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Patrick Moran - President

Testimony
HB 446 Correctional Officers' Retirement System – Membership – Chaplains
Support

AFSCME Council 3 supports HB 446. This bill provides that, as a condition of employment, Chaplains in the Division of Correction would be placed in the Correctional Officer Retirement System.

Chaplains must undergo the same training as Correctional Officers. Once on the job, and particularly because of short-staffing, Chaplains do much more than purely religious duties.

They carry a radio. They are alone or with very little support from Correctional Officers in a chapel with a hundred or more inmates. They are the ones who notify inmates when there is a death in their family. In the course of visiting inmates, they may come in contact with any number of unpredictable situations.

Inmates may be volatile, even in a chapel. With little other support, Chaplains may be on the scene when a fight breaks out. The after-effects of being involved in violent episodes take a huge toll on all involved.

In short, in spite of their benign job titles, Chaplains face the same challenges as those of Correctional Officers. For these reasons we urge a favorable report on this bill.

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An employee has the right to a union representative if requested by the employee.
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