
DIGEST

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HB 542 Engrossed

2023 Regular Session

Hughes

Abstract: Changes allocations of funds for criminal justice reinvestment.

Present law requires the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections (DPS&C) to calculate annual savings realized as a result of criminal justice reinvestment legislation enacted in the 2017 R.S. and thereafter.

Present law allocates the annual savings each fiscal year as follows:

- (1) 15% to DPS&C to award incentive grants to parishes, judicial districts, and nonprofit community partner organizations to expand evidence-backed prison alternatives and reduce admissions to the state prison system.
- (2) 10% to the La. Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Criminal Justice to award competitive grants for victim services.
- (3) 45% to the La. Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) for targeted investments in educational and vocational training aimed at recidivism reduction programing for adult and juvenile offenders. Proposed law further requires the La. Community and Technical College System to report to the legislature by Dec. 15th of each year.

Proposed law removes the allocation to the LCTCS and instead creates a separate special fund in the state treasury under the administration of LCTCS for the same purposes (the Reinvestment in Offender Education Fund, more fully described below). Further requires DPS&C to transfer at the beginning of each fiscal year, commencing with fiscal year 2024-2025, an amount equal to \$5,000,000 of DPS&C's criminal justice reinvestment savings to LCTCS for deposit into such fund.

Proposed law retains present law reporting requirement for LCTCS.

Proposed law designates LCTCS as the entity responsible for managing post-secondary education and vocational training for incarcerated persons. Requires LCTCS to enter into cooperative endeavor agreements with DPS&C and the La. Workforce Commission as necessary to accomplish this charge.

Proposed law further establishes the Reinvestment in Offender Education Fund (fund). Requires monies in the fund to be invested in the same manner as monies in the state general fund and that any interest earned on investment of fund monies be credited to the fund. Further requires

unexpended and unencumbered monies in the fund at the end of the fiscal year to remain in the fund. Requires monies in the fund to be appropriated to the Board of Supervisors of LCTCS for education and vocational training for incarcerated persons.

As described above, proposed law modifies how DPS&C and LCTCS realize criminal justice reinvestment savings. Proposed law further retains the provisions of present law relative to the continuous and reoccurring allocation of savings recognized in prior fiscal years and allocated to the office of juvenile justice, the La. Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice, and sheriffs' offices.

Effective July 1, 2023.

(Adds R.S. 15:827.3(C) and (D) and R.S. 17:1877; Repeals R.S. 15:827.3(A)(2)(c))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Appropriations to the original bill:

1. Remove prohibition on Dept. of Corrections carrying forward into future fiscal years aggregated savings realized as a result of criminal justice reinvestment legislation enacted in the 2017 R.S. and thereafter.
2. Require Dept. of Corrections, beginning FY 2024-2025 and thereafter, to transfer \$5,000,000 of such savings to the La. Community and Technical College System for deposit into the fund created pursuant to proposed law.
3. Make technical changes.