



Virginia  
Goodwill  
Network

Training • Employment • Hope

**For Immediate Release:** June 27, 2011

**For more information:**

Derby Brackett - Goodwill serving Central  
Virginia & Hampton Roads

Phone: (804) 745-6300

Derby.Brackett@goodwillvirginia.org

## **Governor McDonnell Signs Prisoner Re-Entry Legislation at Goodwill® in Richmond, VA**

**RICHMOND, VA** – Governor Bob McDonnell today ceremonially signed seven pieces of legislation that strengthen re-entry policies in the Commonwealth and further enhance his commitment to ensuring a strong focus on prisoner re-entry in Virginia. The legislation includes increasing to 90 days the amount of time in which the court services unit must consult with the local department of social services before a juvenile is released from juvenile facility, requiring the Department of Corrections (DOC) to establish a personal trust account for every inmate, requiring the DOC to offer testing for human immunodeficiency virus within 60 days of release, and allowing prison workforces to assist with maintaining privately owned, abandoned cemeteries.

The legislation was signed during a morning event at Goodwill serving Central Virginia & Hampton Roads in Richmond with representatives of every Goodwill agency that makes up the Virginia Goodwill Network present. The Virginia Goodwill Network (VGN) is a coalition of six Goodwill organizations in Virginia which has identified prisoner re-entry as a key priority in addressing the workforce development needs of the communities they serve in the Commonwealth. Goodwill is one of Virginia's many nonprofit leaders engaged in public-private partnerships to prepare inmates to return to communities after serving their prison sentence.

“The foremost priority of government is public safety,” Governor McDonnell said. “As a prosecutor, state delegate, attorney general and as governor, I have worked to make Virginia’s communities safer places to live, work and raise a family. One critical component to this is making sure Virginia has an effective prisoner re-entry strategy that includes strong, successful programs. An effective prisoner re-entry plan is good government. It improves public safety, reduces recidivism and victimization and improves the outcome for offenders returning to our communities. Everyone deserves a second chance. When a crime is committed, the individual responsible must be punished to the fullest extent. If you do the crime in Virginia you will do the time. But when that prison sentence is completed, and the price to society has been paid, we need to take the additional steps necessary to ensure that our prison system is not a revolving door. Currently, two-thirds of those who come out of prison are re-arrested within three years. That means new victims, and more costs to taxpayers. This is simply not acceptable. We must provide offenders who are leaving our prisons with the tools and resources they need to become productive, law-abiding members of society. We do not want to see offenders come back to jail;

we want to see them go to work. That is good public policy that helps the offenders, saves taxpayer dollars and makes our communities safer.”

“The Virginia Goodwill Network is proud of Governor McDonnell’s efforts to address prisoner re-entry. Goodwill’s mission is to improve individuals, families, and the communities we serve so we fully support practices and programs that make successful re-entry possible,” said Charles Layman, President and CEO of the Goodwill Serving Central Virginia & Hampton Roads, one of the six Goodwill organizations serving the Commonwealth.

### **Prisoner Re-entry Legislation Signed Today:**

#### **SB1170 (Marsden)/ HB2036 (Peace and Keam) – Commitment on parole supervision; court services unit to consult with local department**

- Requires the court services unit to consult with the local department of social services 90 days prior to a person's release from the Department of Juvenile Justice's commitment on parole supervision about the return of the person to the locality, the placement of the person, and to collaborate on a transition plan. Under current law, the court services unit shall make such consultation four weeks prior to such person’s release

#### **SB923 (McDougle)/ HB2225 (Wright) – Department of Corrections; inmate trust accounts**

- Requires the Department of Corrections to establish a personal trust account for each inmate consisting of 10 percent of any funds received by an inmate from any source until the account has a balance of \$1,000

#### **SB1258 (Vogel)/ HB1688 (Dance and Alexander) – Prisoners; mandatory testing for human immunodeficiency virus**

- Requires the Department of Corrections to offer to test an inmate who does not have a record of a positive test result for infection with human immunodeficiency virus within 60 days of his scheduled discharge. Prior to administering the test, the department shall inform the inmate of the purpose of the test. An inmate may decline being tested.

#### **HB1613 (Ward) – Local prisoner programs; workforces in certain cemeteries**

- Allows workforces to assist with maintaining privately owned, abandoned cemeteries

The Virginia Goodwill Network’s mission is collaboration to build our capacity to help Virginians work. Learn more about the VGN at [www.viriniagoodwillnetwork.org](http://www.viriniagoodwillnetwork.org)

###