

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 4, 2000

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—1999–2000 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1999

Introduced by Assembly Member Dickerson

February 18, 2000

An act relating to conservation camps, ~~making an appropriation therefor,~~ and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1999, as amended, Dickerson. Conservation camps.

(1) Existing law establishes conservation camps, and provides for the transfer of inmates as specified to be housed and employed therein.

This bill would state findings and declarations of the Legislature regarding the benefits to the state of an expanded conservation camp program, and would direct the Department of Corrections to maximize the availability of conservation camp qualified inmates after health and safety requirements are met at other facilities of the department. ~~The bill would provide that conservation camp qualified inmates shall not be used to perform routine maintenance to the exclusion of meeting present and future conservation camp needs.~~ This bill would declare the intent of the Legislature to continue to expand the conservation camp program, and would direct the Resources Secretary to provide by November 1, 2000, and each year thereafter, a report to the Legislature and Governor on additional camp

construction needs and recommendations for the following fiscal year.

This bill would also ~~appropriate \$3,580,000 from the General Fund to provide that~~ the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection ~~to shall~~ reactivate a ~~17-person crew~~ 20-person crew module at 17 specified conservation camps, to reactivate the camps and provide necessary training, vehicles, and equipment, ~~appropriate \$11,000,000 to the department to~~ reestablish a minimum security conservation camp at Green Valley in Sacramento County, ~~appropriate \$2,400,000 from the General Fund to the department to~~ construct and equip a 3-fire crew module minimum security work center at Cummings Valley in Kern County, and ~~appropriate \$33,000,000 from the General Fund to~~ construct and equip 3 other new conservation camps in flood, fire, and earthquake prone areas of the state, as specified.

(2) This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Vote: ²/₃. Appropriation: ~~yes~~—no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares the
2 following:

3 ~~(1)~~

4 (a) The Legislative Analyst’s Office projects the state
5 will need to provide additional space for as many as 27,000
6 inmates by June 30, 2004. Current facilities are at 187
7 percent of designed capacity.

8 ~~(2)~~

9 (b) The number of fires and floods in California has
10 increased dramatically during the last decade.
11 ~~Prevention of both of these types of natural disasters~~
12 ~~requires labor-intensive work.~~

13 ~~(3) Watershed health has declined, creating a backlog~~
14 ~~of restoration work. Prevention of these natural disasters~~
15 ~~and changing these conditions will require~~
16 ~~environmentally sensitive, labor-intensive work by hand~~
17 ~~crews.~~



1 (c) Each conservation camp inmate provides an
2 annual return to the community of over twenty thousand
3 dollars (\$20,000) in productive work, while costing
4 taxpayers only thirteen thousand dollars (\$13,000) per
5 year.

6 ~~(4)~~

7 (d) Conservation camps provide significant
8 rehabilitation benefits, as recidivism rates are lowered by
9 the opportunity to learn strong work ethics, teamwork
10 and job satisfaction, by assisting communities, farms, and
11 the state's natural resources.

12 ~~(5)~~

13 (e) Lower disciplinary and custodial costs result due to
14 the fact that the hard-working emergency response team
15 activities curtail disciplinary problems associated with
16 idle time in prisons.

17 ~~(6)~~

18 (f) Shortened incarceration time results for
19 nonviolent inmates who reduce their sentence by
20 performing meaningful work.

21 ~~(7)~~

22 (g) Conservation camps have provided over 2,000,000
23 work-hours of emergency fire and flood assistance to the
24 state and over 4,000,000 work-hours of resource,
25 environmental, and community service in a single year.

26 ~~(8)~~

27 (h) Minimum-security conservation centers cost less
28 to construct than "hardwall" facilities and considerably
29 less to operate.

30 SEC. 2. The Department of Corrections shall
31 maximize the availability of conservation camp qualified
32 inmates after the minimum health and safety
33 requirements are met at other facilities of the
34 department. ~~Conservation camp qualified inmates shall
35 not be used for routine maintenance duties, including
36 gardening and trash collection, to the exclusion of
37 meeting present and future conservation camp needs.
38 department.~~

39 SEC. 3. It is the intent of the Legislature to continue
40 to expand the conservation camp program to provide



1 additional beds for low-level inmates and at the same time
2 provide additional capabilities to prevent and deal with
3 fire, flood, earthquake, and other emergencies in the
4 State of California in a more cost-effective manner.
5 Therefore, the Resources Secretary, after consultation
6 with the Secretary of the Youth and Adult Correctional
7 Agency and other benefiting agencies, shall by
8 November 1, 2000, and each year thereafter, report to the
9 Legislature and the Governor on additional camp
10 construction needs and recommendations for the
11 following fiscal year.

12 ~~SEC. 4. (a) It is the intent of the Legislature that all~~
13 ~~existing conservation camps be operated at their~~
14 ~~designed strength in order to take full advantage of~~
15 ~~existing facilities and to be cost effective and maintain~~
16 ~~discipline. Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature~~
17 ~~that an additional 20-person crew module be reactivated~~
18 ~~at each of the 17 conservation camps.~~

19 ~~(b) The sum of three million five hundred eighty~~
20 ~~thousand dollars (\$3,580,000) is hereby appropriated~~
21 ~~from the General Fund to the Department of Forestry~~
22 ~~and Fire Protection, for the purpose of reactivating a~~
23 ~~17-person crew~~ *The Department of Forestry and Fire*
24 *Protection shall do the following:*

25 *(a) Reactive an additional 20-person crew module at*
26 *each of the following 17 conservation camps, for the*
27 *purpose of reactivating the camps and providing*
28 *necessary training, vehicles, and equipment: Baseline,*
29 *Bautista, Delta, Devils Garden, Eel River, Fenner*
30 *Canyon, Gabilan, Growlersburg, McCain Valley, Oak*
31 *Glen, Owens Valley, Preston/Pine Grove, Puerta La*
32 *Cruz, Salt Creek, Sugar Pine, Trinity River, Valley View.*

33 ~~SEC. 5. The sum of eleven million dollars~~
34 ~~(\$11,000,000) is hereby appropriated from the General~~
35 ~~Fund to the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection~~
36 ~~for the purpose of reestablishing a minimum security~~

37 *(b) Reestablish a minimum security* conservation
38 *camp at Green Valley in Sacramento County, to*
39 *accommodate six fire crews, totaling 120 persons.*



1 ~~SEC. 6. The sum of two million four hundred~~
2 ~~thousand dollars (\$2,400,000) is hereby appropriated~~
3 ~~from the General Fund to the Department of Forestry~~
4 ~~and Fire Protection for the purpose of constructing and~~
5 ~~equipping~~

6 *(c) Construct and equip* a three-fire crew module
7 minimum security work center at Cummings Valley in
8 Kern County.

9 ~~SEC. 7. The sum of thirty three million dollars~~
10 ~~(\$33,000,000) is hereby appropriated from the General~~
11 ~~Fund to construct and equip the first three of~~
12 ~~approximately 15~~

13 *(d) Construct and equip three other* new conservation
14 camps in fire, flood, and earthquake prone areas of the
15 state. These camps shall be established in areas
16 designated jointly by the Director of Corrections and the
17 Department of Forestry and Fire Protection based on
18 studies currently underway by the Department of
19 Forestry and Fire Protection and after consultation with
20 local communities and counties.

21 ~~SEC. 8.~~

22 *SEC. 5.* This act is an urgency statute necessary for
23 the immediate preservation of the public peace, health,
24 or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the
25 Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts
26 constituting the necessity are:

27 In order to determine conservation camp construction
28 and other budgetary needs and thereby improve the
29 ability of the conservation camp program to provide
30 emergency services in event of fire, flood, or earthquake
31 at the earliest possible time, it is necessary that this act
32 take effect immediately.

