

Subject Ombudsman for Corrections

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Overview

This bill re-establishes the Ombudsman for Corrections which the legislature eliminated in 2003. The ombudsman is tasked with promoting “the highest standards of competence, efficiency, and justice in the administration of corrections.” The ombudsman is empowered with the authority to investigate decisions, acts, and other matters of the Department of Corrections. The bill delineates the specific powers granted to the ombudsman, including subpoena power, the right to access agency data and information, and the authority to file suit to invoke its powers. Further, the bill defines the scope of appropriate investigations and authorizes the ombudsman to investigate complaints from jails and detention facilities.

The bill also provides guidance on ombudsman qualifications, employee selection, access to data, complaint form and handling, publication of ombudsman recommendations, and annual reports. Finally, the bill proposes a blank appropriation to fund the office of the ombudsman.