



S. 2304 – Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Reauthorization and Improvement Act of 2008

FLOOR SITUATION

S. 2304 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM) on November 5, 2007. The Senate passed this bill with an amendment by unanimous consent on September 26, 2008.

S. 2304 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on September 27, 2008.

SUMMARY

Reauthorization of the Adult and Juvenile Grants: The bill reauthorizes \$50 million for each of the years 2009-2014 for the Attorney General to make grants for adult and juvenile collaboration for access to mental health treatment.

Note: Congress established this program in 2004 with enactment of the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-414). The law authorized \$50 million for FY2005 and such sums as may be necessary for FY2006-FY2009.

Law Enforcement Grants: S. 2304 directs the Attorney General to make grants to state and local governments for training programs to assist law enforcement officers and campus security in responding to incidents involving mentally-ill individuals.

Examination and Report: This legislation requires the Attorney General to examine and report on mental illness regarding the criminal justice system. The AG must report to Congress within three years with findings. \$2 million in fiscal year 2009 is authorized for this purpose.

BACKGROUND

In the United States there are high numbers of people with mental illness involved in all stages of the criminal justice system. In 1999, the Department of Justice reported that 16 percent of individuals in prison in the U.S. have mental illnesses. Among youth, the National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice concluded that two-thirds of detained male youth and three-quarters of detained female youth have at least one mental health disorder.

In recent years, there have been multiple grave crimes committed by individuals with mental illness. In 2007, for example, a shooter with a history of mental illness murdered 32 people and wounded 23 more at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia.

COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has not produced a cost estimate for S. 3560 as of September 26, 2008.

STAFF CONTACT

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