

State of Minnesota
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-NINTH SESSION

H. F. No. 3214

03/16/2016 Authored by Kahn; Carlson; Johnson, S., and Dehn, R.,
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Finance

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to public safety; expanding the postsecondary correctional education
1.3 program for prison inmates; appropriating money to the Department of
1.4 Corrections.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. **POSTSECONDARY CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM.**

1.7 Subdivision 1. **Legislative findings and intent.** The legislature finds that
1.8 postsecondary correctional education has the potential to reduce recidivism, increase
1.9 employment opportunities for inmates upon release, and have a positive impact on
1.10 correctional facility safety and security. The legislature further finds that there is currently
1.11 a lack of available postsecondary educational opportunities for inmates in the state's
1.12 correctional facilities.

1.13 Subd. 2. **Postsecondary education program for inmates.** The commissioner of
1.14 corrections shall expand the department's postsecondary education program for inmates.
1.15 The commissioner shall use the funds appropriated for this purpose to fund tuition and
1.16 related fees, in whole or in part, for qualified inmates to participate in postsecondary
1.17 education programs. The commissioner, in consultation with the commissioner of higher
1.18 education, shall approve only accredited, not-for-profit, public or private postsecondary
1.19 institutions to operate in the state's correctional facilities. The commissioner may approve
1.20 institutions or programs that offer a traditional classroom education, distance learning, or a
1.21 combination of classroom and distance learning. The program shall provide inmates with
1.22 the opportunity to earn up to a bachelor's degree. To qualify, an inmate must, at a minimum,
1.23 have earned a high school diploma or a general equivalency diploma. The commissioner
1.24 shall establish additional eligibility criteria for inmates to participate in the program.

- 2.1 Subd. 3. **Appropriation.** \$..... is appropriated to the commissioner of corrections
- 2.2 to fund the program established in subdivision 2.