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ASSOCIATION  
of **NONPROFITS**

*...to serve, strengthen  
and support Connecticut's  
nonprofit community.*

Testimony before the Judicial & Corrections Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee  
Regarding H.B.6380, AAC the Budget for the Biennium Ending June 20, 2013

(Related to Judicial & Corrections)

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Senator Harp, Representative Walker, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee: I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Julia Wilcox, Senior Public Policy Specialist for the Connecticut Association of Nonprofits (CT Nonprofits.) CT Nonprofits is a membership organization that represents more than 525 nonprofit agencies. Approximately 300 of our member agencies contract with State government for a variety of human and social services. The following testimony is presented on behalf of the Community Justice Division of Providers who contract with DOC and/or CSSD.

For years, nonprofit providers have come before you and testified in favor of expanding treatment programs and alternatives to incarceration. In these fiscally challenging times, this strategy is not only best for the populations directly served through the criminal justice system, but for the state of Connecticut. Support and expansion of Reentry Programs have historically served as an extensive cost savings measure, which not only increases public safety, but strengthens the very fabric of our communities. As you continue your efforts to address the state budget crisis, it is essential to view the support of community-based, re-entry services (as provided by the nonprofit provider network) not as an 'expense,' but rather, an 'investment' in human capital and the welfare of our state.

There are many reasons for stakeholders and providers of reentry related services to be encouraged by several recent developments and anticipated 'shift' in terms of awareness of the significant value of the reentry process in the state. Most notably, the Governor is to be commended for the far-reaching implications of the recent appointment of Michael Lawlor, Under Secretary for Criminal Justice Policy and Planning of OPM.

On behalf of the nonprofit provider reentry community, CT Nonprofits urges your continued support of the following concepts, as outlined in the Governor's Proposed Biennium Budget:

- No across-the-board cuts to nonprofit health and human services contracts.
- Overarching, increased support of concepts related to reentry and prevention-based initiatives
- Implementation of the 'Raise the Age' initiative.
- Implement an Offender Management Incentive Program to Allow Early Release
- Substitute Prison Time with House Arrest for DUI and Minor Drug Arrests

- Closure of one unspecified DOC facility during FY 13. (Please Note: While no funding enhancement for contracted community-based services is provided, the concept supported through this initiative reflects support of the re-entry process, and alternative services.)

CT Nonprofits urges your attention & consideration regarding the following areas of concern:

- Eliminate Funding for Distance Learning and Children of Incarcerated Parents Programs: Reduction: SFY12=120,000; SFY13=120,000 (Please Note: Funding for Children of Incarcerated Parents remains the CSSD Budget @ \$350,000 each year. However – total reduction in services remains a concern.)
- Reduce Funds for Board of Pardons & Paroles: Potential for reduced efficiency related to processing: SFY12=250,000; SFY13=250,000

**At this time, among the primary concerns related to re-entry services are the proposed CSSD Budget - Reallocations or Transfers as follows:**

Transfer Multi-Agency Pass Through Funding from CSSD to Agencies: Transfer private provider pass-through funding from the Court Support Services Division within the Judicial Department to the agencies that negotiate the contracts as follows:

- \$8,252,316 to the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
- \$2,072,413 to the Department of Children and Families
- \$1,827,687 to the Department of Correction (Reallocate funds from the Judicial Department's Court Support Services Division (CSSD) to consolidate dollars now transferred by the Division to the DOC for privately contracted sex offender treatment beds, mental health programming and other non-residential services.)
- \$658,000 to the University of Connecticut Health Center
- \$36,000 to the Connecticut State University System
- \$10,000 to the Department of Social Services

The initial intent of the proposed transfers is not entirely clear at this point. While the purpose may have been to strengthen the effectiveness and accountability for the programs involved, the re-allocations present a tremendous concern around the final priorities associated with all. While addressing recidivism may be the primary priority for the Court Support Services Division, this may not be the case for other state agencies to which the funds are to be transferred. In the event that additional reductions are required, it would be a critical concern if those State Agencies slated for the transfers, did not maintain these programs as the priority that they deserve.

In closing, I would encourage you to contact providers within your local communities. The ability of the state of CT to adequately meet the needs of its residents is greatly dependent upon the ability of the Private Provider Community to sustain a vibrant network, which will continue to serve as the ultimate safety net for Connecticut's citizens at risk. I thank you for your time and consideration. I would be pleased to answer any questions at this time.

∞ Related Information & Reports ∞

Department of Correction (DOC)	
Total number of nonprofit providers under contract	27
Number of non- residential providers	16
Number of residential providers	19
Total number of individual residential programs	48
Total number of contracted Beds	1,192

Court Support Services Division (CSSD)	
Total number of nonprofit providers under contract	59
Number of residential providers	8
Number of non- residential providers	57
Total contracted beds (Note: Does not count the additional 299 beds that CSSD purchases from DMHAS and DOC)	426

→ For information related to DOC funded programs provided by the private, nonprofit network available within the communities of Connecticut, please refer to the following:

Directory of Contracted Community Programs: Connecticut Department of Correction - Parole and Community Services, Brian K. Murphy, Acting Commissioner, Joseph Haggan, Director of Parole and Community Services. (November 2009)

<http://www.ct.gov/doc/lib/doc/pdf/contractedcommprogdirectory.pdf>

→ State of Connecticut 2010 Annual Recidivism Report: Annual report published in response to the statutory requirements outlined in Public Act 05-249. The legislation created the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division (CJPPD) within the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) and tasked the Division with issuing an annual report on the recidivism of offenders released from the custody of the Department of Correction (DOC) and from probation. (February 15, 2010)

[http://www.ct.gov/opm/lib/opm/cjppd/cjresearch/recidivismstudy/2010\\_0215\\_recidivismstudy.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/opm/lib/opm/cjppd/cjresearch/recidivismstudy/2010_0215_recidivismstudy.pdf)

→ “Partners in Progress” The State of Connecticut Re-entry Strategy

<http://www.ct.gov/doc/lib/doc/PDF/PDFReport/StrategicPlanReentry09.pdf>

→ 2009 Annual Report, Connecticut Department of Correction

<http://www.ct.gov/doc/lib/doc/PDF/PDFReport/annualreport2009.pdf>

→ National Reentry Resource Center- Established by the Second Chance Act, the NRRC provides information related to the field of prisoner reentry. <http://www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/>

→ Final Report of the Governor's Sentencing & Parole Review Task Force - January 22, 2008

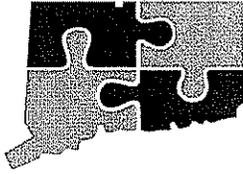
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→ 'Redemption' in an Era of Widespread Criminal Background Checks: National Institute for Justice

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/journals/263/redemption.htm#author#author>

For additional information, please contact:

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## 2011 Legislative Agenda

### Community Justice Providers of Reentry Services

Nonprofit reentry services are crucial to the safety and well-being of our communities. Evidence-based research clearly demonstrates that a period of community supervision and targeted interventions lowers the risk of recidivism. We strongly recommend the support and expansion of treatment programs and alternatives to incarceration. Nonprofits provide these services in an efficient, cost-effective manner outside of institutional settings so that formerly incarcerated individuals may re-build and maintain community ties and supports, and break the cycle of recidivism. As the state and its partners in the nonprofit community face an unprecedented budget deficit, it is essential to view the support of community-based, reentry services not as an 'expense,' but rather, an 'investment' in human capital and the welfare of our state.

We believe that the following priorities represent necessary steps to ensure the sustainability of essential reentry services:

#### **A. Support Existing Programs:**

Support and expansion of reentry services have historically served as an extensive cost savings measure, which not only increases public safety, but strengthens the very fabric of our communities. In these fiscally challenging times, this strategy is not only best for the populations directly served through the criminal justice system, but for the state of Connecticut. The Nonprofit Provider network continues to serve the state on the 'front lines' through initiatives and programs which focus upon a vast array of service needs. The ability of the state of Connecticut to adequately meet the needs of its residents is greatly dependent upon the ability of the Private Provider Community to sustain a vibrant network, which will continue to serve as the ultimate safety net for Connecticut's citizens at risk.

#### **B. Continued Efforts to Eliminate Barriers to Successful Reentry - Employment Opportunities & Housing:**

Support incentives for employers, as well as expansion of 'Ban the Box' legislation. Improve access to affordable, sustainable housing alternatives: Transitional housing, supportive housing, affordable, market-rate opportunities.

#### **C. Increased, State-wide Coordination of Reentry Services:**

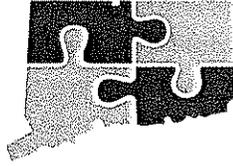
Support efforts to increase communication and collaboration among all stakeholders in the Statewide Re-entry Collaborative. Serve as a resource, to assist the Legislature and Michael Lawlor, Undersecretary, Criminal Justice Policy and Planning, OPM, in their efforts to improve upon the criminal justice system in the state of Connecticut.

#### **D. Increased Awareness Regarding the Significant Value and Impact of Reentry Services:**

It is critical for the legislature and the communities of Connecticut to understand that supervised reentry into their communities – and NOT a system of extended incarceration, is critical to increasing public safety, by ending the cycle of recidivism and strengthening and healing of these families in crisis.

#### **E. Continued Research and Analysis of Sentencing Practices:**

Overall, assist the legislature in their efforts to decrease the number of individuals incarcerated. In particular – support efforts to decrease the number of individuals incarcerated for low-level, nonviolent offenses & technical violations. Assist the Sentencing Commission in their efforts to improve upon the sentencing structure / system in Connecticut.



**2011**

## **Cross-Sector Legislative Agenda**

With over 500 members, Connecticut Association of Nonprofits is the largest membership organization in the state dedicated exclusively to nonprofits. Nonprofits play a significant role in our state's economy as both large and small employers that serve tens of thousands of residents annually. Whether it be by saving a life, keeping a family together, instilling hope through art, protecting the environment or giving someone a chance to be independent, nonprofits play a vital role in peoples' lives. Our members are dedicated to strengthening Connecticut's communities.

**When Connecticut needs us most, this is what we need to be there for Connecticut...**

### **Priority #1 – Sustainability**

- **Allocate consistent and adequate funding** which enables nonprofit human services providers that produce high quality outcomes to meet the rising demand for services and ensure the highest quality of care.
- **Maximize federal revenue and reduce the unnecessary use of costly institutions and emergency room care** by utilizing efficient, cost-effective services provided in nonprofit community-based settings.
- **Create a nonprofit human services provider capital improvement fund** to address infrastructure needs.
- **Reduce unfunded mandates** and other burdensome administrative requirements that take time and resources away from providing services.
- **Expand low interest loan funds.** The expansion of low interest loan funds to all nonprofits are crucial to compensate for the stress placed on provider infrastructure by the dramatic rise in service demand. The state can utilize the format established by the Department of Developmental Services and should expand the scope of the loan to include mortgages, capital improvements and working capital.

### **Priority #2 – Long-Term Solutions through Meaningful Reform**

- **Implement recommendations made by the Commission on Nonprofit Health & Human Services.**
- **Achieve consistent contracting processes across all state agencies** and establish meaningful oversight of these processes, including compliance with timely contract payments.
- **Expand and enhance state revenues** as an alternative to cuts to human services, which are a short-term fix to a budget crisis that will create significantly larger long-term problems for the state. A truly progressive income tax should be adopted and costly tax loopholes should be fixed.
- **Increase the state single audit threshold for nonprofits that contract with the state to \$500,000 in expended state funding.** In 2009, the state increased the threshold from \$100,000 to \$300,000 in expended state funding. Nonprofits will still be required to complete a Core Human Services contract which gives the state full access to all contract-related data, as well as the organization's 990 which must be filed annually with the IRS.
- **Revise the Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA)** to permit greater utilization by both nonprofits and businesses. The NAA gives tax credits against specified business taxes for investments in local community service activities and programs.

**An investment in nonprofits is an investment in Connecticut's well-being.**