

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6337

As Passed House:
February 28, 2010

Title: An act relating to inmate savings accounts.

Brief Description: Concerning inmate savings accounts.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Regala, Carrell, Hargrove and Brandland).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Human Services: 2/18/10, 2/22/10 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/28/10, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Permits an inmate to use his or her personal inmate savings account to pay for accredited postsecondary educational expenses and approved re-entry activities that promote successful community reintegration while he or she is confined at the Department of Corrections or just prior to release.
- Requires the Secretary of the Department of Corrections to establish guidelines for the release of funds while the offender is incarcerated at a Department of Corrections facility.
- Removes obsolete language requiring the Secretary increase the number of inmates employed in class I or class II industries at specified time intervals.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Dickerson, Chair; Orwall, Vice Chair; Dammeier, Ranking Minority Member; Darneille, Green, Herrera, O'Brien and Walsh.

Staff: Linda Merelle (786-7092).

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background:

When an inmate receives funds while incarcerated, with limited exception, those funds are subject to a 10 percent deduction to be placed in the inmate's personal inmate savings account. Funds in the account, together with any accrued interest, are only available to the inmate:

- at the time of the inmate's release from confinement;
- prior to the inmate's release from confinement in order to secure approved housing; or
- when the Secretary of the Department of Corrections (Secretary) determines that an emergency exists for the inmate.

Upon his or her release, the inmate is entitled to all the funds in his or her account. If the Secretary determines that funds are to be made available to an inmate while he or she is incarcerated, the Secretary must determine the amount of funds to be made available to the inmate.

Summary of Bill:

During incarceration, funds in a personal inmate savings account may be made available to an inmate to pay for accredited postsecondary educational expenses. Prior to release, inmate savings funds may be used for department-approved re-entry activities that promote successful community reintegration.

The Secretary must establish guidelines for the release of funds from an account giving consideration to the inmate's need for resources at the time of his or her release from confinement.

Obsolete language requiring the Department of Corrections to expand correctional industries and report by stated deadlines is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2010.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill expands the uses of the monies in the inmate personal savings account for accredited post-secondary education and department-approved re-entry programs.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Regala, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.