

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE BILL ANALYSIS

AMENDMENT DATE: Original
POSITION: Oppose

BILL NUMBER: SB 1555
AUTHOR: S. Kuehl

BILL SUMMARY: Older Prisoners

This bill would require the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to implement various programmatic changes related to elderly inmates, as specified.

FISCAL SUMMARY

This bill would result in increased costs to the CDCR. The CDCR estimates that there are currently 22,683 inmates over the age of 55, and the cost of creating a new identification card is \$10 per inmate. The cost of creating 22,683 cards would be \$227,000.

The CDCR estimates the cost of providing clerical and custody coverage for Inmate Advocacy Councils would be \$50,000 per year. The CDCR has estimated the cost of implementing an elder helper position to be \$50,000 per year. The cost of implementing age-appropriate programs would be \$1,200,000 per year in order to hire an instructor that specializes in geriatrics at each adult facility. The cost of ensuring elderly inmates complete the application for public programs upon release would be \$1,200,000 per year for social workers at 16 institutions. The cost of implementing a training program for dealing with elderly prisoners for custody staff is expected to be \$1,500,000 per year.

COMMENTS

Finance is opposed to this measure because it would create additional General Fund costs which are not included in the 2008-09 Governor's Budget. We would also note that the CDCR has security concerns over allowing elderly inmates to leave their cells first, to have priority access in lines, to walk the shortest route to any destination, or to remain standing during alarms without giving consideration to the individual inmate's custody level or discipline history. The CDCR has also raised concerns over giving priority in programming to elderly inmates without considering the inmate's skills, behavior, or credit earning status. Finally, the CDCR asserts that all the provisions of this bill could be implemented without additional legislation.

Under current law, the Secretary of the CDCR is responsible for the supervision, management, and control of California prisoners. The Secretary is also responsible for the care, custody, treatment, training, discipline, and employment of those prisoners. The Secretary may prescribe or amend rules and regulations for the administration of the prisons.

This bill would require the CDCR to:

- Implement an elder identification card program for inmates 55 years and older.
Allow inmates who possess this card to leave the cell and housing unit before other prisoners so that the elderly inmates will have priority access to the dinning halls, pill lines, or commissary.
Allow elderly inmates to walk the shortest routes to a given destination.
Allow elderly inmates to be exempt from getting down on the ground during alarms.
Implement an elder work policy which would allow elderly inmates to participate in a modified work program consisting of age-appropriate job.
Create an elder helper job assignment for younger inmates, as specified.

Analyst/Principal Date Program Budget Manager Date
(0292) J. Osborn Todd Jerue

Department Deputy Director Date

Governor's Office: By: Date: Position Approved
Position Disapproved

BILL ANALYSIS Form DF-43 (Rev 03/95 Buff)

AUTHOR**AMENDMENT DATE****BILL NUMBER**

S. Kuehl

Original

SB 1555

- Create an Aging Prisoner Subcommittee.
- Implement age appropriate programming for elderly inmates.
- Provide pre-release assistance to help elderly inmates apply for public assistance programs.
- Implement training for custody and health staff on working with elderly prisoners.

This bill would also require the Governor to appoint an ombudsperson with expertise in gerontology to monitor the CDCR's implementation of elderly policies.

Code/Department Agency or Revenue Type	(Fiscal Impact by Fiscal Year)										
	SO	PROP			FC			FC		Fund	
	LA	CO	RV	98	FC	2007-2008	FC	2008-2009	FC	2009-2010	Code
5225/Corr & Rehab	SO	No	C			\$0	C	\$4,527	C	\$4,300	0001