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BILL ANALYSIS

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Senate Bill 799 (as introduced 1-30-18)
Sponsor: Senator John Proos
Committee: Appropriations

Date Completed: 2-21-18

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Management and Budget Act to modify certain provisions related to the State budget process. The bill would add projected prisoner population, prison bed space availability, custody staff requirements, and cost per prisoner for individuals under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Corrections, for both the January and May Consensus Revenue Estimating Conference. The bill would result in official projections for the various prisoner-related forecasts for three fiscal years: the fiscal year in which the conference was being held and the next two fiscal years.

MCL 18.1367b

BACKGROUND

There has been an ongoing discussion about setting up a process to forecast the prison population in a manner similar to the consensus process for Medicaid and human services caseload and expenditures. Since 2000, the estimates for Medicaid and human services caseload and expenditures were completed in an informal process for the May Consensus Revenue Estimating Conference. Public Act 47 of 2011 amended the Management and Budget Act to formalize the inclusion of the Medicaid and human services caseload and expenditures in the May Consensus Revenue Estimating Conference, which has become a leadership stipulation in the completion of budget targets. This means that as negotiations for the budget for the upcoming fiscal year are completed, the amounts arrived at in the consensus caseload process cannot be changed.

The four corrections-related forecasted items would include a population estimate, prison capacity, custody staff, and cost per prisoner. Unlike Medicaid and human services, the bill includes population (or caseload), but not expenditures. As the prison population has declined significantly over the past decade, the budget recommendation from the Governor has overestimated the average annual prison population. A process completed by the House and Senate Fiscal Agencies and the State Budget Office in estimating these measures could assist in arriving at an unbiased projection for the corrections-related estimates.

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: John Maxwell

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