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**HOUSE BILL 1751**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2023 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Couture, Walsh, Robertson, Stokesbary, Caldier, Griffey, Jacobsen, Volz, Abbarno, Graham, Schmidt, Orcutt, and Chambers

AN ACT Relating to siting of sex offender and sexually violent predator facilities; and amending RCW 71.09.099, 71.09.250, and 72.09.290.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

**Sec.**  RCW 71.09.099 and 2021 c 236 s 10 are each amended to read as follows:

To facilitate the primary role of the department in identifying less restrictive alternative placements under RCW 71.09.090 and discharge planning under RCW 71.09.080, subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department shall conduct a study to explore the development of conditional release and transition facilities, which may include community-based state-operated living alternatives similar to the state-operated living alternative program operated by the developmental disabilities administration. Any facilities or placements developed under this section may be identified through a request for proposal process or through direct state acquisition and development. The department shall notify the superior court in any county where a conditional release and transition facility is considered, and shall consider the superior court's recommendation on the facility siting before entering into any contract. Any contracts with facilities or placements entered into under this section shall include a provision requiring oversight by the department to ensure the programs are operating appropriately.

**Sec.**  RCW 71.09.250 and 2021 c 236 s 9 are each amended to read as follows:

(1)(a) The secretary is authorized to site, construct, occupy, and operate (i) a secure community transition facility on McNeil Island for persons authorized to petition for a less restrictive alternative under RCW 71.09.090(1) and who are conditionally released; and (ii) a special commitment center on McNeil Island with up to four hundred four beds as a total confinement facility under this chapter, subject to appropriated funding for those purposes. The secure community transition facility shall be authorized for the number of beds needed to ensure compliance with the orders of the superior courts under this chapter and the federal district court for the western district of Washington. The total number of beds in the secure community transition facility shall be limited to 24, consisting of up to 15 transitional beds and up to nine pretransitional beds. The residents occupying the transitional beds shall be the only residents eligible for transitional services occurring in Pierce county. In no event shall more than 15 residents of the secure community transition facility be participating in off-island transitional, educational, or employment activity at the same time in Pierce county. The department shall provide the Pierce county sheriff, or his or her designee, with a list of the 15 residents so designated, along with their photographs and physical descriptions, and the list shall be immediately updated whenever a residential change occurs. The Pierce county sheriff, or his or her designee, shall be provided an opportunity to confirm the residential status of each resident leaving McNeil Island.

(b) For purposes of this subsection, "transitional beds" means beds only for residents who are judged by a qualified expert to be suitable to leave the island for treatment, education, and employment.

(2)(a) The secretary is authorized to site, either within the secure community transition facility established pursuant to subsection (1)(a)(i) of this section, or within the special commitment center, up to nine pretransitional beds.

(b) Residents assigned to pretransitional beds shall not be permitted to leave McNeil Island for education, employment, treatment, or community activities in Pierce county.

(c) For purposes of this subsection, "pretransitional beds" means beds for residents whose progress toward a less secure residential environment and transition into more complete community involvement is projected to take substantially longer than a typical resident of the special commitment center.

(3) Notwithstanding RCW 36.70A.103 or any other law, this statute preempts and supersedes local plans, development regulations, permitting requirements, inspection requirements, and all other laws as necessary to enable the secretary to site, construct, occupy, and operate a secure community transition facility on McNeil Island and a total confinement facility on McNeil Island.

(4) To the greatest extent possible, until June 30, 2003, persons who were not civilly committed from the county in which the secure community transition facility established pursuant to subsection (1) of this section is located may not be conditionally released to a setting in that same county less restrictive than that facility.

(5) As of June 26, 2001, the state shall immediately cease any efforts in effect on such date to site secure community transition facilities, other than the facility authorized by subsection (1) of this section, and shall instead site such facilities in accordance with the provisions of this section.

(6) The department must:

(a) Identify the minimum and maximum number of secure community transition facility beds in addition to the facility established under subsection (1) of this section that may be necessary for the period of May 2004 through May 2007 and provide notice of these numbers to all counties by August 31, 2001; ((~~and~~))

(b) Develop and publish policy guidelines for the siting and operation of secure community transition facilities; and

(c) Notify the superior court in any county where a community transition facility is proposed.

(7)(a) The total number of secure community transition facility beds that may be required to be sited in a county between June 26, 2001, and June 30, 2008, may be no greater than the total number of persons civilly committed from that county, or detained at the special commitment center under a pending civil commitment petition from that county where a finding of probable cause had been made on April 1, 2001. The total number of secure community transition facility beds required to be sited in each county between July 1, 2008, and June 30, 2015, may be no greater than the total number of persons civilly committed from that county or detained at the special commitment center under a pending civil commitment petition from that county where a finding of probable cause had been made as of July 1, 2008.

(b) Counties and cities that provide secure community transition facility beds above the maximum number that they could be required to site under this subsection are eligible for a bonus grant under the incentive provisions in RCW 71.09.255. The county where the special commitment center is located shall receive this bonus grant for the number of beds in the facility established in subsection (1) of this section in excess of the maximum number established by this subsection.

(c) No secure community transition facilities in addition to the one established in subsection (1) of this section may be required to be sited in the county where the special commitment center is located until after June 30, 2008, provided however, that the county and its cities may elect to site additional secure community transition facilities and shall be eligible under the incentive provisions of RCW 71.09.255 for any additional facilities meeting the requirements of that section.

(8) After the department demonstrates the need for additional bed capacity to the appropriate committees of the legislature, and receives approval from the superior court in the county where the community transition facility is proposed, and receives approval and funding from the appropriate committees of the legislature to build additional bed capacity, the state is authorized to site and operate secure community transition facilities and other conditional release and transitional facilities in any county in the state in accordance with RCW 71.09.315. In identifying potential counties and sites within a county for the location of a secure community transition facility or other conditional release and transitional facilities, the department shall work with and assist local governments to provide for the equitable distribution of such facilities. In coordinating and deciding upon the siting of secure community transition facilities or other conditional release and transitional facilities within a county, great weight shall be given by the county and cities within the county to:

(a) The number and location of existing residential facility beds operated by the department of corrections or the mental health division of the department of social and health services in each jurisdiction in the county; and

(b) The number of registered sex offenders classified as level II or level III and the number of sex offenders registered as homeless residing in each jurisdiction in the county.

(9)(a) "Equitable distribution" means siting or locating secure community transition facilities and other conditional release and transitional facilities in a manner that will not cause a disproportionate grouping of similar facilities either in any one county, or in any one jurisdiction or community within a county, as relevant; and

(b) "Jurisdiction" means a city, town, or geographic area of a county in which distinct political or judicial authority may be exercised.

**Sec.**  RCW 72.09.290 and 2007 c 483 s 303 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) No later than July 1, 2007, and every biennium thereafter starting with the biennium beginning July 1, 2009, the department shall prepare a list of counties and rural multicounty geographic areas in which work release facilities, community justice centers and other community-based correctional facilities are anticipated to be sited during the next three fiscal years and transmit the list to the office of financial management, the superior court in the counties on the list, and the counties on the list. The list may be updated as needed.

(2) In preparing the list, the department shall make substantial efforts to provide for the equitable distribution of work release, community justice centers, or other community-based correctional facilities among counties. The department shall give great weight to the following factors in determining equitable distribution:

(a) The locations of existing residential facilities owned or operated by, or operated under contract with, the department in each county;

(b) The number and proportion of adult offenders sentenced to the custody or supervision of the department by the courts of the county or rural multicounty geographic area; ((~~and~~))

(c) The number of adult registered sex offenders classified as level II or III and adult sex offenders registered per thousand persons residing in the county; and

(d) The recommendation from the superior court in any county where a correctional facility is proposed.

(3) For purposes of this section, "equitable distribution" means siting or locating work release, community justice centers, or other community-based correctional facilities in a manner that reasonably reflects the proportion of offenders sentenced to the custody or supervision of the department by the courts of each county or rural multicounty geographic area designated by the department, and, to the extent practicable, the proportion of offenders residing in particular jurisdictions or communities within such counties or rural multicounty geographic areas. Equitable distribution is a policy goal, not a basis for any legal challenge to the siting, construction, occupancy, or operation of any facility anywhere in the state.

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