

Ray Roberts, Secretary

Sam Brownback, Governor

Testimony on HB 2510  
to  
The House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development

By Ray Roberts  
Secretary  
Kansas Department of Corrections  
January 31, 2012

The Department of Corrections opposes the provisions of HB 2510. HB 2510 would prohibit the department from establishing or maintaining a program which produces manufactured or modular homes. The department's vocational education cabin building program is sound public policy and benefits commerce and economic development.

Vocational education enhances public safety through successful offender reentry, increases facility safety through the lack of idle time for inmates and redirecting them to productive, skill-strengthening activities, and enhances community development by providing trained employees for private businesses.

The department's vocational education program, provided through Greenbush of the Southeast Kansas Education Service, provides inmates with nationally accredited vocational skills in the construction of cabins sited at state parks. Throughout calendar year 2011, the Department of Corrections only constructed six cabins by utilizing the 72 slots made available for the project. Inmates completing the vocational education program, which constructs cabins for Kansas Wildlife and Parks, receive national certification by the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER). This program enables released offenders to gain employment upon reentering the community and provide employers with a trained workforce without the employer having to bear the cost of training. Additionally, employers who hire released offenders can receive federal tax credits and payment of a liability bond. This reentry vocational program benefits Kansas businesses.

In addition to the department's cabin building project providing a trained and federally subsidized workforce to Kansas businesses, the cabin building project buys its materials locally if the material is not required to be purchased from a particular vendor due to matching color or other appearance specifications.

78% of KDOC inmates have a moderate or high risk/need LSI-R score due to the need for employment or education. The types of training opportunities that this offers to inmates are invaluable when it comes to releasing to the community and seeking meaningful employment. Dr. Liechtenberger in a study for the Kansas Department of Labor found the department's work force development program reduces recidivism by 1/3. Not only are the inmates less likely to recidivate and reenter the state correctional system, but they are more likely to become safer, tax-paying citizens. The department's cabin building program does not just build cabins, it builds people.

House Commerce & Economic  
Development Committee  
Date: 01/31/12  
Attachment #: 02-01

Therefore, the department urges that HB 2510 NOT be recommended for favorable passage.

Landon State Office Building  
900 SW Jackson, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Topeka, KS 66612



phone: (785) 296-3317  
fax: (785) 296-0014  
kdocpub@doc.ks.gov  
www.doc.ks.gov

Ray Roberts, Secretary of Corrections

Department of Corrections

Sam Brownback, Governor

Date: January 31, 2012

To: House Commerce & Economic Development Committee

From: Ray Roberts, Secretary

RE: Committee questions – 1/31/2012

Chairman Brown and committee members,

In response to the committee's questions during my testimony today on HB 2510, I wanted to follow up regarding no grant funding for previous house-building/cabin building projects. During the time span of 2003 through 2006, the Interfaith Housing Service, in conjunction with Hutchinson Correctional Facility, built 11 wood framed houses for low-income qualifiers. The Interfaith Housing Service supplied the materials and reimbursed Greenbush, the Department of Corrections' education contractor, \$1,000 per home. However, there was never any grant money attached to the project. Please contact me if you have any further questions or comments.

Landon State Office Building  
900 SW Jackson, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Topeka, KS 66612



phone: (785) 296-3317  
fax: (785) 296-0014  
kdocpub@doc.ks.gov  
www.doc.ks.gov

Ray Roberts, Secretary of Corrections

Department of Corrections

Sam Brownback, Governor

Date: January 31, 2012

To: House Commerce & Economic Development Committee

From: Ray Roberts, Secretary

RE: Committee questions – 1/31/2012

Chairman Brown and committee members,

In response to the committee's questions during my testimony today on HB 2510, I wanted to follow up regarding no grant funding for previous house-building/cabin building projects. During the time span of 2003 through 2006, the Interfaith Housing Service, in conjunction with Hutchinson Correctional Facility, built 11 wood framed houses for low-income qualifiers. The Interfaith Housing Service supplied the materials and reimbursed Greenbush, the Department of Corrections' education contractor, \$1,000 per home. However, there was never any grant money attached to the project. Please contact me if you have any further questions or comments.