
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 5569

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A CHILD NURSERY FACILITY AT THE CONNECTICUT CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION, NIAN TIC.

SUMMARY:

This bill requires the Department of Correction (DOC) commissioner, within available appropriations, to establish a nursery at the state's prison facility for women in Niantic (in practice, called the York Correctional Institution). Under the bill, the nursery would allow an infant born to a woman incarcerated at York to be placed at the institution where he or she was delivered (presumably York, although DOC directives require scheduling births in hospitals, not DOC facilities) if the mother is awaiting trial or has been sentenced to up to 18 months in prison.

The bill allows the DOC commissioner to set requirements for infant placement in the nursery, including limiting eligibility to mothers who comply with program, education, counseling, and other requirements.

Current law requires the York facility's warden, with the DOC commissioner's approval, to adopt regulations in cooperation with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) for (1) DCF placement of an infant within 60 days and (2) direct placement from the delivery institution of an infant born to an inmate awaiting trial or sentenced to up to one year in prison. The bill alternatively allows an infant to stay in the prison nursery for up to 18 months before DCF placement and instead allows the DOC commissioner to adopt the regulations in consultation with the warden and DCF.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2014

BACKGROUND

DOC Administrative Directive 8.12

Under this directive, inmates are scheduled to give birth at Lawrence and Memorial Hospital or another designated hospital. The newborn is placed according to a plan developed by Lawrence and Memorial Hospital's social network professionals and DCF.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 33 Nay 4 (03/28/2014)