

# CT COMMUNITY NONPROFIT ALLIANCE



To: Members of the Judiciary Committee

From: Julia Wilcox, Senior Public Policy Specialist, CT Community Nonprofit Alliance

Re: Judiciary Committee Public Hearing Re: SB 18 'A Second Chance Society' & Related Legislation

Date: March 23, 2016

Good morning, distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Julia Wilcox, Senior Public Policy Specialist at CT Community Nonprofit Alliance. The CT Nonprofit Alliance represents more than 550 nonprofit organizations and associations across the state and is the largest advocacy organization representing community nonprofits in Connecticut. Together, our members serve more than 500,000 Connecticut residents each year.

The following testimony is presented on behalf of the Community Justice and Juvenile Justice Divisions of CT Nonprofit Alliance who contract with DOC and/or CSSD— and the thousands of individuals and families impacted by their programmatic contributions to the state. With that said, there is no question that legislation involving the criminal justice system of Connecticut, has the potential to impact every population that is currently served by the nonprofit sector.

I am here today to testify **IN SUPPORT** of the following legislation, with provisional concerns as noted:

1	<u>S.B. No. 18</u> AN ACT CONCERNING A SECOND CHANCE SOCIETY	Support
4	<u>S.B. No. 469</u> (RAISED) AAC NONVIOLENT MISDEMEANOR DRUG VIOLATIONS OR CONVICTIONS  While we completely support the concepts raised in SB469, we appreciate the concerns raised by the Judicial Branch, with regard to implementation, and the resources that would be necessary to accurately track the individuals involved and resolve each individual case. We would fully support the legislation in the event that a system is developed that would meet the needs of the process AND would not deter resources from critical services/programs currently in place.	Support with provisions
6	<u>S.B. No. 471</u> (RAISED) AAC ACCESS TO JUSTICE	Support
14	<u>H.B. No. 5641</u> (RAISED) AAC PROVISIONAL PARDONS	Support
15	<u>H.B. No. 5642</u> (RAISED) AAC THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE  While we completely support the concepts raised in HB5642, we understand that there is much work ahead to assure success in each initiative. We stand in support of the recommendations of the CT Juvenile Justice Alliance (CTJJA), in relation to the JJPOC recommendations. With regard to the closure of CJTS by July 1, 2018: It is important to note that nonprofit providers stand able and willing to serve those youth in the community. However - In order for this transition to be successful, it is essential that programs are funded for the actual cost of services, and that the state of CT follow the national model of 'Justice Reinvestment' and reinvest any cost savings back into the very programs that will assure positive outcomes.	Support with recommendations

**S.B. No. 18 AN ACT CONCERNING A SECOND CHANCE SOCIETY**  
**'To implement the Governor's Budget recommendations.'**

Members of the Judiciary Committee are to be commended for your vision and commitment to the Criminal Justice System of Connecticut, and for raising legislation to address these critically important areas of concern and opportunity.

**CT Nonprofit Alliance stands in strong support of the proposed 'Second Chance Society 2.0.'** The initiative includes proposed adjustments in many areas, with essential focus on expansion of the Second Chance Society initiative, as well as services affecting those involved in the Juvenile Justice System. These changes are focused on young offenders, but also include bail reforms which would impact the prison population in FY 2017. Second Chance 2.0 - a national model of legislation - will further tackle the cycle of crime and poverty and ensure that Connecticut's already extraordinarily low crime rates continue to drop.

**In addition, CT Nonprofit Alliance stands in strong support of our partners within the Department of Correction (DOC) and the Court Support Services Division (CSSD) of the Judicial Branch.** In order for the Second Chance Society Initiative to truly be successful, it is essential that each and every service component is as strong and viable as possible. These components include the Nonprofit Provider network of community services who provide a critical array of supports and treatment which are essential for individuals reentering society; the DOC staff who ensure the safety, security and order of the state's correctional facilities; and the CSSD staff who work collaboratively with stakeholders to promote compliance with court orders and instill positive change in individuals, families, and communities. *The services of all collective partners are provided in a manner which is widely viewed as a national model.*

The reality of the Second Chance Society Initiative as we stand before you today, is that the viability of the necessary components simply cannot be maintained in the face of the current fiscal crisis and cuts to the CSSD, DOC, and in turn – the Nonprofit Provider Community!

The provider network has a long standing and increasingly collaborative relationship with both the DOC and the Court Support Services Division (CSSD) of the Judicial Branch. We are extremely fortunate to have the opportunity to work in partnership with Commissioner Semple, (DOC) and Executive Director Grant (CSSD) – and their respective administrations. Each leader provides a unique vision for the future of reentry services within their purview. The success within both State entities is reflected in the data that places CT at the forefront on the national stage.

These Second Chance Society Initiatives are designed to continue the progress being made in reducing the state's dropping crime rate, (which, in 2015, was at a 48-year low), as well as ensuring nonviolent offenders are successfully reintegrated into society and become productive and fulfilled members of their communities, who contribute to Connecticut's economy. They will help to break the cycle of crime and poverty that impacts all too many families and communities. National, bipartisan consensus is building in support of a Second Chance Society in states across the country, including Texas, Mississippi, Georgia, and Alabama. Connecticut continues as national model of excellence in the Criminal Justice field - most recently profiled in a powerful New York Times Editorial: [Connecticut's Second Chance Society \(1.04.16\)](#)

On behalf of the nonprofit provider reentry community, CT Nonprofit Alliance urges your continued support of the Second Chance Society Initiatives. With that said: It is critical to acknowledge that the state's ability to effectively achieve any of the goals set forth is directly related to the strength and viability of the Nonprofit Provider network of Community Justice Services – as well as our partners within the DOC and CSSD.

☞ Related Reference Information & Reports ☞

**Recidivism Statistics: Court Support Services Division (March 2016)**

**Adult Probation:** Since 2007, 24-month rearrest rates have declined from 47% to under 40% in 2015. Each percentage point reduction equates to approximately 235 fewer probationers rearrested annually. Put another way, there are over 1,600 fewer rearrests of probationers in 2015 than there were in 2007. Probationers who successfully complete their supervision are rearrested at lower rates (under 30% in the following 24 months) than those who do not (44% in 24 months).

**Juvenile Probation:** Since 2007, 24-month rearrest rates have declined from 66% to 57% in 2015. Each percentage point reduction equates to approximately 20 fewer juvenile probationers rearrested annually. In other words, there are about 180 fewer rearrests of juvenile probationers in 2015 than there were in 2007. Probationers who successfully complete their supervision are rearrested at lower rates (38% in the following 24 months) than those who do not (63% in 24 months).

**Alternative In the Community:** Since 2011, 12-month rearrest rates for program completers have declined from 37% to just over 27% in 2015. Clients who successfully complete the AIC program are rearrested at lower rates than those who do not; 43% of non-completers in 2015 were rearrested in a 12-month period.

**Domestic Violence:** Since 2011, 12-month DV rearrest rates for completers of Family Violence Education Program or Pre-Trial Supervision have remained low, declining from 12.5% to 9.4% in 2015. Clients who successfully complete these programs are rearrested at lower rates than those who do not; 23% of non-completers in 2015 incurred a new DV arrest in a 12-month period.

***Recidivism Statistics: Office of Policy and Management:***

**2010 Annual Recidivism Report** : State of Connecticut, Office of Policy and Management  
Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division (February 15, 2010)

This study finds recidivism in Connecticut to be generally consistent with other states for the categories of recidivism that were reported. As in past studies on both the state and national level, offenders that were discharged after completing community supervision programs, like parole or transitional supervision, had the lowest recidivism rates among all groups of offenders in the study. For example, while 36.6% of all offenders were re-incarcerated for new sentences within 3 years of release, 27.9% of offenders completing transitional supervision and 24.7% of offenders completing parole were re-incarcerated for new sentences.

36.6% all offenders | 27.9% completing transitional supervision | 24.7% completing parole

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**Reference Materials & Reports:**

- 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, Scott Semple, Commissioner | Joseph Haggan, Director of Parole and Community Svcs. (July 2014 – most recent) <http://www.ct.gov/doc/lib/doc/pdf/contractedcommprogdirectory.pdf>

- Recidivism in CT, 2008 releases: OPM - Criminal Justice Policy & Planning Division (Published in 2015.)  
[http://www.ct.gov/opm/lib/opm/cjppd/cjsac/20150424recidivism\\_report\\_february\\_2015.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/opm/lib/opm/cjppd/cjsac/20150424recidivism_report_february_2015.pdf)

- State of Connecticut 2011 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, 2011)  
[http://www.ct.gov/opm/lib/opm/cjppd/cjresearch/recidivismstudy/2011\\_recidivism\\_report\\_final.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/opm/lib/opm/cjppd/cjresearch/recidivismstudy/2011_recidivism_report_final.pdf)

- Reducing Recidivism and Improving Other Outcomes for Young Adults in the Juvenile and Adult Criminal <https://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Transitional-Age-Brief.pdf> (The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center | November 2015)

- 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/>

- '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>

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