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Gov. Rounds announces receipt of Second Chance Act Grant for prisoner reentry and recidivism reduction programs

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Mike Rounds has announced that the State of South Dakota is the recipient of a Second Chance Act Prisoner Reentry Initiative grant to assist with prisoner reentry issues.

The state will receive \$750,000 per year over three years to implement programs and strategies to reduce recidivism, the return to prison of those who commit subsequent crimes or violate conditions of supervision. In 2007, South Dakota's one-year adult recidivism rate was 29.9 percent. The state's goal is to reduce the recidivism rate by 50 percent within five years.

“Every inmate who is released and does not offend again is a positive sign,” Gov. Rounds said. “It saves taxpayer dollars and indicates a successful rehabilitation that creates another productive member of society rather than a cost to society.”

Gov. Rounds signed an executive order in March to create a Reentry Council to deal with the issue of state prison system recidivism. Individuals released from prison face issues such as drug and alcohol abuse and medical and mental health problems, as well as a lack of education, employment and housing.

Reentry Council members include the state secretaries of Corrections, Education, Labor, Health, Human Services, Military and Veterans Affairs, and Social Services; director of Tribal Government Relations; executive director of the South Dakota Housing

Development Authority; heads of other departments or agencies; and representatives of local governments, organizations and associations, as the governor designates.

The Reentry Council established a Reentry Workgroup to serve as a statewide multi-disciplinary implementation team to identify existing services as well as gaps and barriers for inmates in the community. Reentry Task Forces are in place in both Sioux Falls and Rapid City, made up of local leaders and community-based organizations that provide services to offenders. The Task Forces are also assisting in soliciting support and involvement in transition efforts at the community level.