

Connecticut Sentencing Task Force
Community Supervision/Alternative Sanctions and Sentencing Structure
Subcommittee Meeting Summary
August 20, 2007

Introduction- Chairman Farr

- Meeting commenced at 10:05 am

Recap of National Association of Sentencing Commissions Conference (Aug 5-7)

- Gained knowledge of what other states have done
- Found that other states face very similar issues regarding sentencing
- Similarities and differences among various sentencing commissions
- California is currently facing a correctional population crisis
- The importance of sentencing policy
- The model penal code should be reviewed by the CT sentencing task force
- Unique conference that combines both research and policy

Probation Statistics – Brian Hill (CSSD)

- Probation population by gender
- Probation population by race/ethnicity
- Probation population by age
- Average length of probation sentence by supervision level
- Average length of probation sentence by offense class
- Average length of probation sentence by offense type
- Average length of probation sentence by top ten offense categories

Discussion

-Treatment- making the appropriate determinations

-Court monitoring- seems to work well with intensive treatment

-Request for CSSD to provide statistics on the breakdown of misdemeanor and felony offenses for those individuals currently on probation

-The majority of CT's probation population is Caucasian- this is common for the community population as opposed to the incarcerated population

Summary of July 16th Meeting- Andrew Clark (Institute for the Study of Crime & Justice, CCSU)

- For a copy of the written summary please visit:
<http://www.ct.gov/opm/CriminalJustice/SentencingTaskforce>
- A recording of this meeting can be found on the CTN website

Current Types of Supervision in CT- Randy Braren (Board of Pardons and Paroles)

- 140 individuals on parole for burglary offenses- some of the most serious offenders on probation currently
- Electronic monitoring for those 140 parolees also on high alert status
- Those there is no research that shows curfew-monitoring devices reduce recidivism but it does increase compliance
- GPS is labor intensive, which could require additional staffing resources
- This initiative could potentially expand curfew monitoring across other offense categories

Discussion: Supervision Techniques- Addressing the Specific Needs of Offenders (led by Barb Tombs- Vera Institute of Justice)

-Classifying burglaries- Weapons vs. occupied dwellings

-Are there psychological differences between burglars that chose occupied dwellings vs. non-occupied dwellings? Need to search for research on this topic

-Prior conviction for a “like crime”- burglary is repetitious and there is a good likelihood that an individual convicted of burglary will re-offend.

-Need to combine the offense category with offender characteristics

Chairman Farr

- Request for additional OPM data
- Burglary will be a legislative issue next session
- We should view electronic monitoring as a tool not the answer to public safety.
- Assessment tools to identify psychopathy, these types of individuals pose threats both inside and outside of prison.

CSSD Recommendations

- Change probation length from 5yrs to 3 yrs- length of probation can decrease an individual’s motivation
- Pretrial program for individuals diagnosed with mental health issues
- These recommendations reflect a cultural change- the most important issue is compliance and treatment completion.
- The above recommendations exclude sex offenders
- Other states have mandatory probation periods based on offense type

Meeting Adjourned- 12:06pm

Next Subcommittee Meeting- Tuesday September 10, 2007 at 10:00 am

Next Full Task Force Meeting- Monday, September 24th at 1:00 pm

Next Steps- additional proposals- tentative proposals, mission statement for the subcommittee- bring in examples