



ILLINOIS STATE COMMISSION  
ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SENTENCING REFORM

Regular Meeting Minutes  
Thursday July 7, 2016  
1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

TASC  
700 S. Clinton  
Chicago, Illinois

Commissioners present: Rodger Heaton (Chairman), Jerry Butler, Andy Leipold, John Maki, Dave Olson, Honorable Elizabeth Robb, Gladyse Taylor, Senator Kwame Raoul, Kathryn Bocanegra, Kathy Saltmarsh, Representative Scott Drury, Pam Rodriguez, Mike Tardy, Senator Karen McConnaughay, Michael Pelletier, Representative Elgie Sims  
Lisa Desai

Conference Call - Commissioners: John Baldwin, Representative Brian Stewart, Representative John Cabello, Elena Quintana, Greg Sullivan, Senator Michael Connelly

Call to Order: Chairman Rodger Heaton called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm. A quorum was determined to be present as indicated above. A special thanks to Pam Rodriguez and the staff of TASC for hosting the meeting.

Illinois Crime Victims Views on Safety and Justice

John Maki introduced Lenore Anderson. Lenore is the President of the Alliance for Safety and Justice. She is also the Executive Director and Founder of California's Safety and Justice. The work of the organization is geared to advancing new safety priorities which includes reducing over alliance in incarceration and replacing that with rehabilitation with an emphasis on smart justice strategies that can reduce recidivism more effectively than the prior era. Lenore has been noted nationally for her work.

Lenore addressed the group and stated background of Illinois is like many other states; Illinois saw an increase in imprisonment and prison spending from 1980 to 2014 (6x faster than education spending) this trend is consistent across the United States. Though there were sharp declines in crime since the mid 1990's, what is known is that the increased incarceration has not been causally linked to the crime decline. Studies indicate that states that reduced imprisonment experienced bigger drops in crime and that increased incarceration had no impact on crime rate.

To get a better understanding of what victims want and need from the justice system, Lenore's group polled victims of crime in California and offered assistance to Illinois for similar polling.

Lenore provided details on data collected. Two thousand interviews were conducted in Illinois (Chicago and Peoria) with five focus groups represented. A deeper interview process was then conducted with those identified as crime victims. Of the 2000 interviewed, 32% (1 in 3) are victims of crime; most of which were victims of serious/violent crime. Most researchers would suggest that is under reported.

Lenore presented findings of the study on Illinois crime victims. This is the first of its kind referencing IL crime victim views on the justice policy. Three areas were addressed:

- Safety
- Experiences with Criminal Justice Policies
- Experiences with Trauma Recovery

Executive Summary of the findings indicate

- Most victims, across demographic groups, experience trauma from crime.
- Most victims do not think the criminal justice system is working.
- Most victims would prefer that it focus more on shorter sentences, rehabilitation and other alternatives, rather than on long sentences.
- Most victims do not feel supported by the criminal justice system, and do not access victim services that are available to them.

On all questions about justice policy, there is a broad cross-section of support for reform across all victim demographic groups (age, gender, race and ethnicity, and political party affiliation).

- Across all ethnic groups, party affiliations, and regions of the state, majorities believe that the criminal justice system is not working well.
- Strong majorities across all ethnic and regional groups prefer alternatives to prison like rehabilitation, mental health and drug treatment.
- Most crime victims – regardless of the types of crimes they have experienced –broadly support reform.
- Over 60 percent of victims prefer alternatives to prison. Victims of serious crimes (like rape and armed robbery) are even *more likely* to prefer alternatives

Commissioners commented the information from the victim poll supports some recommendations the Commission has discussed and is also consistent with previous discussions on truth in sentencing and the opportunity for reduction in sentences. Commissioners provided input on additional useful information they would like to see included in the study.

Lenore discussed Advanced Trauma Recovery Centers in San Francisco. The model is designed to support all victims of crime whether there is a prosecution or an active case. Advanced trauma recovery programs are one stop resources and support the hardest to reach crime victims, those who are least likely to get support and services. What is remarkable about this model is that by creating a safe community environment, an increase in cooperation with law enforcement and an increased trust with the process of prosecuting crime is seen. If the emphasis is switched to what traumatized people need in the moment, it will have a positive impact on Criminal Justice.

Several commissioners had the opportunity to travel to San Francisco and visit the trauma recovery centers and model recovery centers in San Francisco.

The trauma recovery center (TRC) is the type of integrated rehabilitative community based service that the commission has been discussing and victims are articulating based on the results of the Illinois survey. A trauma recovery center is a place where people who have experienced crime whether through loss of a loved one, gun violence, sexual assault etc. can receive psychosocial support and intensive case management. They can go to one place and have all of their needs met such as navigating the legal system, help with medications, law enforcement, interpretation or transportation services as well as basic needs. Services are usually on a 16 week time frame and are provided free regardless of insurance, documentation status or level of income. There is an effective referral system that victims receive for continuum support upon release from the trauma recovery center.

Commissioners discussed similar services for Illinois and potential BOCA funding as an option. BOCA funding is dollars from fines through Federal cases. In the last year IL went from \$ 23M to \$ 80M. It is recognized that training will be needed to provide an entire system approach. A critical element to this will be the hospitals as it will allow for continuity especially with the HIPA laws. A Gap analysis is also needed demonstrating where services are currently and where critically needed to build capacity in those communities that have been most victimized. Additionally identify other players and services that can provide support and backfill considering limited resources.

In California, the first TRC was hospital based. There are now 6 different community-based extension programs. Each formed a 501c non-profit.

**Public Comment:**

Pastor of Bright Star Community Outreach addressed the group. Bright Star is developing a Dream Center. With the shootings in Chicago Bright Star is identifying faith leaders who can be trained and certified, based on the Israeli model to provide post trauma counselling. Training begins August 22 – September 23. Partners are University of Chicago Hospital, Northwestern Hospital and the United Way. In addition 19 schools participated in a survey of community needs with an 81% response rate. Areas identified were counseling, mentors, work force development and advocacy.

An individual from Little Village Community does outreach and works with an at risk youth group. As a community member who has also been impacted by violence (lost brother to murder in 2012) family did not feel justice was met. The system is overwhelmed and it is understood there is a budget crisis but having organizations such as the Alliance for Safety and Justice to talk to families, advice of eligibility and offer networking support would be amazing. Currently turning to faith based organizations that are also overwhelmed. Going with organizations that are already 501C3 certified that do not rely on government would be helpful.

Greg/Social worker and educator in the Chicago area suggested utilizing school social workers in the area of support services in the community. They are trained in victim assistance and delivery of service. Supports building capacity in faith based leaders to deliver victim assistance and building community capacity. Also take into consider communities inability to connect to agencies directly causing a lack of understanding of what actually the community needs. The result is programs that are not as robust as they could be.

Professor Doug Thomson addressed the group. Commissioners were provided with a handout regarding his remarks on responsible sentencing. Professor Thomson stated “What stands in the way is mandatory incarceration sentencing laws”. The history of Illinois residential burglary law was also addressed.

Professor Thomson also spoke of a program in New York called Common Justice. Common Justice deals with serious felonies often violent. The primary objective is to meet the needs of victims and at the same time tries to keep the individuals who have committed these harms out of prison. The offenders are placed in a program and are held accountable for what they have done. Common Justice requires victim consent before the offender is allowed in the program. Consistent with what we have heard today, more often victims give their consent.

Representative of Inner City Youth requested follow up on last month’s concerns discussion. Items addressed include:

- Grounds for early release – Specifics for eligibility will be provided
- State IDs – Bill has been introduced. Senate has passed
- 17 year old receives a life sentence. He has currently been in prison 35 years. What was his mental capacity at 17? Should this be a consideration in sentencing?
- Recommendations in the 1<sup>st</sup> report? The several administrative recommendations within the Department of Corrections are already underway. Those recommendations that require legislative changes have been put into bills and are moving forward. There are a few still in process.

### New Business

The next meeting will turn to the budget and capacity issues and how we sustain, implement and are accountable.

### Adjournment

The meeting of the Illinois State Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing adjourned 4:40 pm.