

CONNECTICUT SENTENCING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

Thursday, January 9, 2025

MINUTES

Members Present: Judge Robin Pavia (chair), John Santa (vice chair), Michael Gailor, Gary Roberge, Deborah Del Prete Sullivan (on behalf of the Chief Public Defender), Judge Gerald Harmon, Jennifer Zaccagnini, Stephen Tavares, Patrick Griffin, Jennifer Zito, Anna VanCleave, Maurice Reaves (on behalf of OPM), Elizabeth Bozzuto, Natasha Pierre, Kelly Sinko Steuber (on behalf of DMHAS)

Staff: Alex Tsarkov (Executive Director), Andrew Clark, Tommy Dowd, Chenoa Greenlee, Scott Warden, Valerie Gordon

Guests: Deborah Dorfman, Sachin Pandya, Mary Janicki, Kevin Lawlor, CT-N

I. MEETING CONVENED

- Judge Pavia convened the meeting at 2:01pm.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE 11.14.2024 MEETING

- The minutes from 11.14.2024 were approved.

III. UPDATE ON SENTENCING DATABASE STUDY - Sachin S. Pandya, University of Connecticut School of Law

- Sachin Pandya updated Commission members on the progress of the sentencing database study.
 - By the end of January, Pandya and research partner Vaughn Crichlow will have conducted 21 interviews with stakeholders from 8 jurisdictions.
 - They are identifying successes and challenges from other jurisdictions to inform their recommendations to the Commission.
 - The researchers plan to code interviews this semester and complete a draft report by fall.
 - The team seeks additional internal stakeholders to interview; please contact them if you have suggestions.

IV. PROPOSAL FOR CONSIDERATION - An Act Concerning Supervised Diversionary Program

- Judge Pavia reviewed the proposal.
 - Last year, a similar proposal was adopted by the Commission but failed to gain approval in the General Assembly.
 - This year, the proposal has been amended to address concerns from various state agencies.
- Alex Tsarkov outlined additional changes to the proposal.
- Gary Roberge, Natasha Pierre, and Kelly Sinko Steuber added comments.
- The proposal passed without opposition, with abstentions from Maurice Reaves (on behalf of OPM) and Kelly Sinko Steuber (on behalf of DMHAS).

V. AN ACT CONCERNING BAIL DECISIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS ARRESTED ON A BENCH WARRANT

- Judge Pavia updated Commission members on the status of the proposal.
 - The Judicial Branch is discussing ways to adopt the proposal's changes administratively. Thus, the Commission will not vote on the proposal.

VI. UPDATE ON INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (IDD) STUDY - Deborah Dorfman, Disability Rights Connecticut, Executive Director

- Deborah Dorfman updated Commission members on the progress of the IDD study.
 - Dorfman recognized attorneys Gina Teixeira and Rachel Mirsky (in attendance), as well as Yale and UConn Law students, for their contributions.
 - The researchers are nearly done with the initial research process and are moving on to the interview phase of the project. The team has developed interview questions and is awaiting IRB approval.
 - The research team has requested data from DDS and may prepare additional data requests.

VII. APPROVAL OF 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

- The annual report is a statutorily required report summarizing the activities of the Commission in 2024.
- Alex Tsarkov thanked Commission staff and interns for their work on this report.
- The annual report was approved.

VIII. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

a. Mental Health Subcommittee

- Jennifer Zito provided the update.
 - The next Subcommittee meeting is on February 25th. Agenda items include a presentation by the Yale Mental Health Justice Clinic on diversionary programs in other states, an update on the Yale SEICHE Center reentry study, and a discussion of the Commission's 2025 legislative agenda.
 - The Subcommittee is continuing to oversee reports on the competency to stand trial process and mental health diversionary programs.

b. Criminal Procedure and Sentencing Subcommittee

- Alex Tsarkov provided the update.
 - At its December 3rd meeting, the Subcommittee debriefed on the annual symposium, discussed the bail proposal from Inspector General Devlin, reviewed new data on the seven percent cash bail policy, and discussed the hate crimes report.
 - The Commission has finalized an MOU with the Judicial Branch to obtain pretrial data, which will be analyzed for the pretrial report.
 - The Subcommittee aims to finalize and vote on the hate crimes report and human trafficking memorandum at its March meeting.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

- Judge Pavia congratulated outgoing Commission member Sarah Russell on her appointment to the federal bench.
- Pavia adjourned the meeting at 2:38pm.