



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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

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Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #245

Black River Correctional Center Boot Camp Program (DOC -- Adult Corrections)

[LFB 2003-05 Budget Summary: Page 121, #18]

CURRENT LAW

The Department of Corrections operates a challenge incarceration program that provides inmates with strenuous physical exercise, manual labor, personal development counseling, substance abuse treatment and education, military drill and ceremony, and counseling. Corrections may place any inmate in the program if the inmate has not attained the age of 30 as of the start of the program, and also meets the following criteria: (a) the inmate volunteers to participate in the program; (b) the inmate is incarcerated for a crime specified in Chapter 940 (crimes against life and bodily security) or for child sex crimes; (c) if the inmate is serving a bifurcated sentence, the sentencing court decided at sentencing that the inmate is eligible for the challenge incarceration program; (d) Corrections determines, during assessment and evaluation, that the inmate has a substance abuse problem; and (e) Corrections determines that the inmate has no psychological, physical or medical limitations that would preclude participation in the program.

GOVERNOR

Provide \$705,000 GPR in 2003-04 and -\$1,080,100 GPR in 2004-05 and 17.5 GPR positions annually to create a challenge incarceration program at the Black River Correctional Center in Black River Falls.

Modify statutory language to provide that an inmate, who volunteers to participate in the program, is eligible for the program if the inmate has not attained the age of 40 as of the date on which they begin the program. Specify that the program provide strenuous physical exercise for participants who have not attained the age of 30 as of the starting date, or age-appropriate

strenuous physical exercise for all other participants. Specify that the modification would first apply to persons sentenced on the effective date of the bill.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. The Department of Corrections currently operates a challenge incarceration program ("boot camp") at the St. Croix Correctional Center. The boot camp program is structured around discipline and treatment and includes rigorous physical activity, manual work assignments, regimentation and discipline, instruction on military bearing, intensive alcohol and other drug abuse treatment, individualized educational programming, and group interaction addressing rational thinking and responsible behavior. The challenge incarceration program is a six-month earned release program, and an offender who successfully completes the program will be released to parole or extended supervision. On May 2, 2003, there were 96 male inmates in the program at St. Croix.

2. On June 19, 2002, the Building Commission approved \$246,500 general fund-supported borrowing for the purchase of a modular housing unit to house up to 12 female inmates for a boot camp program for female inmates at St. Croix. The program started in February, 2003.

3. Corrections indicates that the Department has historically not tracked recidivism. However, one recidivism study was conducted on inmates who were released in 1995. According to the study, of the 5,688 inmates released in 1995, 3,148 (55%) were readmitted during the period of 1995 through September, 2001. Of the 3,148 inmates that were readmitted, 1,144 (36%) were readmitted under a new sentence, while the remaining offenders were readmitted for probation and parole violations.

4. Specifically related to the St. Croix boot camp, Corrections has information on the recidivism rate of offenders in the program from 1991 through December, 2002. Of the 1,323 inmates released from the program, 564 (42%) were readmitted to prison. Of the 564 inmates readmitted, 127 (9%) were readmitted under a new sentence, the remaining offenders were readmitted for probation or parole violations.

5. Because information on the recidivism rate of the boot camp program covers a longer period of time than that of the general population, comparison between the general population and boot camp population may be inexact. To the extent that the two studies can be compared, the boot camp program had a lower overall recidivism rate than the general population for all readmissions.

6. Under SB 44, the age requirement for the boot camp program would be increased to allow any inmate who has not attained the age of 40 as of the start of the program to be eligible. In addition, the bill would modify statutory language to provide strenuous physical exercise for participants who have not attained the age of 30 as of the starting date, or age-appropriate strenuous physical exercise for all other participants. In 2001-02, the average age of male offenders admitted to prison was 30.6 years, and the average age of female offenders admitted to prison was 32.6 years.

7. In addition to modifying program requirements, SB 44 creates a boot camp program at Black River Correctional Center and provides \$705,000 GPR in 2003-04 and -\$1,080,100 GPR in 2004-05 and 17.5 GPR positions annually. Under the bill, increased costs for operating the facility (\$705,000 GPR in 2003-04 and \$748,000 GPR in 2004-05) are offset by a reduction in contract bed funding (-\$1,828,100 GPR in 2004-05). Staffing includes: 12.0 correctional officers; 2.0 supervising officers, 1.0 social worker, 1.0 food service position, and 1.5 program assistants. Currently, Black River Correctional Center has an operating capacity of 94 beds with a total staff of 25.5 positions. The boot camp program would begin in January, 2004.

8. The administration's summary of the budget bill indicates that creating a boot camp program at Black River and expanding eligibility for the program are intended allow additional nonviolent offenders participates in earned release programming. There are currently 83 inmates approved for the boot camp program. Approximately 200 inmates are on a waiting list for the program, and the average wait for placement in the program is seven months.

9. The proposed Black River boot camp is similar in size to the St. Croix boot camp, and proposed staffing is comparable to that of St. Croix. Currently, St. Croix Correctional Center has 51.0 positions for a capacity of 120 inmates. Under SB 44, Black River staff would increase to 43.0 positions for a capacity of 94 inmates.

10. Under SB 44, contract bed funding would be reduced by \$1,828,100 GPR in 2004-05. Because boot camp is an earned release program, offenders who successfully complete the program would be released from prison earlier than those not in the program (or who fail the program). According to Corrections, the average sentence reduction for offenders who successfully complete the St. Croix program is 1.65 years, and the success rate for the program at St. Croix is 70%. With a 70% success rate, it is estimated that 66 offenders will successfully complete boot camp every six months. Because the six-month program begins in January, 2004, the first group of offenders in the program would not finish until the beginning of the 2004-05 fiscal year. Therefore, there would not be any contract bed savings until 2004-05.

11. Funding for staffing of the Black River Falls boot camp could be modified based on: (a) turnover reduction adjustments (based on DOA budget instructions); (b) adjustments associated with reduced correctional officer preservice training costs (based on standardized assumption of training completion); and (c) reducing the number of months of funding for 2003-04 positions by one month to correspond to the start of the program. With the modifications, the bill would be adjusted by -\$72,300 GPR in 2003-04 and -\$5,400 GPR in 2004-05.

12. If the boot camp program is not created, contract bed savings in 2004-05 (-\$1,828,100 GPR) would not be realized resulting in a net increase to the bill of \$375,100 GPR (a decrease of \$705,000 GPR in 2003-04 and an increase of \$1,080,100 GPR in 2004-05).

13. If the Committee does not wish to create a second boot camp program, it could be argued that, given that the average age of an inmate at admission is currently greater than 30 years old, the Governor's statutory language changes could still be adopted. Conversely, if the Committee wishes to retain the focus of the program on younger offenders, these modifications could be

removed.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to provide \$705,000 GPR in 2003-04 and -\$1,080,100 GPR in 2004-05 and 17.5 GPR positions annually to create a challenge incarceration program at the Black River Correctional Center. Modify statutory language to provide that an inmate, who volunteers to participate in the program, is eligible for the program if the inmate has not attained the age of 40 as of the date on which they begin the program. Specify that the program provide strenuous physical exercise for participants who have not attained the age of 30 as of the starting date, or age-appropriate strenuous physical exercise for all other participants. Specify that the modification would first apply to persons sentenced on the effective date of the bill.

2. Modify Alternative 1 to delete \$72,300 GPR in 2003-04 and \$5,400 GPR in 2004-05. This alternative makes the following adjustments: (a) turnover reduction adjustments; (b) adjustments associated with reduced correctional officer preservice training costs; and (c) reducing the number of months of funding for 2003-04 positions by one month.

<u>Alternative 2</u>	<u>GPR</u>
2003-05 FUNDING (Change to Bill)	- \$77,700

3. Delete \$705,000 GPR in 2003-04 and -\$1,080,100 GPR in 2004-05 and 17.5 GPR positions annually to create a challenge incarceration program at the Black River Correctional Center in Black River Falls. [This alternative deletes funding for the new boot camp program, but maintains the Governor's recommended statutory language changes.]

<u>Alternative 3</u>	<u>GPR</u>
2003-05 FUNDING (Change to Bill)	\$375,100
2004-05 POSITIONS (Change to Bill)	- 17.50

4. In addition to Alternative 1 or Alternative 2, delete the Governor's statutory language expanding the challenge incarceration program to offenders up to the age of 40.

5. Delete provision.

<u>Alternative 5</u>	<u>GPR</u>
2003-05 FUNDING (Change to Bill)	\$375,100
2004-05 POSITIONS (Change to Bill)	- 17.50

Prepared by: Chris Carmichael