OPERATION AND LEADERSHIP

Committees of diverse membership – including members outside of the Commission and its Advisory Committee – and Ad Hoc Committees meet regularly, while the full Commission meets quarterly. The next full Commission meeting is December 12, 2019. Chief Justice O'Connor chairs the Commission and the Vice-Chair is Judge Nick Selvaggio from the Champaign County Court of Common Pleas.

SENTENCING COMMISSION PROJECT UPDATES

⸻ **Bail and Pretrial Services**

Grant Project: We continue our work on the grant that we were awarded in collaboration with the Office of Criminal Justice Services regarding data collection for bail and pretrial services with a variety of courts on the project. The summary description is as follows:

> Under the Special Emphasis project, OCJS will collaborate with the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission, an affiliated office of the Supreme Court of Ohio, to move Ohio municipal and common pleas courts toward better and more comprehensive data collection on bail and pretrial services. OCJS and the Criminal Sentencing Commission will carry out the following activities:
>
> 1) Assess the quality of local court data and examine the extent to which these records can support analysis of bail and pretrial services;
>
> 2) Make recommendations regarding data collection based on local needs and the standards identified as most critical in assessing outcome and performance measures for the bail and pretrial services field, and their related court functions; and
>
> 3) To work with identified courts on early implementation of these recommendations.

Pretrial Services Survey: This summer we also embarked on a groundbreaking survey of Ohio pretrial practices. The Commission has a team of interns, representing several universities, assigned to the project. The survey team contacted local court officials to schedule phone interviews to conduct the survey. We are now conducting qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis to capture the intricate picture of pretrial practices of the near 200 courts that participated in the survey. Following this vibrant survey process, the researchers at the Commission will compile results and produce a report for presentation.

⸻ **Uniform Sentencing Entry**

The Commission established a Uniform Sentencing Entry Ad Hoc Committee in September 2019 to develop a model, uniform sentencing entry prescribing the minimum information required in a felony sentencing entry. Providing a uniform entry with the minimum standards required allows the Courts to include supplemental information to the uniform entry as necessary. The Ad Hoc Committee coincides with the Supreme Court asking its Commission on Technology and the Courts to create a workgroup to explore opportunities for standardizing and reporting sentencing information in a format that will improve the reporting and analysis of sentencing data. These two groups will coordinate efforts and seize the opportunity to develop key sentencing data elements and connect the evolution of sentencing structure with preparation of the sentencing entry.

⸻ **Reagan Tokes Law**

The Commission continues to conduct implementation trainings regarding *132 GA SB201* "The Reagan Tokes Law" and recently met with the bill sponsors, the Ohio Judicial Conference, and the Legislative Service Commission to discuss necessary legislative fixes to bring clarity and simplification to indefinite sentencing process and procedure.

⎯ **Appellate Review of Felony Sentencing**

Sentencing Commission members and the Ohio Judicial Conference continue to work on a legislative proposal to amend ORC 2952.08 dealing with appellate review of felony sentencing. The chapter currently contains language that has been subject to inconsistent and often conflicting interpretation throughout the state. These efforts are intended to provide a method for uniform and meaningful review of felony sentencing by appellate courts through clear drafting and concise statements of standards.

⎯ **Parole Board Project**

In collaboration with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, the Commission is currently examining characteristics of the currently incarcerated, parole-eligible inmates to compare to similar offenders that were recently paroled from 2014 to 2018. The purpose of this analysis is to understand any potential differences in parole determinations among those sentenced pre- and post-SB2. This analysis will also focus on characteristics such as offense committed, degree of offense, and demographic characteristics for each group.

⎯ **Jail recidivism**

The Commission has been working in collaboration with the Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association, the Stepping Up initiative in Ohio and the Council of State Governments on a project to, among other things, define and measure jail recidivism. We're pleased to share that the definition of jail recidivism can be found here. We are also considering partnering the conversation of defining jail recidivism with an effort to identify trends and patterns of jail population over time using the historical jail data the Commission has from the early 2000s in combination with more recent data.

⎯ **Data Analysis**

One of the Commission's ongoing priorities is sensible criminal justice and drug reform in Ohio. We believe constructive conversation about treatment and program resources, capacity, and outcomes is critical to getting it right, but constructive conversation is not possible without movement towards a data-informed environment. Data at the aggregate level could provide Ohio with a framework designed to reduce criminal justice involvement and move people with drug dependency and mental health needs into treatment that works.

Thus, we are working with members of the General Assembly to include language authorizing (and obligating) the Sentencing Commission to regularly monitor and report on the implementation, application, and administration of legislation enacted that impacts sentencing. Empowering the Commission to collect aggregate criminal justice data will provide an unprecedented level of information for system practitioners and policy makers that can, in turn, be used to develop and implement new law enforcement interventions and policing strategies, to refine extant criminal justice policies, and to leverage resources and programming to improve outcomes. Robust data and information translates to a safer, fairer, and more cost-efficient criminal justice system.