



INMATE EDUCATION AMENDMENT PROPOSAL: BILL H.B.0449

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Female recidivism, reoffending after release from incarceration, and unintended pregnancy, any unplanned conception, rates are rising in Utah and the United States. Both create a significant amount of financial responsibility to the state and the federal government. Unintended pregnancy causes strain on female parolees and increases the risk for recidivistic activity by destabilizing the reintegration process. While some states are beginning to offer programs surrounding reproductive health to women during incarceration, they are few and far between.

Without established standards these courses are subjective and left to the correctional administration's discretion. In Utah, there are virtually no programs available in prisons and jails offering reproductive and sexual education. In this project, I address with Dr. Larry Bench female recidivism and unintended pregnancy in Utah and the United States. Based on our research, we find many incarcerated women lack knowledge surrounding reproductive health, often holding negative views towards pregnancy, and have a history of unintended pregnancy, many of which have high-risk complications that are costly.

We propose a cost-effective solution for Utah through legislation, bill HB0449, that addresses both issues through amending inmate education to require a consistent class, offered at all correctional facilities in Utah, on women's reproductive and sexual health. Establishing a standard equal opportunity class of this nature, led by a knowledgeable educator for, voluntary, female offenders incarcerated in Utah will; ensure equal opportunity access to information, reduce recidivism and the risk for unintended pregnancy, decrease the tax dollars, and aid in the reintegration process. By reducing pregnancies that are unintended, we will enable parolees and probationers to become reintegrated with more knowledge about added stressors and responsibilities that arise with pregnancy. Providing women with more comprehension over their reproductive health will reduce the risk for recidivistic activity and cost to the state while building more stable individuals and families.

