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H.760

Senator Sears moves that the Senate propose to the House that the bill be amended by striking out Sec. 70, effective date, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 70. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS; GRADUATED
SANCTIONS; REENTRY HOUSING; REPORT

(a) During the 2020 legislative interim, the Department of Corrections shall review and strengthen existing graduated sanctions and incentives policies to ensure they reflect current research on best practices for responses to violation behavior that most effectively achieve behavior change and uphold public safety. The Department shall also identify reentry housing needs for corrections populations. As a part of this work, the Department shall:

(1) Formalize the use of incentives and sanctions in supervision practices at a 4:1 ratio and require incentives to be entered and tracked in the community supervision case management system.

(2) Analyze how supervision staff currently understand, implement, and input data regarding the Department’s graduated sanctions policy to identify where practices differ across the State; where necessary, provide additional staff training on the use and tracking of graduated sanctions.

(3) Develop and implement a homeless screening tool for use when a person is booked into or released from Department facilities, and track reports

1 of homelessness among corrections populations in the Department's case
2 management system.

3 (4) Identify and quantify high utilizers of corrections, homeless, and
4 behavioral health services; inform statewide permanent supportive housing
5 planning; and establish data match partnerships with appropriate Agency of
6 Human Services departments to match Department of Corrections, Homeless
7 Management Information System (HMIS), and Medicaid information.

8 (5) Explore establishing a collaborative approach for the Department,
9 the Department of Mental Health, and the Vermont Department of Health to
10 contract with housing providers to coordinate responses for shared clients and
11 identify how the State can better leverage local and federal housing vouchers.

12 (6) Explore how the Department's contractors could leverage federal
13 Medicaid funding or other funding to allow the Department's contractors'
14 clients to stay in supportive housing after they are no longer under the
15 supervision of the Department.

16 (7) Reduce barriers to recovery housing by establishing evidence-based
17 norms and expectations for contracts and certifications for sober and recovery
18 housing providers, including allowing for the use of medications and
19 restricting evictions due to relapse.

20 (8) Explore opportunities to redefine housing requirements for
21 incarcerated persons in order to receive approval for furlough release.

1 (b)(1) On or before November 15, 2020, the Department shall report to the
2 Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee on:

3 (A) the Department’s plan to reduce its use of short-term
4 incarceration sanctions for people on furlough, the reduction in numbers of
5 short-term incarceration sanctions imposed, and the reduction in numbers of
6 graduated sanctions imposed; and

7 (B) the results of the Department’s work pursuant to subdivisions
8 (a)(3)–(8) of this section.

9 (2) On or before April 1, 2020, the Department shall report to the
10 Senate Committee on Judiciary, the House Committee on Corrections and
11 Institutions and the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations with a
12 status update on its progress towards completing the work required by this
13 section.

14 Sec. 71. EFFECTIVE DATES

15 This act shall take effect on passage, except that Sec. 70 shall take effect on
16 April 1, 2020.