

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RS22934

This bill, the product of Idaho's data-driven "justice reinvestment" approach, will increase public safety and contain the cost of corrections. The policies in this bill address three challenges facing the state's criminal justice system: a revolving door of recidivism from supervision and diversion programs, inefficient use of prison space, and insufficient oversight of recidivism-reduction investments.

Between 2008 and 2013, Idaho's prison population increased 10 percent and, by 2019, is projected to grow 16 percent. This bill is estimated to avert nearly all this growth. In doing so, it saves Idaho up to \$288 million and enables the state to reinvest \$33 million in probation and parole officer training, community treatment, and quality assurance measures. In addition, it is estimated to reduce recidivism 15 percent.

The bill accomplishes public-safety and cost-containment objectives in three ways. It strengthens probation and parole supervision and diversion programs, structures parole to prioritize prison space for violent offenders and to focus resources in the community on reducing recidivism, and evaluates programs and validates risk assessments to ensure taxpayer dollars are used wisely.

FISCAL NOTE

The additional fiscal impact of implementing these recommendations is \$2 million to the General Fund and \$299,999 in dedicated funds in FY 2015. Funding will be provided to add 5 new Probation and Parole Officers to decrease officers' caseloads; shift 10 authorized but unfilled positions onto the General Fund and off of dedicated funds due to lack of revenue in the Parolee Supervision Fund; and shift an additional 9 Probation and Parole Officer positions onto the General Fund and off of the Parolee Supervision Fund so that supervision standards and best practices are not undermined by officers spending too much time focused on collecting fees from offenders. In addition, as the total number of offenders under supervision decrease, and the caseload per officer decreases, there will not be sufficient revenue from offender fees to support the workforce. Ongoing funding will also be provided for all current and new Probation and Parole Officers to train on core correctional practices and to establish a train-the-trainer approach to ensure that the state builds the long-term capacity necessary to deliver training based on evidence-based strategies. In order to efficiently manage offenders on light supervision status, a web-based reporting system will also be developed using Parolee Supervision Funds, as a tool for offenders to check in with Parole Officers. The estimated cost is \$299,000, of which \$27,000 is ongoing. In FY 2015, there will also be \$500,000 appropriated from the Parolee Supervision Fund, to build upon the existing crime victim restitution collection system and to further emphasize the importance of restitution to the victim. The Governor's budget recommendation already includes additional funding for Community-Based Substance Abuse Treatment and funding for additional Pre-sentence Investigators that can be counted towards this effort.

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