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Henry McMaster
Governor

G. Daniel Ellzey
Executive Director

March 12, 2020

Via Email

Charles Appleby
General Counsel
House Legislative Oversight Committee
CharlesAppleby@schouse.gov

Dear Mr. Appleby:

This letter is in response to your March 3, 2020 email requesting feedback on the following potential recommendations for the South Carolina Department of Corrections (SCDC) that might impact the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW). SCDC and DEW have an established history of working together to help the incarcerated population receive training and assistance to develop work readiness. The two agencies have entered into three different agreements that provide for DEW staff to work behind the wire at Kershaw Correctional Institute, Camille Griffin Graham Correctional Institute, and Manning Correctional Institute.

We feel the potential recommendations from House Legislative Oversight Committee are excellent additional steps to be considered. Our staff is ready to assist SCDC with preparing any memorandums of understanding and carrying out those recommendations, should they be finalized in the Committee's report. More details regarding the two recommendations are below.

- (39)(a) Request offender employment preparation program member agencies provide employment trends as they must do pursuant to S.C. Code Section 24-13-2130.**

DEW prepares profiles of South Carolina's workforce statewide, by county, and by geographic area. These profiles provide detailed information on the labor market, including workforce supply and demand, growing industries, prevailing wages, and industry projections. DEW can discuss with SCDC which of these monthly profiles would be of interest to them.

- (39)(b) Provide proposals to the Department of Corrections regarding potential vocational training activities.**

DEW maintains a list of "Second Chance" employers, who are willing to hire recently released inmates, which will be shared with SCDC. This may facilitate further conversations between our agencies in our continued effort to identify targeted training opportunities for current inmates.

- (41) **Work with the Department of Employment and Workforce and other stakeholders to implement a method to track the number of individuals who obtain employment immediately upon release from prison, or within a certain period of time, and add this as a performance measure in SCDC's annual accountability report.**

DEW currently provides SCDC with the percentage of participants of the Manning Correctional and Camille Griffin Graham Correctional work readiness programs that gain employment after release. SCDC and DEW could amend its existing data-sharing agreements to include re-employment information on all recently released inmates. DEW recommends providing employment information as of the second and fourth quarters post-release. DEW reports to the federal Department of Labor the employment outcomes for individuals who participate in training programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) based on the participant's status as of the second and fourth quarters after completing the training program. By mirroring the WIOA reporting requirements, SCDC would be able to assess the effectiveness of their training programs compared to non-inmate training programs.

I hope this letter is helpful to the Committee's work. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any additional questions.

Respectfully,



G. Daniel Ellzey
Executive Director