

Department of Correction

Testimony of Leo C. Arnone, Commissioner

Judiciary Committee

Raised Bill No. 6346, *An Act Concerning Residential Stays at Correctional Facilities*

February 23, 2011

Good afternoon, Senator Coleman, Representative Fox and members of the Judiciary Committee. I am Leo Arnone, Commissioner of the Department of Correction (DOC). I am here this afternoon to speak in strong favor of Raised Bill No. 6346, *An Act Concerning Residential Stays at Correctional Facilities*.

As you know, I must discharge an inmate by the effective maximum term date of the inmate's sentence, regardless of the inmate needs. Raised Bill No. 6346 would allow an inmate, at his or her request, to stay at a correctional facility beyond the inmate's end of sentence discharge date if a treatment program or healthcare institution to which the inmate is scheduled to be released to is not able to accept the inmate on the inmate's discharge date. As an example, if it is determined that an inmate scheduled to be discharged is in need of a residential program for substance abuse, and instead is discharged into the community because a program bed is not available on the scheduled discharge date, recidivism is likely to be high. I do not anticipate that this provision would be used frequently but it would be beneficial to have the statutory authority should the need arise.

There is current statutory language that allows the inmate to request to remain confined for up to 90 days beyond this end of sentence date for continued participation in a department program for drug dependency, in a work or education release program or in a program operated by a state agency other than the DOC. I would like to expand this authority to allow an inmate to request to remain in a correctional facility while awaiting entry into a treatment program, healthcare institution or for a compelling reason related to rehabilitation or treatment.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this matter.