

These minutes contain materials which paraphrase and/or summarize statements made during this session. Only text enclosed in quotation marks

report a speaker's exact words. For complete contents of the proceedings, please refer to the tapes.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

April 10, 1991
p.m. Tapes 56-57

11Hearing Room F 1:30

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rep. Carolyn Oakley, Chair Rep. Vera Katz,
Vice-Chair Rep. Delna Jones Rep. Mike Nelson Rep. Bob Pickard Rep. Walt Schroeder

MEMBER EXCUSED: Rep. Bruce Hugo

STAFF PRESENT: Lee Penny, Committee Administrator Carolynn Gillson, Committee Assistant

MEASURES CONSIDERED: HB 2816 - Limits inmate participation in higher ed programs - PUB HB 3437 - Modifies duties of Administrator of Correctional Education - PUB

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TAPE 56, SIDE A

005REP. CAROLYN OAKLEY, chair: Calls the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

HB 2816 - Prohibits inmates from participating in any formal higher educational programs except during last three years of imprisonment
Public Hearing Witnesses: Denis Dodd, Department of Corrections (DOC)
Shannon DeLateur, Department of Corrections Mike Holland, Office of Community College Services (OCCS) Fred Pearce, Department of Corrections
Rep. Larry Sowa April Reid

009 DENIS DODD, assistant director, Institutions Branch, Oregon Department of Corrections: Reviews his testimony explaining why the Department is opposed to HB 2816 (EXHIBIT A).

CHAIR OAKLEY: Are all inmates who would like to participate, able to do so?

DODD: All inmates in general population where college programs are offered have an opportunity to participate in those programs. > This bill would reduce the number of inmates who are actually involved in the programs. It would probably fiscally impact the Department of Higher Education more.

038 REP. KATZ: What percent of the inmates are high school graduates or functionally illiterate?

DODD: Somewhere between 40 and 50 percent.

047 SHANNON DeLATEUR, acting administrator for Correctional Education: Between 20 and 30 percent of the inmates coming in with GEDs or high school diplomas are functionally illiterate.

061 REP. NELSON: What percentage of prison inmates are enrolled in formal higher education programs?

DODD: Over the past biennium, approximately 500 inmates in total have participated in college programs at some time. The instructors are higher education instructors who come to the prison facility. > The cost per student per term to the Department of Higher Education is \$312. The total cost is \$322,000 per year.

095 REP. SCHROEDER: Wasn't there a bill in the 1989 session where the local districts did not have to pay all the costs for the community college courses?

099 MIKE HOLLAND, commissioner, Office of Community College Services: The bill was regarding contracted out-of-district services that community colleges provide outside of their regular established districts. The bill said correctional education programs would be treated like contracted out-of-district programs and require that those programs be supported by state and federal dollars and not the obligation of local taxpayers. The costs to community colleges to provide support for these programs is around \$700,000 in general fund money.

130 CHAIR OAKLEY: How many classes does each inmate take?

DeLATEUR: There is a mix of full-time and part-time students. The average is around 9 credit hours.

REP. KATZ: How much high school education do you provide in the corrections system?

DeLATEUR: We only do high school completion if the inmates request. We have a GED and high school diploma program.

REP. KATZ: What if we mandated a high school education for all inmates?

178 FRED PEARCE, director, Department of Corrections: HB 3437 mandates, within the first 90 days of their stay, those inmates who are found to be below a certain level when tested must participate in a literacy program. > Gives more detail about the program.

REP. KATZ: Are you still not mandating treatment for drug and alcohol abuse?

PEARCE: It is still a voluntary program. We will direct inmates to go to it. Failure to do so will result in loss of earned time.

243 CHAIR OAKLEY: To take the higher ed classes, do inmates have to have either a high school diploma or a GED?

PEARCE: Yes.

245 REP. NELSON: How are alcohol and drug programs funded?

PEARCE: Currently, they are not included in Governor's budget. There is a great deal of effort going on to locate funds.

277 HOLLAND: Some of the higher educational programs offered in the institutions are often Developmental Education Programs that do not require a high school diploma or GED.

REP. KATZ: What percent of the inmates are receiving a college program, a high school program and or a GED program. Where is the priority placed?

DeLATEUR: Greatest percentage are in GED.

337 REP. SCHROEDER: Are remedial classes considered higher ed?

HOLLAND: For the most part, we are talking about community college programs in these institutions.

375 REP. LARRY SOWA, District 26: I introduced the bill because the issue of prison education needs to be addressed. > Reviews what the bill does.

401 APRIL REID, college student: Reviews her testimony in support of the bill and explaining why she requested it be introduced (EXHIBIT B).

TAPE 57, SIDE A

017 REP. KATZ: Would you agree we need to give more priority to a high school education and GED programs before talking about higher ed classes?

REID: Definitely.

HB 3437 - Modifies duties and authority of Administrator of Correctional Education Public Hearing Witnesses: Rep. Tom Brian Fred Pearce, Department of Corrections (DOC) Mike Holland, Office of Community College Services (OCCS) Shannon DeLateur, Department of Corrections Donna Lane, Office of Community College Services Gayle Gasner, Chemeketa Community College

036 REP. TOM BRIAN, District 9: Gives the committee background on what lead up to the bill. > Functional literacy ought to be our first educational goal in the institutional system. About 41 percent of the inmates are functionally illiterate. > Talks about lack of an educational plan for inmates. > Reviews what the bill does. > The greatest opportunity for an inmate would be for them to come out of the institution being able to read and write. > Bill emphasizes functional literacy. Those not passing a screening examination will be required to participate in 90 days of instruction on functional literacy.

123 CHAIR OAKLEY: What happens after the 90 days of instruction?

BRIAN: They can voluntarily stay in the program. > Talks about incentive programs in other states. > A plan for vocational training in an area where jobs are available is included in the educational plan. > Reviews Section 4 of the bill explaining that current correctional education employes will still have their jobs. > Points out parts of the bill that need further work. Refers to -5 amendment (EXHIBIT C). > Not requesting funding, only realigning current funding. > Do require a contract between DOC and community colleges. > May be able to use money from the inmate welfare fund. Propose reprioritizing existing general fund money for literacy classes and use the inmates own money to fund two and four year degree classes. > Delete the language bracketed on page 2 of the handengrossed amendment.

276 REP. JONES: Is there a reason for adding "citizens of the United States" on page 3 of the handengrossed version of the bill?

FRED PEARCE: We currently have around 200 inmates that are not citizens of this country.

BRIAN: Unless there is a good reason to keep (d) on page 3, I would support deleting it.

331 REP. SCHROEDER: Suggests keeping people incarcerated at least long enough to take the 90- day literacy course.

BRIAN: The turn-around time for some inmates is so short they are still illiterate when released.

REP. KATZ: Literacy should be the first priority, second a high school diploma or GED and finally the college diploma. Possible to shift dollars to deal with those priorities.

BRIAN: Explains how it has already been done.

421 PEARCE: Expresses support of the bill. > Current language in the bill assures current employes they will not be displaced. > My policy has been to contract with local community colleges for all the programs. > Only in the medium and maximum security institutions are college level courses provided. > Plan to provide literacy and GED classes in the evenings.

TAPE 56, SIDE B

025 MIKE HOLLAND: Talks about the relationship between community colleges and the DOC. > Literacy will become a bigger priority. > Talks about better coordination of education between the different institutions for inmates who are transferred. > Lists other areas that need attention in order to have a well-organized integrated education program.

078 SHANNON DeLATEUR, Corrections Education: Talks about the relationship with OCCS and what needs to be done to get the programs going.

107 DONNA LANE: Reviews written testimony (EXHIBIT D) concerning recommendations from the Joint Planning and Development Team for Corrections Education Planning and Development Team that will be abolished by HB 3437. > Refers to corrections reading and math assessments included with her testimony. > Explains the National Adult Education bill has language in it that is similar to HB 3427. > Approximately 42 percent of the 2,536 inmates tested upon entering the institutions have no high school diploma; 31 percent have a GED, 22 percent have a high school diploma, and 5 percent have some college. Eighty percent were dropouts.

171 REP. KATZ: What grades did they drop out of?

LANE: The majority in the third, fourth and fifth grades.

REP. NELSON: Is there any hard data on other states that teach basic literacy in the prisons system and does it reduce recidivism?

BRIAN: No one has done any longitudinal tracking. Oregon could do tracking in three to five years.

205 GAYLE GASNER, director of corrections education, Chemeketa Community College: Wonders why the state should pursue a mandatory functional literacy program without incentives for the inmates when it has not been able to provide adequately for the educational needs of voluntary inmate students.

REP. KATZ: Is this because you don't believe mandating education for adults or you believe inmates have rights?

GASNER: I believe inmates do have rights. > Refers to three efforts on the part of prison education professionals. > Need to strengthen incentives if there is mandatory language in the bill.

Testimony in support of HB 2437 was submitted by Denis Dowd, assistant director/Institutions Branch, DOC (EXHIBIT E).

282 CHAIR OAKLEY: Adjourns meeting at 2:55 p.m.

Submitted by: Reviewed by:

Carolynn GillsonLee Penny Assistant Administrator

EXHIBIT LOG:

A - Testimony on HB 2816 - Denis Dowd - 1 page B - Testimony
on HB 2816 - April Reid - 2 pages C - Amendments to HB 3437 - Rep.
Brian - 5 pages D-Testimony on HB 3437 - Donna Lane - 5 pages
E-Testimony on HB 3437 - Denis Dowd - 1 page