

Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission
April 12, 2007
Meeting Minutes

Members of the Commission Present: Brian Austin, Chair, Undersecretary, Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division, Office of Policy and Management; Commissioner Theresa Lantz, Department of Correction; Commissioner John Danaher III, Department of Public Safety; Commissioner Thomas Kirk, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services; Patricia Mayfield, Commissioner, Department of Labor; Judge William Lavery, Chief Court Administrator; William Carbone, Executive Director, Court Support Services Division, Judicial Branch; Kevin Kane, Chief State's Attorney; Robert Farr, Chair, Board of Pardons and Paroles; Nancy Kushins, Commission Member; Richard Healey, Commission Member; LTC Cheryl Malloy, Commission Member; Chief Francisco Ortiz, Commission Member; Leo Arnone representing the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families; Scott Newgass representing the Commissioner of the Department of Education; Diana Mason representing the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services; and Brian Carlow representing the Chief Public Defender.

Others Present: Peter Rockholz, Carol Salisbury, John Lahda, Richard Sparaco, Patrick Hynes, Randy Braren, Karl Lewis, Dan Bannish, Judith Rossi, Loel Meckel, Louise Pyers, Brian Hill, Steve Grant, Christine Fortunato, Donna Cupka, Ed Henion, Michael Peloso, Michael Aiello, Amonda Hannah, Alan Colandro, Joseph O'Keefe, Jerry Stowell, Joe Grzelak, Tom Berendt, John Forbes, Terry Schnure, Lisa Secondo, Linda Deconti, Alyse Chin, and Linda Hothan.

Chair Brian Austin convened the meeting to order at 9:03am. He introduced John Danaher III as the new Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety.

Minutes of February 8, 2007: Chair Brian Austin asked that the last full paragraph on page 8 under the Prevention Work Group presentation be deleted:

Of the 6 critical indicators . . . associations/companions (gang involvement)

Minutes, as amended, approved unanimously.

Correspondence: There was no correspondence.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Presentation: Dr. Stephen Cox
Director of Connecticut Statistical Analysis Center
Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice
Central Connecticut State University
2007 Annual Recidivism Study
2007 Prison Population Projection Study

Recidivism Rates

Recidivism rates of 8,221 (out of 9,501) inmates released from prison in CY2000 were assessed. This included released at end of sentence (from prison, parole, transitional supervision), and released with DOC supervision (to parole, transitional supervision, and community program).

End of Sentence Release	Reconviction Rate	Re-sentenced to Prison
From Prison	47%	26%
From Parole	27%	12%
From Trans Supervision	37%	16%
Rel with DOC Supervision		
To Parole	31%	19%
To Trans Supvsn	35%	21%
To Comm Progrm	24%	16%

Reconviction rates by offense type showed: property at 45%; criminal justice process at 45%; probation violation at 42% weapon at 41% personal at 38%; drug at 36%; other at 36%; motor vehicle at 31%; and sexual assault at 22%.

Overall recidivism findings:

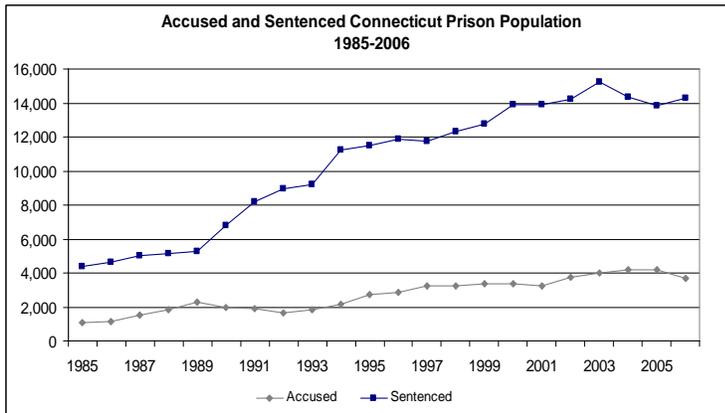
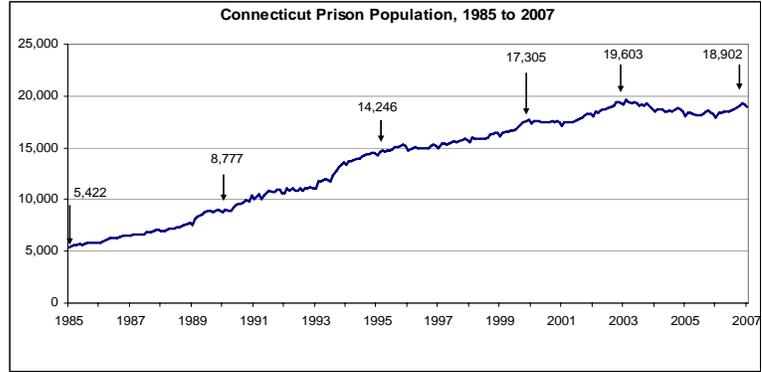
- Inmates released from prison with no community supervision were most likely to be reconvicted and re-sentenced to prison for a new offense.
- Property offenders and those offenders incarcerated for criminal justice process offenses have the highest reconviction rates.
- Inmates with probation supervision after completing their prison sentence have lower conviction rates than inmates leaving prison without community supervision.
- The recidivism rates found in this study are comparable to the 2001 Connecticut Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee report and to national studies of recidivism.

The CJPAC discussed the high remand rate for technical violations; that about 85% of DOC prisoners have a substance abuse problem; that 16- and 17-year olds need a detoxification center; and that statutory changes are needed to facilitate the siting of needed housing.

There was some discussion that the State should consider the policy implications of building more prisons versus investing in programs that have a proven track record; that some study should be done to determine if Connecticut has been over-incarcerating; and that thought needs to be given to incarceration for property offenses compared to violent offenses.

Population Projections

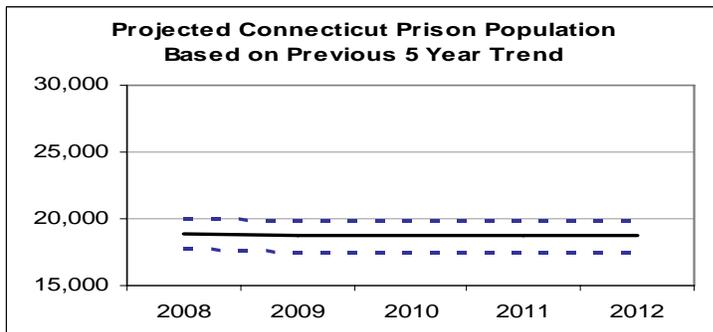
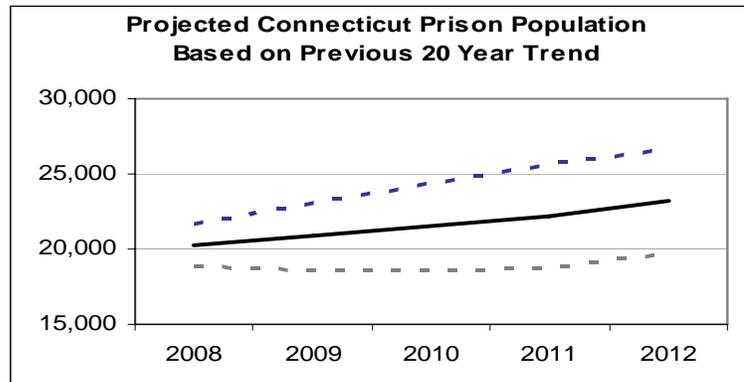
As seen in the chart on the right, there has been a 250% increase in the DOC population since 1985.



The DOC sentenced population has grown faster than the un-sentenced / accused / pre-trial population.

The sentenced population growth is directly related to legislative changes, e.g., loss of good time, requirements to serve 50% and 85% of sentence, etc.

If the 20-year projection is correct, the incarcerated population will exceed current DOC capacity.



However, given the success of Connecticut's re-entry initiatives, the incarcerated population growth could stabilize, as depicted on the chart on the left.

Overall summary of population projections:

- The 5 year trend suggests that the prison population will remain stable if current practices remain in place. Based on the 20 year trend, however, the prison population may increase well beyond current Department of Correction capacity.
- We believe the prison population increases have been caused by policy changes within the criminal justice system. Those factors commonly associated with increases in the prison population have had little or no direct effect in Connecticut (Connecticut's population, demographics, and crime statistics).
- While the accused prison population has more immediate effects on the overall prison population, the significant increase in the prison population is primarily due to increases in the sentenced population.
- In the last ten years, there has been an increase in the number of inmates on parole, in halfway houses, and on re-entry furloughs. These increases appear to be related to the more recent stabilization of the prison population.
- Three factors that were found to have a significant effect on the prison population were the
 - (1) number of people arraigned;
 - (2) number of people arraigned with charges requiring them to serve 85% of their prison sentence if convicted; and,
 - (3) number of people sentenced to prison.

Brian Austin asked that if CJPAC members had comments or wanted more/other statistics, to please contact Brian.Austin@po.state.ct.us or 860-418-6493.

OPM Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division Update:

Created on July 1, 2006, the CJPPD's goal is to promote a more effective and cohesive criminal justice system by:

- ensuring the efficient use of resources through research and policy development
- building and improving upon communication, collaboration and cooperation within the criminal justice system and it's constituent shareholders

With respect to the CJPPD's policy and planning activities:

- Biennial Comprehensive Plan is completed
- Annual Reentry Strategy is in progress
- Sentencing Task Force is in progress

With respect to the CJPPD's research and forecasting activities:

- The monthly admissions and releases report is completed
- Annual correctional population forecasting study is completed
- Annual recidivism study is completed

All reports are available on the OPM website at www.opm.state.ct.us.

Brian Austin noted that the Biennial Plan was developed from the submissions of 60 issues from the State's criminal justice and associated agencies which were then

consolidated into 11 initiatives. The structure of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan for the Connecticut Criminal Justice System includes:

- Overview of comprehensive criminal justice planning in Connecticut
- Strategies for continuous improvement in criminal justice system planning and evaluation
- Recommended activities for development, analysis and/or implementation

The 11 initiatives for 2007 were:

- Information technology
- Habeas reform
- Sex offender management
- Automated victim notification system
- Computer-facilitated child exploitation crimes
- Improve the diversity of employees in the criminal justice system
- Mental health training for all agencies involved in criminal justice issues
- Safety and security program for Connecticut schools
- Police and youth
- Youth violence
- Prison and jail overcrowding

Please contact Brian Austin at 860-418-6394 or Brian.Austin@ct.gov if you should have any questions.

Department of Correction Updates

Commissioner Lantz reported that:

DOC's total incarcerated population is 18,990, which is 589 over that of one year ago (3.2% increase). The accused population is 4,114, which is 73 people below that of one year ago (decrease of almost 2%). The sentenced (incarcerated) population is 14,876, which is 662 above that of the previous year (an increase of 4.7%).

The total number offenders supervised in the community on parole, special parole, transitional supervision, transfer parole and transitional placement is approximately 3,790, which is approximately a 10% increase over that of a year ago.

DOC contracts for over 1,200 halfway house beds; these beds are virtually filled at all times. There has been a 75% increase in such beds since 2003.

The number of offenders on re-entry furlough on April 1st, 2007, was 201; this is well above the 12-month average.

Judicial's Court Support Services Division Update

Executive Director William Carbone reported that:

The Probation Transition Program (PTP), which involves those out on 'split sentences' has shown that it can reduce the incidence of technical violations by 46%. The PTP in conjunction with the Technical Violations Unit has reduced incarceration rates for technical violations by 70%.

Currently, the PTP is serving 917 of the 2,700 PTP-eligibles (34%), and the TVU is serving 889 of the 3,600 TVU-eligibles (25%). More funding is needed for these programs.

In the past 4 years, the Jail Reinterview Program has had increasing success in the numbers of both clients interviewed and released:

	Interviewed	Released
2004	3,153	1,994 (63%)
2005	8,693	5,546 (64%)
2006	9,868	6,696 (68%)

In 2006, 82% of pretrial detainees released into the community were not re-arrested prior to disposition.

Department of Mental Health Update

Commissioner Kirk reported that DMHAS is proposing to establish 2 ten-bed recovery houses (sober houses) for persons primarily with stimulant abuse problems including those released from, or at-risk of entering, the criminal justice system. Requests for Proposals (RFPs) have been issued for Hartford and New Haven.

He also noted that 50-55% of people with psychiatric issues do not have a high school diploma or GED. There was some discussion about the proportion of resources expended on certain segments of the population.

Behavioral Health Subcommittee Update

The Behavioral Health Subcommittee has 2 working groups:

- System Barriers
- Housing and Employment

The Systems Barrier working group has identified 10 barriers, and has prioritized 2 barriers to be addressed immediately:

- 1) to develop a resolution to the problem of providing medications to pretrial inmates released from custody of the court. A special meeting will be held Thursday, May 24th to discuss this issue.
- 2) for those defendants with serious psychiatric symptoms charged with minor offenses (e.g., breach of peace, shoplifting, etc) who are not competent to stand trial, they can be civilly-committed to a hospital and be required to participate in treatment; if they comply with treatment, the charges are nolle. This process is rarely used, but can be used more often with good results.

The Housing and Employment work group reports that:

- 1) DOC discharged 277 sentenced inmates with severe and prolonged psychiatric disorders in SFY06; a large number of these were homeless. There are not enough shelter beds for this DMHAS clientele.
- 2) On April 27th, 4 members of the work group will travel to NYC to visit the nationally-recognized model 'Howie The Harp' Program, which provides employment training for people with severe/prolonged mental illness to work in the behavioral health field.

Relatedly, there are many problems getting medications to those inmates with serious and prolonged psychiatric disabilities leaving DOC facilities at the end of their sentence (EOS). Without their medications, some of these people can be dangerous.

Working Groups

Prevention: The work group reiterated several critical indicators for involvement with the system, namely:

- family support (children of prisoners; children raised by people other than their parents; father absence)
- behavioral health (mental health, alcohol/substance use/abuse)
- vocational/educational issues (literacy; underemployment/unemployment; poverty; learning disabilities; truancy)
- trauma (exposure to/victims of violence)
- associations/companions (gang involvement)
- age of onset/criminal history*

The work group requested direction from the CJPAC. Judge Lavery moved to have the Prevention work group concentrate on the following 3 areas:

- family support (children of prisoners; children raised by people other than their parents; father absence)
- vocational/educational issues (literacy; underemployment/unemployment; poverty; learning disabilities; truancy)
- associations/companions (gang involvement)

Following some discussion, the vote was unanimous.

Prison and Jail Overcrowding and Reentry: Commissioner Lantz reported that the work group would meet in May.

Victim Services:

Brian Austin reported that the work group members are reviewing the Chief State's Attorney's study of the automated victim notification system.

Nancy Kushins noted that CONNSACS had received grant funding from CSSD to employ victim advocates in all sex offender supervision units in the State. Connecticut

is the first state in the Nation to have this program statewide. In addition, money was also provided for CSSD to hire additional Probation Officers for its sex offender supervision program. She said "*CSSD is on the cutting edge in supervision of sex offenders*".

Other Business: there was some discussion about contacting other boards and commissions in the State to ascertain any cross-cutting issues for the CJPAC.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 10:56am.

NEXT MEETING
THURSDAY, JUNE 14TH
STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 410
9AM