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**State Government, Elections &  
Information Technology Committee**

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**HB 2818**

**Brief Description:** Concerning the appointment of religious coordinators.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Frame, Irwin, Chapman, Senn, Sells, Sawyer, Appleton, Fitzgibbon, Macri and Stanford.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Changes the employee title "chaplain" for institutions under the Department of Correction (DOC) and the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to "religious coordinator."
- Expands the housing allowance provided to "chaplains" to also include "religious coordinators."

**Hearing Date:** 1/30/18

**Staff:** Travis Yonker (786-7383).

**Background:**

The Department of Correction (DOC) and Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) appoint institutional chaplains for the custodial, correctional, and mental institutions under their jurisdiction, to meet the religious needs of inmates and residents of other institutions. Chaplains serve as religious program coordinators for all faith groups. Every chaplain must have qualifications consistent with community standards of the faith group to which the chaplain belongs.

A minister or other clergyperson employed as a chaplain in a state institution or agency may receive, in addition to his or her gross salary, a housing allowance as follows:

- the rental value of a home furnished to the person; or

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- a housing allowance paid to the person as part of his or her compensation, in an amount equal to the rent or expense of the home, but not more than 40 percent of the person's gross salary.

**Summary of Bill:**

The employee title "chaplain," as used by the DOC and the DSHS, is changed to "religious coordinator." The housing allowance for chaplains is expanded to cover "religious coordinators."

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 29, 2018.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.