



2025 South Dakota Legislature

Senate Concurrent Resolution 608

Introduced by: **Senator Foster**

1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION, To provide for an interim study to examine the South**
 2 **Dakota criminal justice system with a focus on substance abuse, mental**
 3 **health issues, and corrections.**

4 WHEREAS, the South Dakota criminal justice system faces challenges in addressing
 5 substance abuse and recidivism; and

6 WHEREAS, there is a need to explore alternative models and effective strategies for
 7 criminal justice reform; and

8 WHEREAS, substance abuse is a significant driver of criminal behavior in South Dakota;
 9 and

10 WHEREAS, there is a growing movement to shift substance abuse from a criminal justice
 11 issue to a public health issue; and

12 WHEREAS, many states have implemented successful models to address substance abuse
 13 and mental health issues through corrections reform that could be utilized in South Dakota;

14 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Senate of the One Hundredth Legislature of
 15 the State of South Dakota, the House of Representatives concurring therein, that the
 16 Executive Board of the Legislative Research Council establish an interim committee to conduct
 17 a comprehensive review of the South Dakota adult and juvenile criminal justice system with
 18 a particular focus on recidivism, substance abuse, and substance abuse and mental health
 19 treatment; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee analyze successful models of
 21 corrections and evaluate the performance of South Dakota's adult and juvenile correctional
 22 systems, including rates of recidivism at one-year, three-year, and five-year intervals; and

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee explore how other states have
2 successfully addressed substance abuse and recidivism and provide recommendations on how
3 to transform substance abuse in South Dakota from a criminal justice issue to a public health
4 issue; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee review the effectiveness of
6 addiction and mental health treatment programs and vocational and education programs
7 within the criminal justice system and recommend improvements or changes; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee examine the effectiveness of
9 statewide specialty courts and provide recommendations to standardize and potentially
10 expand specialty courts across the state; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee review the funding and caseloads
12 for court services officers and parole agents and identify areas for improvement; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee seek relevant input from past and
14 current employees and inmates of the criminal justice system to gain insight into the strengths
15 and weaknesses of the system; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee investigate the role of the
17 Corrections Commission, including its regularity of meetings and the qualifications required
18 for membership on the commission, to ensure the commission is fulfilling its intended
19 purpose; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee report its findings and
21 recommendations, together with any proposed legislation, to the Executive Board of the
22 Legislative Research Council, on or before December 1, 2025.