

Enable Youth to Have Successful Reentry

Sponsors: Senator Raoul & Representatives Turner-Reboletti-Collins-Bellock

**SB 1725,
as Amended**

What this Bill Does:

As amended, this bill specifies that the **Juvenile Justice Commission “develop recommendations to ensure the effective reintegration of youth offenders** into communities to which they are returning.” The bill specifies that the Commission provide **a report on juveniles who have been the subject of parole revocation by September 30, 2009.** Thereafter, **information concerning technical parole violators and recommendations concerning a tracking system and outcome measures be included in the annual state report** to the Governor and General Assembly.

Reason for the Bill:

Currently, we lack basic data on youth reentry. Local community alternatives for low level offenders are far less costly than re-incarceration. The latest reported per capita cost to incarcerate one juvenile in the Department of Juvenile Justice is over \$70,000 per year. Although services provided through the Redeploy Illinois program are pre-incarceration instead of post-incarceration, many of the services would be similar and range in cost from \$2,500 to \$9,500 per youth per year.

This legislation charges the existing Juvenile Justice Commission with reporting information and developing recommendations on the effectiveness of the State’s juvenile reentry programming.

Current Juvenile Parole System:

The current parole system encompassed in the Department of Juvenile Justice is a “shared service” with the adult Department of Corrections. With the exception of the Cook County area, adult parole officers currently have a shared caseload of adults and juveniles.

This “shared service” also means a “shared philosophy” in terms of approach to returning juveniles to incarceration for “technical violations” to parole requirements. **Under the current system, juveniles are placed on parole until they reach the age of 21.**

Over 40% of confined youth in the Department of Juvenile Justice are technical parole violators. A new Chapin Hall report concludes that nearly one half of the youth released from youth prisons in IL from '96-'03 had little to no involvement with child services – received in effect no services, including education. Our challenge is how to ensure positive outcomes for youth upon reentry. The reported **repeat offending rate for youth returning to the Department of Juvenile Justice is 46%.**

Modeled after Federal Legislation:

Last year, HR5178 **Youth Reentry Improvement Act** of 2008 was introduced and is expected to be reintroduced this year in Congress. There is some expectation that there may be federal dollars to support youth reentry efforts in the future, just as there are currently federal dollars for adult reentry through the Second Chance Act. Senate Bill 1725 is modeled after the federal legislation and will create the underlying data necessary to support reform and put into place the tools – a tracking system & outcome measures – that are necessary to ensure effective reform.

Over a third of youth in the Department of Juvenile Justice are technical parole violators.

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