



ILLINOIS STATE COMMISSION
ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SENTENCING REFORM

Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday August 25, 2016
1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Illinois Historic Preservation
313 S. 6th Street
Springfield, Illinois

Commissioners present: Rodger Heaton (Chairman), Andy Leipold, John Maki, Dave Olson, Honorable Elizabeth Robb, Gladys Taylor, Kathy Saltmarsh, Representative Scott Drury, John Baldwin, Elena Quintana, Greg Sullivan, Brendan Kelly, Howard Peters, Craig Cooper (on behalf of Pam Rodriguez), Honorable Stephen Sawyer, Lisa Desai

Presenters: Lore Baker, Napoleon Williams, Heather O'Donnell, Michael Davis, Cindy Hora

Present- Chicago Location: Senator Kwame Raoul, Jerry Butler

Presenters- Carolyn Goldstein, Victor Dickson

Conference Call - Commissioners: Representative Brian Stewart, Representative John Cabello Kathryn Bocanegra, Doug Marlowe, Senator Karen McConnaughay

Call to Order: Chairman called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm. A quorum was determined to be present as indicated above. This meeting addresses the demands on our provider community that are created by the potential reforms under consideration. If these recommendations are made to the Governor it is important to hear a detailed assessment of what capacity we have and what adjustments will need to be made.

Ms. Saltmarsh provided a brief recap of what has led the Commission to this point. There has not been a full resource capacity for the criminal justice population and the system is far too big to ever be adequately resourced. Reducing incarceration goes hand in hand with investing in communities. Criminal justice is largely local. Social controls need to be strong. The baseline consideration is reducing victimization. We do not get to a lower use of incarceration without reducing victimization.

We have learned we must deal with responsivity. Insufficient housing, mental illness and withdrawal all interfere with rehabilitation. Poor education and employment skills degrade rehabilitation as well.

SPAC conducted an analysis on the cost of recidivism. The average cost of a recidivism event is \$118,000. Five years at the current recidivism rate will cost the state of Illinois \$16 B. As the discussion begins on pre-investment for services, keep in mind the dollars spent in our current system. Resources are not unlimited; it is necessary to set priorities.

Ms. Saltmarsh introduced the panel representing a cross section of organizations and agencies engaged in providing services to the community. For the purpose of today's discussion, the primary areas of focus are housing, mental health and trauma and work force development.

Panelists representing Statewide Housing, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Safer Foundation, Connections for Success, Thresholds, Lutheran Social Services as well as the Attorney General's office shared information on the services available and voiced recommendations for improving community capacity.

Recommendations include:

- Resurrect Half Way back program
- Scale up skill based training. Build capacity for training and employment in the community. Some employers have identified that credentials will trump an offenders record. Look at communities that have a high number of people returning from prison and building a capacity of training and employment in those critical areas.
- Expand the use of community correction transition facilities which decrease recidivism rates
- Explore use of evidence based employment services that have worked with individual placement and support – such as Employment First. California is using a program that Illinois is exploring. We have put a lot of money into services that have not proven productive. In addition examine the threshold one must meet to be eligible for the program.
- Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils in communities
- Identify those communities with increased number of returning offenders and develop concrete coordinating strategies and a network of community support
- Adult Redeploy needs to be expanded.
- Properly fund Victims services
- Better engage families to create a more holistic approach. Support families program. Returning citizens that have family members being supported in programs prior to their release have a higher success rate. An individual is not incarcerated; a family is incarcerated.
- Training for offenders in a specific trade and community involvement. Think innovatively- perhaps a way to make restitution is to leverage the talents and skills an offender has. Example: build up dilapidated properties in the community and sell them; then, take the revenue from those projects and reinvest them back into the programs.
- Include the right services in Medicaid package so people receive the right treatment. The key is early screening. Mandate primary care, screen in the schools, build a workforce with sufficient specialists
- Adequately support /fund victim services. Ensure resources and restitution are provided to the victims
- Start reentry process very early. Address services such as SSI, Medicaid and housing prior to release. Ensure medical records are transferred appropriately.
- Improve literacy within IDOC pre-release.

Panelists were urged to forward additional recommendations the commission should be considering.

Director Baldwin noted that an announcement is expected to be released August 26, 2016 regarding the 1115 waiver. All that is being discussed in this meeting is contemplated in the 1115 waiver. Illinois is the first state to include IDOC and IDJJ in a Medicaid waiver specifically focused on behavioral health. Other states are watching Illinois.

Public Comment:

A member of the public alerted the Commission to Housing guidance issued under the Fair Housing Act. Additional information will be forwarded.

Communities United noted unemployment. Focus cannot be solely on job training but must include job availability. Many offenders are returning to communities that have been the hardest hit. Improving the economy in the neighborhoods should be part of the equation.

Mother addresses the Commission to consider the removal of aggravated DUI convictions from the violent offense category.

Citizen addresses merchant retail theft as a felony charge of burglary that should be changed. Merchant retail theft is not a burglary; the store is open and monitored. The law, if not abolished should carry a higher threshold. Information was also provided about SAS Simulation Studio computer system developed and used in North Carolina to monitor and control the prison population. In 2009 the population threatened to go beyond capacity, the system calculated an adjustment to the sentencing grid.

New Business

The next meeting will be held on Thursday September 29, 2016, TASC at 700 S. Clinton, Chicago Illinois.

Adjournment

The meeting of the Illinois State Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing adjourned 5:00 pm.