



## Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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May 19, 2015

Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #248

### **Remove Requirement for Funding for Certain Community Reintegration Services (Corrections -- Community Corrections)**

[LFB 2015-17 Budget Summary: Page 126, #4]

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#### **CURRENT LAW**

The Department is required to allocate \$50,000 each fiscal year to Madison-area Urban Ministry, Inc. and \$50,000 each fiscal year to Project Return for community reintegration services from its purchased services for offenders appropriation.

#### **GOVERNOR**

Delete provision.

#### **DISCUSSION POINTS**

1. Under current law, Corrections is required to pay \$50,000 annually to Urban Ministry, Inc. and Project Return from its purchased services for offenders appropriation. The provision directing Corrections to allocate this specific funding was created under the 2005-07 biennial budget act when the Department was provided additional funding to expand community reintegration services. Purchased services funding is used to support services for offenders in the community such as halfway housing, transitional and emergency housing, alcohol and other drug abuse services, counseling services, vocational and employment, and drug testing.

2. Corrections currently contracts with Urban Ministry, Inc. to work with offenders returning to the community in the Madison area. The organization works with offenders both prior to and following release from prison to assess for food stamp eligibility and provide employment assistance. Project Return in Milwaukee provides employment programming to offenders,

including assessing and assisting with job searches, training, and long-term employment needs. According to the Department, in 2013-14, Urban Ministry assisted 61 offenders and Project Return assisted 99 offenders.

3. Under the bill, while the statutory designations are removed, Corrections would retain the associated funding in its purchased services for offenders appropriation (\$100,000 GPR annually). According to the Department, deleting the statutory language would allow Corrections to contract for community reintegration services under competitive bidding and procurement procedures. As such, the Committee may wish to approve the provision.

4. On the other hand, the provision has guaranteed community reintegration services be provided to offenders in the Madison and Milwaukee areas for the past 10 years including 160 offenders in 2013-14. To the extent the Committee wished to maintain the current providers and location of services at either or both cities, the statutory language could be retained. [Alternatives 2a or 2b]

5. If the Committee wishes to maintain current law, deletion of the statutory specification could be removed from the bill. [Alternative 3]

## **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to delete the provision requiring Corrections to annually provide \$50,000 to Madison-area Urban Ministry, Inc. and \$50,000 to Project Return for community reintegration services.

2. Modify the Governor's recommendation by retaining the statutory requirement for one or both of the following:

a. \$50,000 each fiscal year to Madison-area Urban Ministry, Inc. for community reintegration services.

b. \$50,000 each fiscal year to Project Return for community reintegration services.

3. Delete provision.

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