

Connecticut Sentencing Task Force Retreat
Central Connecticut State University
Founder's Hall, Davidson Building
June 11, 2007
Meeting Summary

Committee Members in Attendance: Bob Farr (BOPP), Brian Austin (OPM), Randy Braren (BOPP), William Carbone (CSSD), Brian Carlow, Andrew Clark (CCSU), John Forbes (OPM), Kevin Kane, Theresa Lantz (DOC), Michael Lawlor, Fred Levesque, Peter Rockholz, Joe Rubin, David Shepack, Jerry Stowell (BOPP), Tom Ullman, James Papillo, Matthew Gedansky

9:10 – Meeting Commenced, Introduction by Chairman Farr

- *Purpose of a Sentencing Task Force*
- *Future goals*

9:15- Survey of Priorities Presentation by Lyndsay Ruffolo

- *Task Force members requested a copy of survey results which were distributed before the meeting adjourned*

9:25- Purposes of Sentencing Discussion led by Barb Tombs

- *Sentencing Exercise: Members were asked.....*
- *What is a sentencing philosophy and why it is necessary*

9:48- Discussion of Connecticut's Sentencing Philosophy vs. Individual case by case philosophy (Barb Tombs).

- *Examples of other state's sentencing philosophies that are set in statute, handouts were distributed to members*
- *Explanation of U.S sentencing vs. other countries*
- *Legislative action define Connecticut's current policy as opposed to a definitive overarching policy*
- *Discussion- Classification of crimes, prison population and what is wrong with our current system (Chief Mark Palmer).*
- *Parole and probation violators, how that state handles this population*
- *Drug charges/ plea bargaining, a serious offense can be plea bargained to a lesser charge (Chairman Farr)*
- *Victim's groups becoming splintered, it is imperative that all groups share a common philosophy and all groups are represented*
- *Sentencing Task Force disproportionate? Representation is predominately white male while the criminal justice system is comprised of an overwhelming minority population. Most members agree to nominate additional minority members*

11:00- Break

11:15- Meeting Reconvenes, Sentencing Comparisons from Other States (Barb Tombs)

- *Mission statements from other state's Sentencing Commission's were distributed to members*
- *Deterrence and punishment, finding a balance*
- *General deterrence, can it be fair?*
- *What is the role of deterrence? Punishment or retribution?*
- *Discussion- balancing fairness and public safety*
- *Clarification of statistics is necessary- OPM collects criminal justice statistics (Brian Austin)*
- *Connecticut ranks 25/26 per capita*
- *It is important to note how charges are prosecuted within the State- Some states do not have plea bargaining or flexibility, it may be useful to examine the plea bargaining rates and tendencies of other states such as Minnesota, Kansas, North Carolina and Delaware (Chairman Farr)*

12:00- Lunch

1:00 – Discuss the Purpose of Sentencing in Connecticut: State Perspective and Priorities Goals (Barb Tombs)

- Members collectively defined the goals and philosophy of task force as outlined below
 1. *To separate dangerous offenders from non-dangerous (risk vs. non-risk to a third party)*
 2. *To hold offenders accountable*
 3. *Cost effectiveness*
 4. *Rehabilitation/ reintegration / Deterrence*
 5. *Public safety*
 6. *Retribution*
 7. *To be fair, just and equitable (sentencing of criminal justice policy)*
 8. *Restorative*

2:00- Prison Population Presentation (Dr. Stephen Cox)

- *Outlined Connecticut's past and current prison population trends*
- *Suggested that criminal justice policy changes in Connecticut is responsible for the significant prison population increase.*
- *Explained that prison population growth is due to increases in the sentenced population*

2:30- Identifying the Goals of the Sentencing Task Force

- *Subcommittees Established: Offense Classification; Sentencing Structure; Disparity; Community Supervision/Alternative Sanctions*
- *Subcommittee member sign-up*
- *Tasks and deliverables assigned (Barb Tombs)*

- *Overview of timeline*

3:00- Next Steps, Chairman Farr

- Review of Task Force Time line
- Establish meeting schedule for subcommittees
- Potential meeting destinations- CSSD, DOC, CCSU, LOB