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**BILL ANALYSIS**

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House Bill 5422 (as passed by the House)
Sponsor: Representative Joseph Haveman
House Committee: Education
Senate Committee: Education

Date Completed: 12-7-12

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Correctional Officers' Training Act to allow new employee training for correctional officers to be completed at a college or community college.

Under current law, correctional officers must complete a minimum of 320 hours of new employee training, as determined by the Michigan Correctional Officers' Training Council, at the central training academy. The bill would allow that training also to be provided by a college or community college.

Additionally, the bill would require the Council to develop minimum standards and requirements for a certification program for new employee training to be offered by colleges and community colleges, and to designate the form for a certificate of completion for correctional officers completing such training. Those standards and requirements would have to address the qualifications for instructors at approved schools, the facilities and equipment required at those schools, and program content.

Only the Council or a college or community college that was approved by the Council could provide training or a certification of completion for such training. The Council also could provide for the decertification of programs failing to meet its standards.

MCL 791.512 et al.

Legislative Analyst: Cameron S. Mock

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have an indeterminate, but potentially positive, fiscal impact on State government as described below. The bill also could result in a minor increase in administrative costs for the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) associated with the increased responsibilities delegated to the Michigan Correctional Officers' Training Council in developing standards for the college-based and community college-based programs.

There are two areas through which the bill could result in savings for the MDOC. First, under the current new officer hiring process, recruits are formally hired by the MDOC and then assigned to spend eight weeks at the academy. In addition to the cost of running the academy itself, the MDOC pays those new officers at the academy at a trainee-level civil service pay grade. If a community college were to provide the training as allowed under the bill, those attending the academy would be students and would not yet be receiving wages

as trainee-level officers. Wages for trainee-level officers are approximately \$16 per hour, so during the academy each trainee is paid approximately \$5,100. Therefore, for each officer who was hired out of the college or community college setting rather than the MDOC-administered academy, the MDOC would forego paying those wages and associated benefits costs.

The second mechanism through which the MDOC could realize savings under the bill would result from the potentially increased availability of qualified new corrections officers. The MDOC could hire these individuals to fill vacancies, which could allow the Department to reduce overtime shifts and the associated cost premium. Over the last 10 months, the MDOC has averaged nearly 400 vacancies, and these vacancies are one of the primary drivers of overtime costs. The average wage of a corrections officer is approximately \$24 per hour, which goes up to \$36 during overtime shifts. Therefore, if the MDOC could hire new officers (who would enter at the bottom pay grade), then it could achieve savings by covering vacant shifts with new officers rather than using existing staff on overtime.

In FY 2011-12, the MDOC budget included \$4.1 million to provide for new officer training schools. With these funds the MDOC ran two academies, and graduated 163 new officers. In FY 2012-13, the MDOC budget includes \$8.7 million, an increase of \$4.6 million or a \$3.5 million increase above economic adjustments, for new officer training schools. With this funding, it plans to run three academies and graduate 440 new corrections officers. With the nearly 400 vacancies the MDOC has averaged over the last 10 months, coupled with the approximately 30 to 40 experienced corrections officers who retire, resign, or are terminated each month, the new officer training school has had difficulty providing an adequate number of replacement staff.

The bill would have no fiscal impact on local government.

Fiscal Analyst: Dan O'Connor