

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009**

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HOUSE BILL 1026

Short Title: Expand Chemical Dependency Treatment Beds. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Sutton, Yongue, Pierce (Primary Sponsors); and Insko.

Referred to: Appropriations.

April 6, 2009

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION FOR
EXPANSION OF MALE CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY TREATMENT BEDS.

Whereas, the State of North Carolina has an interest in promoting the treatment of inmates with alcohol and drug dependencies; and

Whereas, drug and alcohol dependency disorders represent a serious and costly health problem for the citizens of North Carolina; and

Whereas, certain programs are effective in the treatment of inmates with drug and alcohol addiction, therefore reducing recidivism; and

Whereas, substance abuse problems drive many rearrests; and

Whereas, inmates who are provided intensive treatment and have the opportunity to be enrolled in skills training and work release programs are less likely to return to prison; and

Whereas, empirical data suggest that 64% of inmates have a substance dependency problem and are incarcerated because of crimes related to drugs or alcohol; and

Whereas, programs designed to provide intensive treatment combined with skills training, the teaching of life-learning skills, and the provision of employment opportunities allow offenders the opportunity to develop sound workplace skills; and

Whereas, these efforts can lead to employment opportunities toward the latter part of offenders' sentences through which they can begin court-ordered restitution payments and repay a portion of the costs of incarceration; and

Whereas, prison population projections have increased, resulting in a need for additional beds, including minimum custody beds; and

Whereas, estimated construction costs for a minimum custody bed range from \$62,000 to \$83,000 per bed; and

Whereas, the Department of Correction is expected to request additional beds during the 2009 Regular Session of the General Assembly; and

Whereas, maximizing the existing capacity of male contractual drug treatment facilities will result in a cost avoidance of \$62,000 to \$83,000 per bed; Now, therefore, The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Correction the sum of one million nine hundred eleven thousand five hundred ninety-six dollars (\$1,911,596) for the 2009-2010 fiscal year and the sum of two million five hundred forty-eight thousand seven hundred ninety-five dollars (\$2,548,795) for the 2010-2011 year to maximize capacity and provide contractual intensive drug and alcohol rehabilitation treatment to male inmates who have been diagnosed as needing such treatment through the assessment tools used by the Department of Correction. It is expected that this appropriation shall reduce the need for construction of additional minimum custody beds required by the Department of Correction



1 through full utilization of contractual drug and alcohol treatment bed space currently available,
2 thereby providing an estimated cost avoidance of between six million two hundred thousand
3 dollars (\$6,200,000) and eight million three hundred thousand dollars (\$8,300,000) in
4 construction costs. Additionally, this appropriation shall be used to provide a skills component
5 and a work release component, to improve inmates' educational level, and to provide a family
6 component that improves parenting skills of inmates. Inmates assigned to such treatment shall
7 begin their program of treatment during their last 18 months to two years of incarceration.

8 **SECTION 2.** The Secretary of Correction shall review existing procedures to
9 monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of intensive treatment to inmates and the level and
10 quality of intensive treatment provided, the rate of recidivism, the inmates' efforts and
11 successes in improving their educational level and skills training, and income earned during
12 their last 12-18 months. The Secretary shall modify these procedures as necessary to ensure a
13 more thorough assessment of the treatment provided. A report shall be provided to the Speaker
14 of the House of Representatives, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Chairs of the
15 Senate and House of Representatives Appropriations Committees on Justice and Public Safety,
16 the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations, and the Fiscal Research
17 Division by May 1, 2010.

18 **SECTION 3.** This act shall not be construed to affect existing contracts with
19 providers of drug and alcohol rehabilitation to inmates.

20 **SECTION 4.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2009.