CONNECTICUT SENTENCING COMMISSION

Steering Committee

Wednesday, August 26, 2026

1:00 – 3:00 PM

Microsoft Teams

Members: Judge David Gold (Commission Chair), John Santa (Commission Vice Chair), Bill Dyson, Jennifer Zito, Bevin Salmon (on behalf of John Day), Patrick Griffin, Daniel Karpowitz, Michael Gailor

Staff: Rich Sparaco, Tommy Dowd, Andrew Clark, Mike Cronin, Patrick Riley, Lydia Wileden, Ken Barone, Christian Isidoro

Guests: Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, John DelBarba, Sam Sommers, Gus Marks-Hamilton

MINUTES

I. MEETING CONVENED
- Judge David Gold convened the meeting at 1:03 PM.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE 6.23.2026 MEETING
- The minutes from the 6.23.2026 meeting were approved.

III. COMMITTEE AND PROJECT UPDATES
   a. Criminal Procedure and Sentencing
      i. Pretrial Comparative Report – Christian Isidoro, CT Sentencing Commission Legal Analyst
         - Christian Isidoro presented an update on the pretrial comparative report, including an overview of the report's evolution, structure, and examples of comparative analyses contained therein.
         - Bill Dyson thanked Isidoro for an informative presentation.
         - Judge David Gold contemplated whether the report should be presented at the upcoming Commission meeting, noting that the report was likely to generate substantial discussion and would therefore require sufficient time on the agenda.
            - Rich Sparaco noted that the report was expected to be the primary agenda item for the upcoming meeting, with

possible additional presentations on the pretrial quantitative report and the sentencing disparities report.
    - Judge Gold stated that the Commission would decide after reviewing the full agenda.
- Daniel Karpowitz asked whether the report would address current practices and recent reforms in Connecticut.
    - Isidoro confirmed that the report addresses these topics.
- Andrew Clark asked about the process for adopting the report.
    - Judge Gold explained that the report's findings would be presented at one meeting, with consideration and approval of the final report at the following meeting.
    - Dyson commented that pretrial release and detention could receive significant attention during the upcoming legislative session and encouraged the Commission to contribute to the policy discussion by publishing its reports in a timely manner.

ii. Pretrial Quantitative Report
- Rich Sparaco provided an update.
    - Sachin Pandya, who is leading the report, has forwarded a draft to Commission staff and the co-chairs of the Criminal Procedure and Sentencing Committee.
    - Pandya may present the report's findings at the upcoming Commission meeting.
- Dr. Lydia Wileden explained that the report's data analysis and resulting conclusions are complex and may be inaccessible for the public. She suggested that the report may require substantial revisions to improve its accessibility before it is considered for adoption by the Commission.
    - Daniel Karpowitz echoed the importance of accessibility while noting that pretrial release and detention could receive significant attention during the upcoming legislative session.
    - Mike Gailor and Deborah Sullivan advocated for presenting the report alongside the pretrial comparative report.
        - Sparaco suggested presenting both reports at the upcoming Commission meeting, but Sullivan expressed concern that there may be insufficient time to adequately address both reports during a single meeting.

- Andrew Clark agreed that pretrial release and detention could receive significant legislative attention and suggested holding a full-day event to discuss both reports and the issue more broadly.
    - Jennifer Zito endorsed the idea and suggested inviting legislators to participate.
    - Sparaco suggested replacing the November Commission meeting with the proposed event.
- Bill Dyson suggested presenting the Commission's pretrial research reports at a national conference.

iii. Pretrial Working Group

- Representative Renee LaMark Muir requested that the Commission provide a final summary document reflecting the Working Group's discussions and findings.
- Commission staff will update the interim report to produce a final summary document.

b. Mental Health

- At its June 17 meeting, the Commission accepted the Mental Health Committee's recommendations regarding a diversionary program for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities by a vote of 17-1.
    - Commission staff are currently drafting potential language to codify these recommendations as a formal proposal for the 2027 legislative session.
- The Committee did not meet in the summer. Its next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 5.
- Additionally, the Committee is continuing to oversee two additional research initiatives: (1) a study on the experiences of individuals seeking mental health and substance abuse treatment after release from prison or while on community supervision; and (2) a study cataloguing behavioral health diversionary programs in Connecticut.

c. Data Analytics

- Rich Sparaco, Daniel Karpowitz, and Justice Joan Alexander will meet soon to discuss next steps for the Committee.

- Sparaco provided a brief update on the court processing efficiencies study, explaining that data from CISS alone will not be sufficient to fully answer the Judiciary Committee's research request.

d. Other reports
   - The Commission is continuing to work on two research initiatives that do not fall under the purview of a specific committee: (1) a study assessing the feasibility of establishing a statewide sentencing database; and (2) a study of disparities in pretrial and sentencing outcomes.
     - Final reports for both projects are expected by the end of 2026.

IV. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SENTENCING COMMISSIONS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

a. Debrief
   - Rich Sparaco provided an update.
     - The National Association of Sentencing Commissions (NASC) 2026 Annual Conference was held on August 12-14 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.
     - The Commission led a five-person delegation to the conference: Sparaco, Dr. Lydia Wileden, Tommy Dowd, Jordan Oquendo, and John DelBarba.
     - Commission staff will be preparing a presentation for the upcoming Commission meeting to share key takeaways from the conference.
   - DelBarba shared takeaways from the conference, highlighting the advanced data analysis capabilities of other sentencing commissions and their access to real-time criminal justice data.
     - Daniel Karpowitz asked whether he could raise these observations with Judicial Branch leadership and expressed support for data sharing efforts on behalf of the Governor.

b. Possible hosting in 2027
   - Rich Sparaco provided an update.
     - At the conference, members of the NASC Executive Committee asked whether our Commission would be interested in hosting the conference in August 2027.
     - There are several responsibilities, but the Executive Committee would provide substantial support.

        - Sparaco will forward information from the Executive Committee regarding hosting responsibilities and the conference planning timeline.
    - Sparaco noted that hosting could bring positive attention to the Commission's work.
        - Dr. Lydia Wileden agreed, explaining that the host state is featured prominently on the conference agenda.
- Judge David Gold asked members to consider the request, which will be discussed by the full Commission at its upcoming meeting.
- Jennifer Zito, John DelBarba, and John Santa expressed support for hosting the conference.

V. UPCOMING SCHEDULE

a. Full Commission meeting on September 9
- The next full meeting of the Sentencing Commission will be held on September 9, from 1-3 PM, in Room 1E of the Legislative Office Building.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

a. Update on hiring activities
- Ken Barone provided an update.
    - The associate director position was posted on August 24 and will remain open through September 10.
    - Next steps include determining who will serve on the hiring committee and what its duties will be.
    - Jennifer Zito asked about the salary range for the position.
        - Barone responded that the range is broad, with a midpoint of $99,000.

b. Request from Ray Boyd
- Judge David Gold discussed a request from Ray Boyd, who asked to meet with the Commission to discuss a no-cash bail system.
    - John Santa expressed his desire for more specificity regarding the request.
    - Jennifer Zito asked whether the Commission should respond in writing.
- Members decided that Rich Sparaco would respond to Boyd by highlighting the Commission's ongoing work on pretrial release and detention.

c. Review of Sentencing Commission statutory mandates under CGS 54-300
    - The Committee did not discuss this agenda item.

d. Other
    - Rich Sparaco summarized a recent meeting with Gary Roberge and Mike Aiello regarding potential uses for the $750,000 appropriated to the Judicial Branch for female mental health beds.
        - Sparaco discussed various potential options with Roberge and Aiello.
        - Roberge and Aiello will present such options to the Commission at its upcoming meeting.
    - John Santa adjourned the meeting at 2:37 PM.