



BROTHERS IN BLUE REENTRY

“Transformational Hope for the Incarcerated”

Carl Hughes

Executive Director

Brothers in Blue Reentry, Inc.

HB2554

Spoken Testimony

Good Afternoon! My name is Carl Hughes. I am the Executive Director of Brothers in Blue Reentry, and I am here today to give testimony in regards to HB2554. Let me begin by first giving an overview of our program and what it is that we do inside of Lansing Correctional Facility.

BIBR is a voluntary, faith driven, evidence based reentry program that provides education and resources to incarcerated men based on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. BIBR has a basic format of three phases in which our clients work through our program.

- Phase 1 consists of 12 months of intensive, classroom based education which includes categories of instruction such as Drug & Alcohol Abuse, Anger Management, Life Skills, Financial Management, Family & Faith Study, and one on one counseling. In this curriculum, we partner with KDOC to meet the standards of an offender parole plan, in which our classes give these men program credit towards their release.
- Upon graduation, our clients enter Phase 2, which consists of the time period between Phase 1 graduation and release. In this time period, our clients are introduced to our Self Organized Learning Environment (SOLE) training. Our SOLE program gives our clients a chance to take what they have learned in the classroom and translate it into hands-on vocational training. Each SOLE is individually based, and together with our Reentry management, forms a personalized release plan that maximizes our clients probability of success once they have finished their sentence and returned to society.
- Upon release, our Reentry management gives each client specific needs-based attention for 6-12 months. These resources include help with housing, transportation, finding employment, support groups, and emergency situation management.

Next, I would like to include many of the statistics that we use to quantify the results of BIBR. While there are a couple different ways to do this, no single stat is more important than the measure of recidivism, which is the percentage of men that return to prison after going through our program. Per the Department of Justice, our country has a staggering overall recidivism rate of 67%. In Kansas, we have a much better state specific recidivism rate of 35%.

This dramatic reduction from the national average is directly related to the pro rehabilitation-based policies & programs that the state has taken in relation to corrections. It is because of these policies that Brothers in Blue Reentry is allowed to work with incarcerated individuals inside of KDOC, and has produced a recidivism rate of 13% since the program was founded in 2011. The following are some more important facts about BIBR and the results that the program has produced in recent years.

- 78 current active members in Phase 1, 72 alumni members in Phase 2, and 1,172 released alumni in the community.
- 36 total alumni scheduled for release in 2018.
- 56 total clients receiving SAP (Substance Abuse) counseling through BIBR.
- 11 total alumni have been released and are in our reentry management in 2018 so far.

In closing, the staff at Brothers in Blue Reentry work every day to transform the hearts and minds of incarcerated individuals from mindsets of shame and guilt, to mindsets of peace, growth, and maturity. These core tenants drive what we do here and is the reason that we have had many of our alumni reintegrate back into their families and society successfully. But we also understand that results can sometimes only be measured by a bottom line, and for that purpose I would like to provide some of the following information pertaining to how we effect the State of Kansas specifically.

- Since its founding BIBR has averaged 61 alumni being released into society annually with an average recidivism rate of 13%. Using these figures, 53 men successfully reentered society annually that completed our programming, and 8 men reoffended. Using the State of Kansas average recidivism rate of 35% as a measure of what recidivism would look like without BIBR involved, and using the same total number of men released, there would have been 39 men successfully reenter society and 21 reoffenders. This would be a difference of 13 men per year. If we use the average annual total cost of incarceration per inmate of \$25,841, as referenced in the 2017 KDOC annual report, and multiply that by the difference of 13 offenders BIBR saves the State of Kansas an average of \$335,582 annually, and over 6 million since it's founding, just from the reduced recidivism.
- BIBR is privately funded by donations, and the services that we offer do not have to be duplicated by the KDOC as a condition for release. In this way, BIBR is also saving the State budgetary dollars for every inmate that goes through our program.
- Dollar amounts do not account for the intangibles in recidivism, such as less crime and less victims of crime, children of incarcerated individuals growing up to become incarcerated themselves, etc.

As a part of this bill, BIBR is asking for exemption from taxes when purchasing goods and services used for the program itself. The projected total benefit of that exemption for FY2019 is \$27,000, which would be of great benefit to our program in helping to alleviate some of the other financial pressures that comes with being funded from donations.

I thank the Chairman, and the entire committee, for your consideration of this bill.