



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #313

Personnel Recruitment (DOC -- Departmentwide)

[LFB 2001-03 Budget Summary: Page 204, #10]

CURRENT LAW

At the December, 2000, s. 13.10 meeting, the Joint Committee on Finance approved a one-time transfer of \$141,500 GPR in 2000-01 from the Department of Corrections' prison contracts appropriation for expanded employee recruitment efforts.

GOVERNOR

Provide \$150,000 GPR annually to allow the Department to expand personnel recruitment efforts in southeastern Wisconsin and statewide.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. The Department of Corrections' Bureau of Personnel and Human Resources (BPHR) has a budget of \$2,774,700 (\$2,590,700 GPR and \$50,400 PR) and 52.75 positions (51.75 GPR and 1.0 PR) in 2000-01. The Bureau is responsible for all centralized personnel, payroll, affirmative action, equal employment, employee health, risk management and employment relations activities for the Department of Corrections. The Department has approximately 9,700 full-time equivalent positions (all funds). Of the Bureau's budget, \$284,900 (\$280,900 GPR and \$4,000 PR) is allocated to supplies and services costs, with the remainder primarily allocated to staff costs. In addition to BPHR staff, correctional facilities and the Division of Community Corrections also have personnel and human relations staff who hire employees based on lists provided by BPHR, discipline staff and address other institution-specific personnel matters.

2. At the December 21, 1999, s. 13.10 meeting, the Committee adopted a motion to

provide \$103,500 GPR in 1999-00 and \$447,100 GPR in 2000-01 and 9.0 GPR positions to: (a) address issues of correctional institution crowding and long-range planning; and (b) staff correctional institutions. Corrections utilized 2.0 of these positions to develop and implement a centralized, coordinated, statewide employee recruitment effort.

3. On December 19, 2000, the Joint Committee on Finance, under s. 13.10, approved a one-time transfer of \$141,500 GPR in 2000-01 from the Department of Corrections' prison contracts appropriation for expanded employee recruitment efforts. The Committee specified that no portion of the funding could be used to conduct a billboard campaign. The amount provided under s. 13.10 represented half of the Department's request. The supplies and services budget of \$284,900 in 2000-01 includes the \$141,500 in one-time funding.

4. In the December, 2000, s. 13.10 request, it was indicated that:

- Statistics from Corrections indicated that for the approximately 120 individuals in the October, 2000, correctional officer preservice training classes, 680 applications were received. Of those applications, 82% were rejected for various reasons (failure to return supplemental information, failure to report for the interview, failure to pass the criminal background investigation or reference check, failure to pass or report for the medical/fitness test, failure to pass the examination or interview and not being eligible to be certified for the position). Based on a historic application success rate of 15% (15% of all applicants for correctional officer positions are hired and complete training), Corrections indicates that over 6,600 applicants statewide would be necessary to hire 1,000 officers.

- Low unemployment rates have made hiring more difficult.

- Prior to March, 2000, the Department did not have a departmentwide recruitment effort, but rather relied on job announcements in the state job bulletin, advertisements in local papers and exams conducted at the Department of Employment Relations (DER) exam centers.

- Since March, 2000, Corrections has: (a) begun to continuously recruit for correctional officers; (b) started on-site examinations at correctional facilities, as opposed to centralized DER exams; (c) shortened the hiring process by two weeks; (d) implemented a toll-free number for employment application materials; (e) conducted open houses and tours at correctional facilities; (f) produced a recruitment video which is aired on a biweekly basis in southeastern Wisconsin; (g) increased radio and print job announcement advertising; (h) increased the Department's involvement at career fairs; (i) developed partnerships with the Department of Workforce Development, colleges, universities and various community agencies to expand the visibility of career opportunities in Corrections; (j) developed promotional materials to distribute to the public (for example, a magazine, brochures and pens); and (k) begun posting Corrections' job opportunities on public and private sector web sites.

5. Funding was provided in 2000-01 to support production of informational and promotional materials about the Department, support statewide and regional recruitment advertising

campaigns, fund the creation of job fair displays and support the training and travel expenses of the Department's recruitment staff.

6. In the April, 2001, issue of Corrections Compendium, it was indicated that: "Corrections in America will soon be confronted by a serious manpower problem: the severe shortage of properly trained and highly motivated correctional officers to staff the nations correctional facilities. During the next 10 years, there will be an estimated 25,300 openings per year for correctional officers. Approximately 14,800 will be new positions and the remainder will be vacancies in existing positions. The number of correctional officer positions is expected to grow by 38.7 percent, while the overall American labor force is predicted to increase by only 14.4 percent (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000)." According to an April 23, 2001, New York Times article, a severe shortage of correctional officers exists around the country, resulting in "a barrage of recruiting techniques."

7. Under SB 55, the number of positions in Corrections (all funds) would increase from approximately 9,700 in 2000-01 (base level plus positions approved under s. 13.10) to approximately 11,000 in 2002-03, or an additional 1,300 positions. The majority of these new positions (1,068 positions) are associated with the opening of eight new or expanded correctional facilities. Under the bill, all eight of the facilities are scheduled to open in the first half of 2002, with the 1,500-bed Stanley facility, the 300-bed Highview facility and the 750-bed New Lisbon facility opening in July of that year.

8. In addition to hiring staff to fill newly created positions, Corrections will also need to hire staff to fill positions that become vacant. State budget instructions require agencies to calculate an annual funding adjustment based on an assumed 3% turnover rate. Applying this standard to Corrections would result in the Department needing to hire approximately 300 new employees annually to fill existing, but vacant positions. To the extent that turnover exceeds 3%, more staff would be necessary. Further, Corrections indicates that "a January, 2000, analysis of DOC's workforce indicates that approximately 15% of DOC's current workforce is currently at or above the minimum retirement age. The impact of retirements over the next biennium will greatly increase the challenge of staffing the Department of Corrections."

9. In SB 55, the Governor recommends \$150,000 GPR annually for continued employee recruitment efforts in the Department of Corrections. According to Corrections, funding would be used, as was the one-time funding provided for 2000-01, for job and career fair costs, print advertisements, media/internet promotions, promotional materials and travel costs for the two employee recruiters.

10. The increased funding recommended under the bill for each year of the biennium is similar to that approved by the Committee in December, 2000, under s. 13.10 for 2000-01. Given the number of positions for which Corrections will need to recruit and the number of applicants necessary to fill each position, it can be argued that increased resources for recruitment are appropriate. However, in order to be consistent with the Committee's actions under s. 13.10 for recruitment, the Committee may wish to make the funding one-time and specify that funding could

not be used for billboard campaigns. As a result, the need for the continuation of additional funding could be reevaluated in connection with the 2003-05 biennium.

ALTERNATIVES TO BILL

1. Approve the Governor’s recommendation to provide \$150,000 GPR annually to allow the Department of Corrections to expand personnel recruitment efforts in southeastern Wisconsin and statewide.

2. In addition to Alternative 1, make funding one-time in the 2001-03 biennium and specify that funding could not be used in connection with a billboard campaign.

3. Maintain current law.

<u>Alternative 3</u>	<u>GPR</u>
2001-03 FUNDING (Change to Bill)	- \$300,000

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