

Connecticut General Assembly



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November 27, 2007

TO: Senator Andrew McDonald and Representative Michael Lawlor

FROM: Michael Murphy and Emily Shepard

SUBJECT: Fiscal Estimate for Proposal #15

You wanted to know the fiscal impact of the fifteenth proposal submitted to the Judiciary Committee in response to its informational hearing held on September 11, 2007. Please see below for an analysis of this proposal, and don't hesitate to contact us if you have any further questions in this regard.

Proposal #15, AAC the Supervision of Certain Offenders

Summary

The bill would result in an annual cost estimated to be \$9.6 million - \$23.4 million to enhance supervision and expand services for certain offenders under probation supervision.

Probation Caseload

The bill requires adult probation officers supervising offenders under age 21 to maintain caseloads of no more than 30 clients. At present, there are 5,203 clients between the ages of 16 and 20 years old under active probation supervision (excluding 3,019 clients under administrative supervision or with outstanding warrants). Approximately 50 more probation officer positions would be needed, in addition to existing and budgeted positions, to maintain the caseload limits under the bill. The estimated annual cost of these additional positions is \$3.6 million including salaries, fringe benefits and expenses. An initial cost of about \$165,000 would be incurred to purchase equipment for these probation officers.

Mental Health Evaluations

The bill requires the Court Support Services Division (CSSD) of the Judicial Department to give each offender between the ages of 16 and 20 a mental health evaluation. The contractual cost for a juvenile mental health evaluation is \$616 per evaluation. The net annual increase in evaluations under the bill is estimated to be 2,602.¹ The annual cost to perform mental health evaluations under the bill is estimated to be \$1.6 million. In addition to the annualized cost of \$1.6 million, the CSSD would incur an initial year cost of \$3.2 million to provide mental health evaluations for each of the approximate 5,203 offenders under probation supervision currently.

Employment Program

In addition, the bill requires the Department of Labor to develop and fund an employment program for this same group of offenders. Of the 5,203 eligible offenders, assuming 50 percent are enrolled in accredited secondary or post-secondary educational programs, the cost for 2,600 offenders would range from \$4.4 million to \$18.2 million. Based on the cost of existing programs that provide life skills, social skills, and job training skills (which are currently limited in number)², the cost per offender is estimated between \$1,700 and \$7,000.

Reviewer: Alan Calandro

¹ This assumes that clients in this age group serve an average of two years on probation: $5,203 / 2 = 2,602$.

² There are currently two vocational programs utilized by the CSSD servicing younger offenders on probation.