

By Senator Braynon

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to faith-based prison programs;
3 amending s. 944.803, F.S.; deleting a requirement that
4 a specified percentage of inmates in such programs be
5 within 36 months of release; providing an effective
6 date.

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8 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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10 Section 1. Subsection (3) of section 944.803, Florida
11 Statutes, is amended to read:

12 944.803 Faith-based programs for inmates.—

13 (3) The department must have at least six new programs
14 fully operational. These six programs shall be similar to and in
15 addition to the current faith-based pilot program. The six new
16 programs shall be a joint effort with the department and faith-
17 based service groups within the community. The department shall
18 ensure that an inmate's faith orientation, or lack thereof, will
19 not be considered in determining admission to a faith-based
20 program and that the program does not attempt to convert an
21 inmate toward a particular faith or religious preference. The
22 programs shall operate 24 hours a day within the existing
23 correctional facilities. The programs must emphasize the
24 importance of personal responsibility, meaningful work,
25 education, substance abuse treatment, and peer support.
26 Participation in the faith-based dormitory program shall be
27 voluntary. ~~However, at least 80 percent of the inmates~~
28 ~~participating in this program must be within 36 months of~~
29 ~~release.~~ Assignment to these programs shall be based on

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30 evaluation and the length of time the inmate is projected to be
31 assigned to that particular institution. In evaluating an inmate
32 for this program, priority shall be given to inmates who have
33 shown an indication for substance abuse. A right to substance
34 abuse program services is not stated, intended, or otherwise
35 implied by this subsection. The department may not remove an
36 inmate once assigned to the program except for the purposes of
37 population management, for inmate conduct that may subject the
38 inmate to disciplinary confinement or loss of gain-time, for
39 physical or mental health concerns, or for security or safety
40 concerns. To support the programming component, the department
41 shall assign a chaplain and a full-time clerical support person
42 dedicated to each dormitory to implement and monitor the program
43 and to strengthen volunteer participation and support.

44 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2011.