

SENATE, No. 2471

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
217th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JULY 29, 2016

Sponsored by:

Senator JAMES BEACH

District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes Service Dog Pilot Program for inmates in Camden County.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



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1 AN ACT establishing a Service Dog Pilot Program for inmates in
2 Camden County and making an appropriation.

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4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

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7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that service dogs improve
8 the quality of life for veterans who are suffering from post-
9 traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, or depression. Utilizing inmates
10 to train service dogs provides inmates with the chance to give back
11 to society in a meaningful way. In addition, incorporating the
12 training of service dogs into reentry programs assists with the
13 inmate's transition back into the community by teaching the inmate
14 valuable skills. Establishing a "Service Dog Pilot Program" in
15 Camden County will provide information regarding the
16 effectiveness of the program and the feasibility of expanding the
17 program to other counties in this State.

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19 2. a. There is established a three-year "Service Dog Pilot
20 Program" in Camden County for the purpose of utilizing inmates or
21 former inmates as part of a reentry program to train service dogs.
22 Upon completion of the training, the service dogs shall be placed
23 with veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety,
24 or depression. The Warden of the Camden County Correctional
25 Facility, in consultation with the Commissioner of Corrections,
26 shall be responsible for establishing and administering the pilot
27 program. The warden shall determine which inmates and former
28 inmates shall participate in the program.

29 b. Pursuant to the provisions of section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164
30 (C.52:14-19.1), the Warden of the Camden County Correctional
31 Facility, in consultation with the Commissioner of Corrections,
32 shall submit a report evaluating the effectiveness of the pilot
33 program to the Governor and the Legislature upon completion of
34 the program. The report shall recommend whether the pilot program
35 should be expanded to other counties in this State.

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37 3. There is appropriated \$150,000 from the General Fund to
38 implement the provisions of this act.

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40 4. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire upon
41 the filing of the report required pursuant to subsection b. of section
42 2 of this act.

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STATEMENT

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47 This bill establishes a "Service Dog Pilot Program" for inmates
48 in Camden County. Specifically, the bill establishes a three-year

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1 pilot program in Camden County for the purpose of utilizing
2 inmates or former inmates as part of a reentry program to train
3 service dogs. Upon completion of the training, the service dogs are
4 to be placed with veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress
5 disorder, anxiety, or depression.

6 The Warden of the Camden County Correctional Facility, in
7 consultation with the Commissioner of Corrections, is to establish
8 and administer the pilot program and provide a report to the
9 Governor and Legislature upon completion of the program
10 evaluating the program's effectiveness. The report is also to
11 recommend whether the pilot program should be expanded to other
12 counties in this State.