GPR annually). Since Corrections has been able to fund the positions utilizing existing resources, the funding was not included in the bill. However, the Committee may wish to reconsider funding the surplus positions to address the higher population projections. [Alternative 2] The Department indicates it is looking at its options for housing female inmates as Corrections has recently started to exceed departmentwide capacity.

5. On the other hand, the Committee may wish to approve funding as provided in the bill. The Corrections Secretary stated at the March 28, 2017, agency briefing that funding provided in the bill was sufficient for the Department. Further, the State Building Commission's Capital Budget includes funding for a comprehensive long range master plan of all of Corrections' facilities, which would include evaluating the Department's current capacity and need for inmate with future recommendations made at that time. [Alternative 1]

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to provide \$264,100 GPR in 2017-18 and \$308,400 GPR in 2018-19 and 3.0 positions annually for a recently opened unit at Robert E. Ellsworth Correctional Center to accommodate increases in the female inmate population.

ALT 1	Change to Base		Change to Bill	
	Funding	Positions	Funding	Positions
GPR	\$572,500	3.00	\$0	0.00

2. Approve the Governor's recommendation and additionally provide \$1,034,600 GPR annually to fund 18.0 surplus/pool correctional officer positions currently being funded with existing resources.

ALT 2	Change to Base		Change to Bill	
	Funding	Positions	Funding	Positions
GPR	\$2,641,700	3.00	\$2,069,200	0.00

3. Delete the provision.

ALT 3	Change to Base		Change to Bill	
	Funding	Positions	Funding	Positions
GPR	\$0	0.00	-\$572,500	-3.00

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