3/29/15 4:25 P.M.

Chapter No. 424
15/HR40/R937SG
Yd / fc

HOUSE BILL NO. 602

Originated in House _____ Clerk

HOUSE BILL NO. 602

AN ACT TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI RE-ENTRY COUNCIL; TO DESCRIBE THE PURPOSE OF SUCH COUNCIL; TO PROVIDE THAT A STEERING COMMITTEE SHALL LEAD THE COUNCIL; TO LIST THE MEMBERS OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE; TO PROVIDE THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE; TO PROVIDE THE LIST OF THE DUTIES FOR THE STEERING COMMITTEE; TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC DEFENDERS TASK FORCE; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. (1) There is created the Mississippi Re-Entry Council. The purpose of the council is to create effective strategies to assist former inmates in their return to the general population, to reduce the recidivism rates of inmates, to increase public safety, and to reduce budgetary constraints presently created by prison-related costs. The Re-Entry Council shall be led by a steering committee.

(2) The Re-Entry Council Steering Committee shall be composed of the following twelve (12) members, who shall serve for two-year terms:

(a) A Mississippi United States Attorney, or a designee appointed by the Governor;

(b) The Commissioner of the Mississippi Department of Corrections, or a designee;

(c) The Attorney General of the State of Mississippi, or a designee;

(d) The director of a faith-based organization involved in re-entry programs, or a designee appointed by the Lieutenant Governor;

(e) The Chief Probation Officer of the United States District Courts of Mississippi, or a designee;

(f) A Mississippi United States District Judge, or a designee appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(g) The Chief Justice of the Mississippi Supreme Court, or a designee;

(h) The Executive Director for the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, or a designee;

(i) The Executive Director for the Mississippi Division of Medicaid, or a designee;

(j) The Chairman of the Parole Board, or a designee;

(k) A person who is a former offender appointed by the Chairman of the Parole Board; and

(l) The Director of the Mississippi Department of Employment Security, or a designee.

(3) The Re-Entry Council Steering Committee shall have the following duties:

(a) To consider development of a statewide approach to assist re-entry of former inmates into the general population of this state;

(b) To provide recommendations regarding evidence-based approaches that equip inmates with the requisite, individualized resources to promote their successful return to the general population of this state;

(c) To review reports, studies, and materials as it deems appropriate;

(d) To appoint such subcommittees as it finds proper;

(e) To study proposed legislation that seeks to resolve recidivism;

(f) To submit recommendations from its findings to the Legislature, the Governor and the Mississippi Supreme Court. In making such recommendations, the Re-entry Council Steering Committee will seek input from all branches of state and local government, governmental agencies, businesses and nonprofit organizations throughout this state;

(g) To seek and receive grants;

(h) To hire contract personnel and/or staff using any grants received; and

(i) To collaborate with the coordinator of the transitional re-entry center, under the supervision of the Mississippi Department of Corrections, which shall provide administrative support to the council.

(4) The Chief Justice of the Mississippi Supreme Court shall call the first meeting of the steering committee. At its first meeting, the steering committee shall elect a chairman and vice chairman from its membership and adopt rules for transacting its business and keeping records. Officers shall serve one-year terms or until such time as a successor is elected.

SECTION 2. (1) There is created the Mississippi Public Defender Task Force which shall be composed of thirteen (13) members as follows:

(a) The President of the Mississippi Public Defender Association, or his designee;

(b) The President of the Mississippi Prosecutors Association, or his designee;

(c) A representative of the Administrative Office of Courts;

(d) A representative of the Mississippi Supreme Court;

(e) A representative of the Conference of Circuit Judges;

(f) A representative of the Mississippi Attorney General's Office;

(g) A representative of the Mississippi Association of Supervisors;

(h) A representative of The Mississippi Bar;

(i) A representative of the Magnolia Bar Association;

(j) The Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Division B, or his designee;

(k) The Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, or his designee;

(l) The Chairman of the House Judiciary En Banc Committee, or his designee;

(m) The Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, or his designee.

(2) At its first meeting, the task force shall elect a chairman and vice chairman from its membership and shall adopt rules for transacting its business and keeping records. Members of the task force shall receive a per diem in the amount provided in Section 25-3-69 for each day engaged in the business of the task force. Members of the task force other than the legislative members shall receive reimbursement for travel expenses incurred while engaged in official business of the task force in accordance with Section 25-3-41 and the legislative members of the task force shall receive the expense allowance provided for in Section 5-1-47.

(3) The duties of the task force shall be to:

(a) Make a comprehensive study of the needs by circuit court districts for state-supported indigent defense counsel to examine existing public defender programs, including indigent defense provided in the youth courts. Reports shall be provided

to the Legislature each year at least one (1) month before the convening of the regular session.

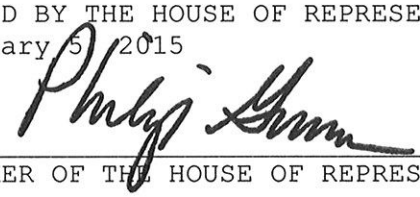
(b) Examine and study approaches taken by other states in the implementation and costs of state-supported indigent criminal and delinquency cases.

(c) To study the relationship between presiding circuit and youth court judges and the appointment of criminal and delinquency indigent defense counsel.

(4) This section shall stand repealed on July 1, 2018.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage.

PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
February 5, 2015



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PASSED BY THE SENATE
March 25, 2015

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNOR

3/29/15
4:25 pm