

CONNECTICUT SENTENCING COMMISSION

Criminal Procedure and Sentencing Committee

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

1:00 – 2:30 PM

Members Present: Michael Gailor (co-chair of Committee), Deborah Del Prete Sullivan (co-chair of Committee), John Santa (vice chair of Commission), Judge Joseph Schwartz, Michael Hines, Anna VanCleave, Lisa D'Angelo, Colin Milne (on behalf of Jennifer Zaccagnini), Patrick Griffin, Joe Garibaldi

Staff: Rich Sparaco, Tommy Dowd, Matthew Hono, Jordan Oquendo, Andrew Clark, Lydia Wileden

Guests: Brian Austin, Bryan Sperry, Chris Moran, Michael Jones, Tom Canny

AGENDA

- I. MEETING CONVENED
 - Deborah Sullivan convened the meeting at 1:04 PM.
- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE 11.18.2025 MEETING
 - The minutes from the 11.18.2025 meeting were approved.
- III. PRESENTATION ON EARLY SCREENING INITIATIVE – Brian Austin, Senior Assistant State's Attorney, Community Court, Hartford
 - Brian Austin, Senior Assistant State's Attorney, presented on the Early Screening and Intervention (ESI) Program.
 - Austin provided an overview of the program, including its goals, requirements, eligibility considerations, length, and overall focus on the root causes of criminal behavior.
 - Michael Hines, Rich Sparaco, and Matthew Hono asked follow-up questions.
 - Patrick Griffin and Judge Joseph Schwartz added comments.
 - Griffin stressed the need for more funding to expand the ESI program.
- IV. UPDATE ON PRETRIAL WORKING GROUP
 - Rich Sparaco provided an update.

- The pretrial working group started meeting weekly in October to examine pretrial procedures, outcomes, and potential policy interventions.
- The group has focused considerable attention on the pretrial detention of misdemeanor defendants.
- The group unanimously voted to recommend more mental health treatment beds for individuals in pretrial detention, especially for female defendants.
 - The Committee unanimously endorsed this proposal and will recommend it to the full Commission.
- Michael Gailor and Deborah Sullivan added comments.

V. OTHER UPDATES

- Rich Sparaco provided an update.
 - Commission staff are continuing to work on three studies: (1) a two-part pretrial study, which will include a quantitative analysis of pretrial trends in Connecticut and a comparative legal analysis of jurisdictions that have transitioned away from a means-based system; (2) a study on Connecticut's human trafficking statutes; and (3) a study on sentencing outcomes in cases of domestic violence homicide.

VI. DISCUSSION ON 2026 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

- The Committee endorsed a proposal from the pretrial working group, as discussed above.
- Michael Gailor would like the Committee to consider recommending additional funding for the ESI Program.
 - Michael Hines and John Santa agreed.
 - Patrick Griffin spoke about his discussions with the Office of the Chief Public Defender regarding the ESI Program.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

- The next Criminal Procedure and Sentencing Committee meeting will be held on March 9.
- Michael Gailor adjourned the meeting at 1:52 PM.