

HB 4215

2011

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

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

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

11           944.803 Faith-based programs for inmates.—

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

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

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