

Introduced by: Mayor John Eberhart
Introduced: March 21, 2016

RESOLUTION NO. 4723, AS AMENDED

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING SENATE BILL 91 RELATING TO COMPREHENSIVE CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 91, an Act relating to comprehensive criminal justice reform, is currently pending before the Legislature of the State of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Legislature is looking at how to manage the state's current fiscal crisis, and facing a multi-billion dollar budget shortfall, it is vital that each state dollar spent is cost effective and targeted in a manner to get the best return on investment; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's corrections spending has grown for decades, now costing the state over \$300 million each year and hundreds of millions more each time Alaska builds a new prison; and

WHEREAS, despite the extraordinary spending, Alaska's recidivism rate is remarkably high, with two out of three released offenders returning to prison within three years of release; and

WHEREAS, every dollar spent on corrections may result in less available funding for priorities such as education and economic development; and

WHEREAS, too many Alaskans are taken out of the workforce and placed behind bars for involvement in nonviolent or low-level crimes and, while incarceration is sometimes suitable, it is not the only path to public safety; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Criminal Justice Commission tracked the best research in the field on the most effective ways to change criminal offending behavior and has provided the Legislature with 21 recommendations for statutory changes that will get better results, safely reduce the prison population, and save the state an estimated \$424 million; and

WHEREAS, the comprehensive package of criminal justice reforms contained in Senate Bill 91 will help ensure that more Alaskans remain productive members of society and not become financial burdens on the state; and

WHEREAS, we have seen the Alaska Legislature work aggressively to ensure that state dollars are not wasted, and we recognize that extending that cost-benefit approach to the state's prison system is overdue; and

WHEREAS, on March 8, 2016, the Fairbanks Diversity Council approved the attached resolution supporting Senate Bill 91 and urging the City Council to approve a resolution in support of the bill; and

WHEREAS, there is support of the philosophical approach to SB 91, and we recognize the need for diversionary programs and greater mental health and drug rehabilitation services in the State of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, in its current form there are still major concerns with SB 91 from the law enforcement and criminal justice leaders in our community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairbanks City Council applauds Senator Coghill for introducing Senate Bill 91 and urges the Alaska Legislature to continue working with Alaska law enforcement to create a bill which is in the best interest of our citizens.

PASSED and **APPROVED** this 21st day of March 2016.




John Eberhart, Mayor

AYES: Gatewood, Walley, Pruhs, Matherly, Cleworth
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Huntington
APPROVED: March 21, 2016

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


D. Danyielle Snider, CMC, City Clerk
Paul Ewers, City Attorney



RESOLUTION NO. 2016-01

**A RESOLUTION BY THE FAIRBANKS DIVERSITY COUNCIL URGING
THE FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL TO SUPPORT STATE SENATE BILL 91
PERTAINING TO COMPREHENSIVE CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM**

WHEREAS, the Alaska Legislature is looking at how to manage the state's current fiscal crisis. Facing a multi-billion dollar budget shortfall, it is vital that each dollar spent is cost effective, and targeted in a manner to get the best return on investment; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's corrections spending has grown unchecked for decades, now costing the state over \$300 million each year, and hundreds of millions more each time Alaska builds a new prison. Despite this extraordinary cost, the state is not getting a good return on investment. Two out of three offenders released from Alaska's prisons return within three years. A two-thirds failure rate would not be tolerated in any other area of government spending; and

WHEREAS, every dollar the state spends on corrections is a dollar that is unavailable for priorities like education and economic development. Thanks to the Alaska Criminal Justice Commission, we now know that the state can spend less on corrections and actually get better public safety outcomes. The Commission tracked the best research in the field on what works – and what does not work – to change criminal offending behavior, and has provided the Legislature with 21 recommendations for statutory changes that will get better outcomes while safely reducing the prison population and saving the state an estimated \$424 million. We applaud Senator Coghill for incorporating these recommendations into Senate Bill 91, and encourage the Alaska Legislature to pass them into law; and

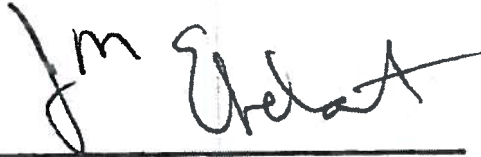
WHEREAS, public safety is directly related to healthy, vibrant, and economically sound communities. Prison, however, is not the only path to public safety, particularly for low-level crimes. Too many Alaskans are taken out of the workforce for involvement in minor nonviolent crimes. The comprehensive package of criminal justice reforms contained in Senate Bill 91 will help ensure that our workforce can remain productive members of society, and not become financial burdens on the state; and

WHEREAS, we have seen the Alaska Legislature work aggressively to ensure that state dollars are not wasted. The time to extend that cost-benefit approach to the state's prison system is now;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairbanks Diversity Council supports State of Alaska Senate Bill 91 and urges the Fairbanks City Council to approve a resolution in support of the bill.

PASSED and APPROVED this 8th day of March 2016 by the Fairbanks Diversity Council.

Signed:



John Eberhart, FDC Chair

Attest:


D. Danyielle Spider, CMC, City Clerk