

JAIL & CORRECTIONS REFORM TASK FORCE

Minutes of the 1st Meeting of the 2023 Interim

June 12, 2023

Call to Order and Roll Call

The 1st meeting of the Jail & Corrections Reform Task Force was held on Monday, June 12, 2023, at 11:00 AM, in Room 129 of the Capitol Annex. Representative Josh Bray, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator John Schickel, Co-Chair; Representative Josh Bray, Co-Chair; Senators Brandon J. Storm, Robin L. Webb, and Whitney Westerfield; Representatives David Hale, Keturah Herron, and Jason Petrie.

Guests: Jim Henderson, Executive Director, Kentucky Association of Counties; Shellie Hampton, Director of Government Affairs, Kentucky Association of Counties; James Daley, Campbell County Jailer, President, Kentucky Jailers Association; Josh Lindblom, Hardin County Jailer; Arthur Maglinger, Daviess County Jailer; and Jason Woosley, Grayson County Jailer.

LRC Staff: Roberta Kiser, Randall Roof, and Jennifer Smith

The County's Role in the Criminal Justice System

Jim Henderson, Executive Director and Shellie Hampton, Director of Government Affairs with the Kentucky Association of Counties provided an overview of the types of jail facilities that operate in the Commonwealth. Mr. Henderson stated that 70 counties operate full-service jails, 43 counties do not have a jail, and 4 regional jails operate throughout the Commonwealth. Mr. Henderson provided the members with an estimate of the costs to the counties of operating jails. Further, he stated that the counties are currently housing 45 percent of all state inmates as of April 2023.

Ms. Hampton presented the legal and legislative history of how county jails became responsible for housing state inmates. In the 1980s, the Kentucky Supreme Court ruled that counties could house state inmates. In 1992, the General Assembly enacted a law that allowed a county to house a Class D felon for a per diem reimbursement. This resulted in new jail construction as counties began to see the opportunity to subsidize their jail costs by housing state inmates. Over time, the costs to the jail began to rise higher than the per diem rate to house state inmates.

In response to Senator Storm, Mr. Henderson stated that the association would provide information to the task force regarding the number of inmates that are currently being held awaiting trial in proportion to the total number of inmates. Also, the association would provide the number of jails with contracts to house federal inmates.

In response to Senator Westerfield and Representative Petrie, Mr. Henderson stated that the association would provide information to the task force regarding the costs of operating each of the county jails and regional jails.

In response to Representative Petrie, Mr. Henderson explained the differences between a full-service jail and a regional jail in regards to operation and costs.

Overview of the County Jail System

James Daley, Campbell County Jailer, President; Josh Lindblom, Hardin County Jailer; Arthur Maglinger, Daviess County Jailer; and Jason Woosley, Grayson County Jailer of the Kentucky Jailers Association presented an update to the members regarding jail populations, jail budgets, and the effects of recent legislative enactments. Mr. Woosley described the current challenges facing the county jail system, including backlog in the court system and the high number of inmates with mental illnesses. Also, Mr. Woosley stated that many inmates are not eligible to participate in jail programs due to the delay in classification by the Kentucky Department of Corrections. Mr. Daley proposed the establishment of a uniform training program for all deputy jailers to provide safety for both the inmates and jail staff.

In response to Chairman Bray, Mr. Lindblom provided an overview of the inmate classification process completed by the Department of Corrections.

In response to Senator Webb, Mr. Daley stated that the Campbell County Jail has a full-time employee who is responsible for the classification of an inmate while he or she is housed in the jail. Mr. Woosley explained that most jails with Class D programs have employees that can classify individual inmates.

In response to Rep. Herron, Mr. Woosley described the types of work programs that Class D inmates can participate in while they are housed in county jails including road crews and building projects. Mr. Lindblom described some of the benefits the inmates receive from participating in these work programs.

In response to Representative Petrie, Mr. Lindblom stated that the per diem rate is not collected until the inmate has been finally sentenced.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:37 P.M.