ASSEMBLY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 92

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 15, 2020

The Assembly Community Development and Affairs Committee reports favorably Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 92.

This concurrent resolution establishes a 15-member "Commission on Reentry Services for Women." The commission is charged with examining issues relating to women prisoner reentry including, but not limited to, identifying physical and psychological hardships endured while incarcerated that may impede successful reentry, identifying specific services that are necessary for successful reentry, identifying current obstacles to female prisoners receiving these services, and proposing solutions to remove these obstacles.

The commission is to be comprised of the following members as appointed by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the General Assembly: a representative of a women's rights organization; a representative of the New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence; an attorney with expertise in prisoner reentry issues; a physician with experience in women's health issues and inmate health issues; a representative of an organization whose members provide mental health and substance use disorder treatment services for women; a representative of the employment and training industry, who by experience or training has expertise in prisoner reentry issues; a representative of the Women's Prison Association; a representative of a women's healthcare organization; a representative of the Women's Health Institute of Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School; a person with expertise in women's health; a representative of the law enforcement community; two representatives of reentry programs; and two representatives from the business industry.

The concurrent resolution specifically requires the commission to examine:

- the quality and quantity of hygiene products disbursed to female prisoners;
- how childbirth occurs for female prisoners while incarcerated;
- the amount of time allowed for a mother to bond with her child birthed in prison;
- technological advances and their utilization in visitation between mothers and their children, such as video conferencing;

- women whose crimes were related to a domestic violence situation in which they were the victim;
- aligning formerly incarcerated females with essential support services in order to better care for their children;
- the psychological profile of the female prisoner, including the psychological health of female prisoners and methods to minimize psychological damage;
- housing, including halfway houses and residential housing;
- education and training;
- employment opportunities and workforce development;
- addiction and substance use disorder treatment, including drug treatment for inmates released from State and county correctional facilities; length of drug treatment and access to medication assisted treatment, appropriate 12-step programs, and intensive outpatient programs;
- medical and mental health treatment;
- access to legal assistance and current legal restrictions that create barriers to successful reentry;
- integration of corrections, parole, and reentry, including the use of parole and supervision; and
- coordination with faith-based services.

The commission is to prepare and submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including legislative proposals, to the Governor and the Legislature no later than 18 months after the commission organizes. The commission is to expire upon submission of the report.