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H.476

Introduced by Representatives Connor of Fairfield, Burke of Brattleboro, Carr
of Brandon, Cina of Burlington, Conquest of Newbury,
Donovan of Burlington, Head of South Burlington, Hill of
Wolcott, LaLonde of South Burlington, Masland of Thetford,
McCullough of Williston, O’Sullivan of Burlington, Stevens of
Waterbury, Till of Jericho, Troiano of Stannard, Weed of
Enosburgh, and Yantachka of Charlotte

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Corrections; correctional facilities; treatment programming

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require the
Department of Corrections, in consultation with the Department of Mental
Health, to study and make recommendations for developing holistic treatment
programming at State correctional facilities for offenders in need of substance
abuse recovery treatment.

An act relating to treatment programming at correctional facilities

1 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

2 Sec. 1. TREATMENT PROGRAMMING AT CORRECTIONAL
3 FACILITIES; STUDY

4 (a) The Commissioner of Corrections, in consultation with the
5 Commissioner of Mental Health, shall study approaches to treatment in State
6 correctional facilities for offenders who are in need of substance abuse
7 recovery programming in order to provide a holistic approach to alcohol and
8 other drug treatment. The study shall include:

9 (1) a review of treatment regimens for inmates, including:

10 (A) screening by a medical and mental health professional upon entry
11 into a correctional facility;

12 (B) continuing preexisting prescriptions and medication treatments
13 during an inmate's incarceration;

14 (C) providing supportive and treatment-enhancing activities
15 throughout the inmate's incarceration, including use of case workers to assist
16 inmates with treatment during incarceration, recovery coaching, and certified
17 drug and alcohol counselors; and

18 (D) developing relationships with community providers once an
19 offender approaches release;

1 (2) ways to link treatment programming with increased secondary and
2 postsecondary educational opportunities, and job skills and training
3 opportunities; and

4 (3) opportunities to develop and use self-help peer groups to assist in
5 drug and alcohol treatment in maintaining abstinence.

6 (b) On or before December 1, 2017, the Department of Corrections shall
7 submit a report to the House Committees on Corrections and Institutions and
8 on Human Services, and the Senate Committees on Institutions and on Health
9 and Welfare on the findings of the study described in subsection (a) of this
10 section. The report shall include recommendations for legislative action to
11 implement new treatment programming based on the findings of the study.

12 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

13 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2017.