

Senate Finance Subcommittee on Corrections

Budget Narrative

The Senate Finance Subcommittee on Correction has made the following budget recommendations to be submitted to the full Senate Finance Committee.

Starting with the FY00 Management Plan budget, the Subcommittee makes the following recommendations:

- 1. Office of the Commissioner**

Eliminate Program Coordinator	-57.8 General Funds
Eliminate AK Judicial Council Funding	-50.0 General Funds

The Program Coordinator was recently reclassified from a Range 23 to a range 17 and moved from Anchorage to Juneau. This leaves the Commissioners office with one Program Coordinator whose duty includes monitoring the state's compliance with all the requirements of the Cleary settlement. The Department will file to get out from under the Cleary settlement in August 2000.

The Third Draft Final Report of the Criminal Justice Assessment Commission was submitted on January 10, 2000. Further funding has not been justified.

- 2. Administrative Services**

Eliminate Program Coordinator	-76.4 General Funds
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The Program Coordinator in the Administrative Services Component is the Department's Legislative Liaison. While it's acknowledged that there may be some nominal delays in requests for information from the department, the Subcommittee determined the cost savings to the State would be worth the minor inconvenience.

- 3. Inmate Health Care**

Reduce funding for Nursing Services	-500.0 General Funds
Fund switch MHTAAR to GF/MH	-200.0 MHTAAR
Fund switch MHTAAR to GF/MH	+200.0 GF/MH

The Inmate Health Care Component was budgeted 2.4 Million in Personal Services for Nurses. It also includes funding for Nine (9) Psych Nurses, Fifteen (15) Mental Health Clinicians, Seven (7) Licensed Prac Nurses, Eleven (11) Health Practitioners, and One (1) Psych Nurse Asst. IV. In addition to this cadre of Health Care Professionals, the Department also contracted out with MedSearch for 2.1 Million in Nurse Services. The Subcommittee recommends the Department review it's Health Care expenses and try to identify and eliminate inefficiencies and over-utilization of services.

The 200.0 fund switch from MHTAAR Funds to General Funds/Mental Health completes the transfer of funding for the Hiland Mountain Women's Psychiatric Unit for MHTAAR to GF/MH

4. Institution Director's Office

Increase Federal Manday Billings +75.0 Federal Funds

The Subcommittee recommends the approval of 75.0 Federal Funds requested to cover increased manday coverage provided to federal agencies. These new manday funds will be transferred via RSA to institutions where the increased services impact prisoner operations, as necessary.

5. Correctional Centers

Reduce funding for:

Anvil Mountain	-66.6 General Funds
Combined Hiland Mountain	-124.7 General Funds
Cook Inlet	-138.8 General Funds
Fairbanks	-116.5 General Funds
Ketchikan	-43.8 General Funds
Lemon Creek	-100.5 General Funds
Mat-Su	-43.7 General Funds
Palmer	-141.2 General Funds
Sixth Avenue	-60.9 General Funds
Spring Creek	-231.0 General Funds
Wildwood	-138.1 General Funds
Yukon-Kuskokwim	-66.0 General Funds
Community Jails	-80.7 General funds

Over half of the Department of Corrections budget is directed toward correctional center operations. By spreading a modest 1.7% reduction across the thirteen prison and jail components, each superintendent is given the latitude and incentive to reduce waste, improve efficiency and increase self pay proposals without jeopardizing public safety or compromising institutional security and inmate programs. The reduction should also serve as a stimulus to reduce institutional inmate populations in favor of less costly community based programs such as CRC's and 3rd party release for appropriate offenders.

6. Probation

Reduce funding for:

Northern Region	-41.9 General Funds
Southcentral Region	-80.0 General Funds
Southeast Region	-16.4 General Funds

The goal of the Subcommittee is to reduce the Department's field services budget by 1.7%. The Director of Community Corrections should manage this reduction by management efficiency, waste reduction, overtime control and realistic vacancy factors.

The Subcommittee has confidence this goal can be achieved without compromise to public safety.

- 7. Out-of-State Contractual**
Decrease Arizona Contract -1,155.0 General Funds

In light of the latest Inmate Population data, the Subcommittee recommends that the FY01 contract with the private provider in Arizona be reduced by 1,155.0 General Funds.

- 8. Alternative Housing**
Reduce funding for increased staff -30.0 General Funds

The Subcommittee recommends that the corrections officers utilize inmate labor to erect tents at Palmer Correctional Center.

- 9. VPSO Parole Supervision Program**
Continue funding for VPSO +95.0 General Funds

Offender supervision in rural villages without a DOC presence has been a significant threat to village public safety. The pilot VPSO parole supervision program has successfully mitigated the risk to the public in these remote areas. The Subcommittee urges the Department to expand this program and measure the results during the next fiscal year for possible statewide application.

- 10. White Bison Program**
Funding for White Bison +65.0 General Funds

While Alaska's indigenous native peoples represent roughly 17% of the general population, over 33% of the prison inmate population are Native Alaskan. Prior studies and commissions have determined that alcohol plays a substantive role in over 98% of these arrests. Yet conventional alcohol treatment models appear to be ineffective with Native Alaskans. The White Bison program has a demonstrated success rate with these populations as a culturally relevant, native focused 12 step program. The White Bison Program will give the native cultural clubs ownership of this sobriety program and it will be open to all inmates. The Subcommittee intends that the Department's Rural Affairs Coordinator oversee implementation of this program as a means of reducing recidivism of offenders.