

1 TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

2 The Committee on Ways and Means to which was referred House Bill  
3 No. 703 entitled “An act relating to promoting workforce development”  
4 respectfully reports that it has considered the same and recommends that the  
5 report of the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development be  
6 amended by striking out Sec. 6, justice-involved individuals; workforce  
7 development; pilot program, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new  
8 Sec. 6 to read as follows:

9 Sec. 6. INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS; WORKFORCE  
10 DEVELOPMENT; PILOT PROGRAM

11 (a) Purpose. The purpose of this section is to facilitate the education and  
12 vocational training of incarcerated individuals so that they have a greater  
13 likelihood of obtaining gainful employment and positively contributing to  
14 society upon reintegration into the community.

15 (b) Policy; appropriations.

16 (1)(A) In fiscal year 2023, the amount of \$420,000.00 is appropriated  
17 from the General Fund to the Department of Corrections to address education  
18 and vocational enhancement needs. These funds shall not be allocated from  
19 any amounts budgeted for Justice Reinvestment II initiatives.

20 (B) The Department shall use the funds allocated for the development  
21 of education and vocational training for incarcerated individuals residing in a

1 correctional facility prior to community reintegration. The Department may  
2 allocate the funds over three years, consistent with the following:

3 (i) \$270,000.00 for transition development, including equipment  
4 and mobile labs in one or more sites;

5 (ii) \$100,000.00 for training partner support; and

6 (iii) \$50,000.00 for curriculum development.

7 (2) In fiscal year 2023, the amount of \$300,000.00 is appropriated from  
8 the General Fund to the Department of Corrections, which may be allocated  
9 over not more than three years, to establish a community-based pilot reentry  
10 program at the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility. The Department  
11 shall designate a service provider to administer the pilot program's goals to:

12 (A) provide continuity of services for incarcerated individuals;

13 (B) expand current employment readiness programs within the  
14 facility by building pathways for coordinated transition to employment;

15 (C) focus on the first six months after individuals are released from  
16 the facility;

17 (D) coordinate with local community resources, parole and probation  
18 offices, and other supports to ensure successful transition into the community;

19 (E) assist individuals in successfully transitioning into new jobs; and

20 (F) work with employers to support successful hiring and best  
21 practices to support incarcerated individuals.

1        (c) Report. On or before January 15, 2023, the Department of Corrections  
2        shall create and submit a report on workforce and education training programs  
3        in correctional facilities to the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee;  
4        the House Committees on Corrections and Institutions and on Commerce and  
5        Economic Development; and the Senate Committees on Economic  
6        Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Judiciary. The report shall:

7            (1) identify program design, logistical needs, and policy changes to  
8            current Department of Corrections facility-based training and educational  
9            programs necessary to successfully enable incarcerated individuals’  
10          reintegration into their communities, including changes to programs that  
11          enhance individuals’ skill development, knowledge, and other support needed  
12          to qualify for and secure a position in a critical occupation in Vermont;

13            (2) identify disparities of outcomes and recommend solutions for  
14          incarcerated Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color concerning facility-based  
15          training, educational programming, and successful community reintegration;

16            (3) provide an update on the Department of Corrections’ use of  
17          education and vocational enhancement funding in fiscal year 2023;

18            (4) provide recommendations on what aspects of the pilot program  
19          should be replicated in other correctional facilities in Vermont; and

20            (5) provide recommended legislation for the continuation of the pilot  
21          program or any changes.

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4 (Committee vote: \_\_\_\_\_)

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Representative \_\_\_\_\_

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FOR THE COMMITTEE