

EXECUTIVE ORDER

04-02

GOVERNOR'S STEERING COMMITTEE
ON CORRECTIONS REFORM AND PRISONER REENTRY

WHEREAS, more than 3,500 sentenced offenders were released from prison in the State of Rhode Island during the year 2003; and

WHEREAS, over 50% of these individuals are likely to return to the Adult Correctional Institutions as sentenced inmates within three years of discharge, 33% within the first twelve months after discharge, and

WHEREAS, all offenders, with the exception of 21 men serving life without parole, will eventually return to the community, and

WHEREAS, this recidivism poses a serious risk to public safety and is a major contributor to the size and cost of our state's prison populations; and

WHEREAS, community-based support in the form of coordinated access to life skills and job training, education, medical and mental health services, substance abuse treatment and mentoring has a positive and direct impact on reducing the likelihood of recidivism; and

WHEREAS, in his State of the Union address, President George W. Bush proposed a four year \$300 million plan to provide transitional housing, job training and mentoring to ex-inmates in an effort to reduce recidivism, and

WHEREAS, there is strong interest nationally in the development of successful models for reentry and Rhode Island has received national recognition from the National Governor's Association, the United States Department of Justice and the National Institute of Corrections among other private and public agencies as a state actively engaged in building meaningful reentry programs, and

WHEREAS, the Rhode Island Department of Corrections has taken active steps to implement a reentry philosophy for the correctional population and has secured funding to inaugurate several approaches to the problem.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DONALD L. CARCIERI, by virtue of the power vested in me as Governor of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, do hereby order as follows:

1. The Governor's Steering Committee on Prisoner Reentry is hereby established to create a comprehensive plan and systematic approach to promoting reentry strategies for all offenders prior to release from incarceration with continued support from probation, parole and community-based agencies after release.
2. The Reentry Steering Committee shall:
 - a. Provide ongoing coordination at the executive level of reentry initiatives across the state;
 - b. Ensure agreement on overall policy direction;
 - c. Resolve policies and practices that impede successful reintegration;
 - d. Assign senior staff from the departments and offices involved to implement established priorities.
3. The Steering Committee shall be comprised of at least fifteen members. All members shall be appointed by the Governor, and shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Governor shall select a chairperson.
4. All executive state departments and agencies shall support the efforts and goals of the Steering Committee.

This Executive Order shall take effect immediately upon the date hereof and shall remain in effect through December 2005.

So Ordered:

Donald L. Carcieri

Date: _____