
**Community Safety, Justice, & Reentry
Committee**

HB 2210

Brief Description: Establishing a wild horse holding and training program at a state corrections center.

Sponsors: Representatives Dye, Couture, Graham, Fosse, Springer and Davis.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Department of Corrections (DOC) to conduct a feasibility study and develop a plan for implementing a wild horse training, holding, and farrier program at a state corrections center.
- Requires the DOC to submit a report and implementation plan to the Governor and the Legislature by November 1, 2024.

Hearing Date: 1/18/24

Staff: Lena Langer (786-7192).

Background:

Correctional Industries.

The Department of Corrections (DOC) has a voluntary work program that it operates through Correctional Industries (CI). The program is designed to maintain and expand work training programs to develop marketable job skills and increase successful reentry to the community. Programs include technical skills, service and manufacturing industries, and trade apprenticeship coaching. Some participants in CI work programs receive financial compensation for their work, while others are performed without financial compensation for the benefit of the community. Any wages or gratuities that a person may earn in a work program are subject to tax and other

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various deductions depending on the industry classification.

Federal Bureau of Land Management Wild Horse and Burro Program.

The United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Wild Horse and Burro Program manages and protects wild horses and burros on 26.9 million acres of public lands across ten western states. The federal Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 authorizes the BLM to remove excess wild horses and burros from the range to sustain the health and productivity of public lands.

Arizona Wild Horse Inmate Program.

In 2012, Arizona Correctional Industries and the BLM partnered to create the Wild Horse Inmate Program (WHIP), where incarcerated individuals learn how to tame and domesticate wild horses and burros obtained from the BLM so they can be offered for adoption. WHIP employs a staff of professional horse trainers who provide horsemanship, animal husbandry, and farrier skills. The training facility is located within the prison, and horses and burros are fed and cared for in a holding center across from the prison complex.

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Corrections (DOC), through Correctional Industries, must conduct a feasibility study and develop a plan to implement a wild horse training, holding, and farrier program in partnership with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) at a state corrections center. The DOC must complete the study and submit a report and implementation plan to the Governor and the Legislature by November 1, 2024.

To develop an implementation plan, the DOC must consult with the BLM, and the Department of Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture, Walla Walla Community College, Washington State University, other appropriate federal and state agencies, local governments, and experts in wild horse management and training.

In developing the implementation plan, the DOC must:

- use natural horsemanship as the basis for gentling and training;
- evaluate and consult with similar programs in other states;
- develop design and construction options for holding and training program facilities;
- determine the costs to establish and maintain the operations, facilities, and staff;
- evaluate the availability of land and water necessary to support the program;
- evaluate steps necessary to partner with Walla Walla Community College to establish a farrier certificate course to be completed in conjunction with the wild horse training program;
- consult with Washington State University regarding whether the College of Veterinary Medicine may have students practice care at the training and holding facilities; and
- assess whether there are any changes to state statutes or DOC policies necessary for implementation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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