

1 SJR43
2 168280-2
3 By Senator Ward
4 RFD:
5 First Read: 28-APR-15

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8 CREATING THE ALABAMA PRISON REFORM TASK FORCE.
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10 WHEREAS, overcrowding and understaffing of Alabama
11 prisons have created a potential federal takeover of the state
12 prison system; and

13 WHEREAS, the Alabama Legislature needs to take
14 proactive steps to avert the looming overcrowding crisis of
15 the state prison system; and

16 WHEREAS, the Alabama Corrections System is the most
17 overcrowded in the United States; and

18 WHEREAS, Alabama spends less per inmate than any
19 other state corrections system in the nation; and

20 WHEREAS, the primary responsibility of state
21 government is to provide for the public safety of its citizens
22 and victims of crime; now therefore,

23 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
24 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That there is created the Alabama
25 Prison Reform Task Force to be comprised of the following
26 members:

1 (1) One member of the Alabama Senate appointed by
2 the Lieutenant Governor.

3 (2) Two members appointed by the Alabama District
4 Attorney's Association.

5 (3) One member appointed by the Victims of Crime and
6 Leniency (VOCAL).

7 (4) One member of the Alabama House of
8 Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House of
9 Representatives.

10 (5) One representative of the Attorney General's
11 Office appointed by the Attorney General.

12 (6) The Commissioner the Department of Corrections.

13 (7) One representative of the Department of Public
14 Safety appointed by the Director of Public Safety.

15 (8) One representative of the Governor's Office
16 appointed by the Governor.

17 (9) One member appointed by the Association of
18 County Commissions of Alabama.

19 (10) One member of the House of Representatives and
20 one nonlegislative member appointed by the Chair of the House
21 Judiciary Committee.

22 (11) One member of the Senate and one nonlegislative
23 member appointed by the Chair of the Senate Committee on
24 Judiciary.

25 (12) One member of the Senate appointed by the
26 Senate President Pro Tempore.

27 (13) The Director of the Alabama Law Institute.

1 (14) Two representatives of the Judicial Department
2 appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

3 (15) One attorney licensed in Alabama appointed by
4 the President of the Alabama Bar.

5 (16) One representative appointed by the Alabama
6 Sheriff's Association.

7 The Governor shall appoint the chair once all
8 appointments have been made to the task force.

9 The task force membership shall be inclusive and
10 shall reflect the racial, gender, geographic, urban, rural,
11 and economic diversity of the state, as well as the diversity
12 and demographics of the Alabama prison population.

13 The task force shall study and identify causes and
14 potential legislative solutions for the overcrowding of the
15 prison system and the understaffing of corrections personnel
16 in the system.

17 The task force shall study a broad range of issues
18 related to prison inmate overpopulation including, but not
19 limited to: Court procedures and sentencing; data on reported
20 crimes and arrests; problem-solving suggestions and policies
21 of the courts; felony and parole policies; prison admissions
22 and length of stay; community work center programs; recidivism
23 rates; and alternative drug court sentencing.

24 The task force shall study issues related to health
25 insurance eligibility, enrollment, and coverage, including
26 examination of the costs and benefits of suspending Medicaid

1 benefits in lieu of termination, for individuals involved in
2 the criminal justice system.

3 The task force shall report its findings,
4 conclusions, and recommendations for proposed legislation to
5 the Legislature no later than the 15th day of the 2016 Regular
6 Session, where upon it shall stand dissolved and discharged of
7 any further duties.

8 Each nonlegislative member of the task force may be
9 reimbursed for expenses related to attending meetings
10 consistent with the policies of the various appointing
11 authorities.

12 Upon the request of the chair, the Secretary of the
13 Senate and Clerk of the House of Representatives shall provide
14 necessary clerical assistance for the work of the task force.
15 Each legislative member of the task force shall be entitled to
16 his or her regular legislative compensation, per diem, and
17 travel expenses for each day he or she attends a meeting of
18 the task force in accordance with Amendment 871 of the
19 Constitution of Alabama of 1901. These payments shall be paid
20 out of any funds appropriated to the use of the Legislature by
21 means of warrants drawn by the state Comptroller on the State
22 Treasury.