STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]
SENATE, No. 2953

with Senate Floor Amendments
(Proposed by Senator SWEENEY)

ADOPTED: JUNE 3, 2021

Senate Bill No. 2953 (1R) expands the scope of reentry services and benefits currently available to inmates released from incarceration in State and county correctional facilities.

The bill requires that State and county correctional facilities supply inmates being released with a three-month supply of prescription medication, an additional 30 day prescription order, and two additional refills or long-acting injectables. These Senate amendments reduce the three-month supply to 30 days, require that a three-month supply of long acting injectables be provided, and continue to require two additional refills. The amendments stipulate that the counties are to receive an annual appropriation to cover the cost of these prescription medicines.

The Senate amendments also clarify that regional non-profit inmate reentry organizations are to be those within the purview of the Department of Community Affairs.

The Senate amendments limit the scope of the provisions of the bill applicable to county inmates to those county inmates who are incarcerated for 90 days or longer.

The Senate amendments authorize counties to appoint a county reentry coordinator to evaluate the needs of inmates in county correctional facilities, and assist them in accessing services deemed necessary pursuant to the evaluation. The county reentry coordinator also is to assist the inmate in obtaining a non-driver identification card and ensure that the inmate is released during regular business hours and is provided with the required prescription medication. The coordinator is required to collect and analyze data related to the services provided; develop peer counseling programs; meet with community stakeholders to establish best practices in preparing inmates for release and identifying available county services; and make recommendations for successful reentry. The amounts deemed necessary to support the county reentry coordinators are to be annually appropriated.

The scope of the independent investigator appointed by the Governor to evaluate the DOC's compliance with current law and the bill's provisions concerning reentry services and benefits is expanded by these amendments. The investigator is required by the amendments to also require the investigator to evaluate DOC's compliance with the provisions of current law regarding student financial aid to

incarcerated persons, the Dignity for Incarcerated Primary Caretaker Parents Act, and the Earn Your Way Out Act.