
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1140 (Connolly) - Single-Occupancy Cell Pilot Program

Version: July 3, 2025

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 18, 2025

Policy Vote: PUB. S. 6 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Liah Burnley

Bill Summary: AB 1140 requires CDCR to establish a single-occupancy cell pilot program at four adult male prison facilities.

Fiscal Impact: Ongoing costs (General Fund) to CDCR, possibly in the hundreds of thousands of dollars to low millions of dollars, in staff workload to create and implement the pilot program, plus cost pressures for infrastructure expansion. It is unlikely that CDCR has sufficient single-cell capacity to meet this bill's requirements, particularly at lower security prisons. Thus, CDCR will likely need to somehow create more single-occupancy housing to implement this pilot, without constructing any new state facilities, resulting in significant costs.

Background: At CDCR, most incarcerated people are housed in double-occupancy cells (one cell in which two people each have a bed or bunk), pod housing (one room in which about six people each have a bed or bunk), or dormitory housing (one large room in which many people each have a bed or bunk, sometimes separated by partial walls or partitions).

Under CDCR's regulations, single-occupancy cells (one cell in which one person has a bed) are generally reserved for incarcerated people who demonstrate a pattern of physically or sexually assaultive behavior toward other incarcerated people, or incarcerated people who are recommended for single-cell housing by clinical staff due to mental health disorders or medical concerns. Most existing single-cell housing is in the CDCR facilities with the highest security levels, which typically house incarcerated people who have high placement scores due to their convictions, rules violations, or other instances of violence. There is no existing single-cell housing for the general population in CDCR's women's prisons.

This bill appears inspired by a January 2024 report by the San Quentin Transformation Advisory Council. In the report, the council recommended numerous changes to San Quentin's facilities and operations, including an overall reduction in the prison's population to allow for more single-cell housing "to improve the dignity of the tiered cells living environment and dormitory experience as soon as possible." This bill requires CDCR to establish a pilot program that moves 10 percent of the population at four CDCR facilities into single-occupancy cells.

In addition to the direct costs noted above, moving more of California's prison population into single-occupancy cells will likely slow ongoing efforts to close prison facilities. In recent years, as the prison population has decreased, CDCR has closed prisons and prison yards by consolidating the remaining population. The Legislative

Analyst's Office estimates ongoing General Fund savings of approximately \$620 million annually resulting from closures of prisons and prison yards since 2021.

Proposed Law:

- Requires the secretary of CDCR to develop and implement a pilot program to house persons who are incarcerated at four adult prison facilities in single-occupancy cells by January 1, 2027.
- Requires the secretary, or their designee, to establish criteria to determine who will be housed in single-occupancy cells and the four facilities participating in the pilot program.
- Provides that, at a minimum, the pilot program shall do both of the following:
 - Be implemented at four facilities housing incarcerated adults excluding the women's state prisons, medical facilities, and state hospitals; and,
 - Apply to 10 percent of the population housed at each of the four-designated facilities.
- Requires the secretary to transmit a publicly available report to the Legislature and Governor by March 15, 2028, detailing all of the following related to the four facilities designated to be participating in the pilot program, to be known as "pilot sites":
 - The capacity of the pilot sites as of December 31, 2026, and December 31, 2027;
 - The number of incarcerated persons housed in single-occupancy cells under the pilot program at the four pilot sites;
 - The number of incarcerated persons participating in work assignments by facility at the four pilot sites on December 31, 2026;
 - The number of incarcerated persons participating in education assignments by facility at the four pilot sites on December 31, 2026;
 - The number of incarcerated persons participating in treatment and reentry program assignments by facility at the four pilot sites on December 31, 2026;
 - The number of incarcerated persons participating in work assignments by facility at the four pilot sites on December 31, 2027;
 - The number of incarcerated persons participating in education assignments by facility at the four pilot sites on December 31, 2027;
 - The number of incarcerated persons participating in treatment and reentry program assignments by facility at the four pilot sites on December 31, 2027.;
 - The housing classification for incarcerated persons participating in the assignments by facility;

- The number of disciplinary incidents and incidents involving violence that occurred by facility for each of the four pilot sites overall and disaggregated by single-occupancy and non-single-occupancy cells and rehabilitative programming;
 - A breakdown of disciplinary incidents and incidents involving violence by facility and month for the first year that the pilot program is operational;
 - The inclusion or exclusion criteria, or both, the secretary, or their designee, used to designate incarcerated persons to single-occupancy cells, by facility; and,
 - A qualitative description of the changes made in each of the four pilot sites in order to implement this pilot program.
- Prohibits the secretary, from deeming the following to qualify towards the percentage of the pilot site's population required to be housed in single-occupancy cells:
 - Persons housed in safety cells;
 - Persons housed in detoxification cells; and,
 - Persons housed in temporary holding cells or rooms.
 - Provides that participation by an incarcerated person in the single-occupancy cell pilot program shall be voluntary, and an incarcerated person may request to be transferred from a single-occupancy cell to a non-single-occupancy cell at any time.
 - Provides that, if an incarcerated person requests to be housed in a pilot site and the secretary, denies the inmate's request for that housing, that denial shall not constitute a cognizable cause of action.
 - States that the creation of the single-occupancy cell pilot program shall not result in any new construction of state prison facilities.

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