

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1077

To establish a pilot program to provide training and certification in the culinary arts for Federal inmates to be utilized during the normal inmate meals process and to be accredited for future employment and educational opportunities, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 15, 2011

Ms. RICHARDSON (for herself and Ms. BASS of California) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To establish a pilot program to provide training and certification in the culinary arts for Federal inmates to be utilized during the normal inmate meals process and to be accredited for future employment and educational opportunities, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Cooking Helps Elevate
5 Futures Act” or the “CHEF Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

1 (1) In 2008, according to the Bureau of Justice
2 Statistics, the United States had more individuals in
3 prison than any other developed nation, with more
4 than 2,000,000 individuals incarcerated.

5 (2) Each year, more than 650,000 inmates are
6 released from State and Federal prisons after com-
7 pleting their sentences and such inmates return to
8 living and participating in society in communities
9 across the United States.

10 (3) There are many impediments affecting the
11 successful reentry of inmates into society, including
12 the lack of marketable job skills and the overall risk
13 of recidivism.

14 (4) Because many inmates are not prepared for
15 reentry into society and lack access to certain serv-
16 ices and networks of support, the recidivism rate for
17 inmates in the first year after release from prison is
18 44.1 percent, increasing to 67.5 percent in the first
19 3 years after release.

20 (5) According to a 12-year study conducted by
21 the Federal Bureau of Prisons, job skills, experience,
22 and training obtained through prison work programs
23 or vocational training programs have a positive ef-
24 fect on post release employment and recidivism, in-
25 creasing the likelihood that Federal inmates will suc-

1 ccessfully reintegrate into the community following
2 their release from Federal prison.

3 (6) Such study revealed that Federal inmates
4 who participated in vocational training programs
5 were 24 percent less likely to recidivate and 14 per-
6 cent more likely to be employed at the end of the 12-
7 month period following their release from prison
8 than such inmates who did not participate in such
9 training programs.

10 (7) Culinary training is an effective strategy for
11 increasing employment rates among former inmates
12 because of the high demand for employment in the
13 food service industry. In 2008, according to the Bu-
14 reau of Labor Statistics, there were 546,300 pri-
15 vately owned food service and drinking places in the
16 Unites States, offering over 1,564,000 culinary posi-
17 tions.

18 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF PILOT PROGRAM.**

19 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
20 date of the enactment of this Act, the Attorney General
21 shall establish a pilot program—

22 (1) to provide training and certification in the
23 culinary arts for Federal inmates in order to provide
24 such inmates with marketable employment skills;
25 and

1 (2) to provide such inmates with job placement
2 assistance after their release from a Federal correc-
3 tional facility.

4 (b) FACILITIES SELECTED.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall
6 select 10 different Federal correctional facilities lo-
7 cated in different regions of the continental United
8 States to participate in the pilot program.

9 (2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In selecting Federal
10 correctional facilities under paragraph (1), the At-
11 torney General shall take into consideration for each
12 State—

13 (A) percentage of the State’s population
14 that are Federal inmates;

15 (B) the recidivism rate of such inmates;
16 and

17 (C) the unemployment rate of such in-
18 mates after release from a Federal correctional
19 facility.

20 (3) DEFINITION.—In paragraph (1), the term
21 “continental United States” means a State (other
22 than Alaska and Hawaii) and the District of Colum-
23 bia.

1 **SEC. 4. ELIGIBILITY.**

2 The Attorney General, in consultation with the Direc-
3 tor of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, shall prescribe regu-
4 lations that establish eligibility requirements for Federal
5 inmates to participate in the pilot program.

6 **SEC. 5. CONTRACTS.**

7 The Attorney General may enter into contracts with
8 entities to provide culinary training and job placement as-
9 sistance for Federal inmates participating in the pilot pro-
10 gram.

11 **SEC. 6. REPORT.**

12 Not later than 120 days after the conclusion of the
13 pilot program, the Attorney General shall submit to the
14 Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representa-
15 tives and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate
16 a report that details—

17 (1) the number of Federal inmates who partici-
18 pated in, completed, and received a certification
19 under the program;

20 (2) the number of such inmates who were suc-
21 cessfully placed in jobs once they were released from
22 a Federal correctional facility;

23 (3) the length of time it took for such inmates
24 to find employment upon release from such a facil-
25 ity;

1 (4) the length of time that such inmates have
2 been employed by a particular employer since they
3 were released from such a facility;

4 (5) the rate of recidivism of such inmates; and

5 (6) the number of disciplinary incidents such
6 inmates were involved in while incarcerated and par-
7 ticipating in the program as compared to the num-
8 ber of such incidents that occurred involving inmates
9 who did not participate in the program.

10 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

11 There are authorized to be appropriated such sums
12 as are necessary for each of the fiscal years 2012 through
13 2017 to carry out the pilot program.

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