

Commission on Racial & Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System

Connecticut Judicial Branch

Meeting Minutes

November 9, 2021

2:00 – 3:30

Virtual Meeting via WebEx

Commission members in attendance: Justice Lubbie Harper, Jr. (Chair), Scott Jones (President Pro Temp of Senate), Werner Oyanadel (CWCSEO), Hakima Bey-Coon (OVA), Denise Drummond (CWCSEO), Preston Tisdale (Governor), David McGuire (Appointee of Majority Leader of the Senate), Gail Hardy (DCJ), Claud Chong (Chief's Public Defender's designee), Avery Gaddis (Appointee of Minority Leader of the Senate), Alex Tsarkov (Majority Leader of the House).

Non-commission members in attendance: Aileen Keays (IMRP), Irvine Peck's-Agaya (IMRP), Ken Barone (IMRP), Andrew Clark (IMRP), Troy Brown (Judicial/CSSD).

I. Welcome

- a. Meeting commenced at 2:10pm

II. Review and approve minutes from September meeting

- a. Hakima Bey-Coon made a motion to approve. Approved

III. Updates on other commissions, committees, and task forces

- a. *Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC) – Judicial/CSSD*
 - a. As Chair of the JJPOC, Rep Walker and other JJPOC legislative members have been focused on addressing the Republican Caucuses' response to increased car thefts and gun violence. The Republicans have been holding press events and generating materials to keep this issue in the forefront and are advocating for tougher measures. Rep. Walker has urged JJPOC members speak against this narrative, and at the next JJPOC meeting (11/18) the specific proposals listed in the Senate Republic Caucus' proposal, "A Better Way to a Safer Connecticut" will be discussed. Would the Commission be willing to submit an Op-ed on this subject?
 - i. Need more concrete info before determining whether to weigh-in and if so, how. In the chat, David McGuire shared [this](#) 25-piece proposal. Andrew Clark provided [this](#) recent report from OPM CJPD on crime trends in CT over the past decade.
 - ii. Ken Barone summarized auto thefts data in CT historically and now. Auto thefts in CT largely peaked in early to mid-90's. It was common to see 26,000+ thefts/year thru early 90's. Began to trend downward but still saw 10,000+. CT has historically followed national trend and always below national average for car thefts. When the national trend ticks up, CT's trend ticks up. Thefts at historic low bn 2010-2013 across country and CT. Nationally in 2013, in CT about 2014, began to see small increase related to increase in use of vehicles with key fobs. Since then, saw 93% increase nationally with keys left in

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vehicles and key fobs too close to the parked car. Not unusual to see 2,000 car thefts in each of our major cities. Now, cities are seeing marked decrease (30% decrease) in thefts whereas neighboring suburbs are seeing a significant increase.

However, still the number of thefts in these suburbs is low. Not seeing a major increase in thefts, seeing a shift in thefts from cities to suburbs. 2019 pre-pandemic, lowest number of thefts in CT since began collecting data in 1995. The current increase mirrors national rise and started around the beginning of the shut-down – closing of schools, youth programs. Driver of the increase is keys being left in cars (and key fobs too close to vehicles) and cars being left open. In 2020, police only made an arrest in 7% of cases, and only 35% of those cases involved a juvenile. 2019 numbers were similar. It will be a difficult policy to “arrest your way” out of. 90% of these cases go unsolved. Vehicles are mostly recovered and not used in serious crimes.

1. Should release a data-driven statement on behalf of the Commission. We do not want lawmakers to play political games with our kids. Responsibility to put facts out there.
 2. Nature of auto-theft has changed over time since the 90s. Those cars were not recovered then, but now most cars are recovered and returned to owners
 3. Warner Oyanadel on behalf of CWCSEO supports ideas to put out data-driven notice and engage community about facts. Differentiate trends from outliers. Responsibility to use facts as basis for community conversation and/or political dialogue
 4. Avery Gaddis – displeased with plans to put out statement, “people are dying” and data should not override people’s lives.
- b. Other JJPOC Working Groups continue to work on long-term projects. The RED Committee has engaged the services of CCLP (Center for Children’s Law and Policy) to assist them in advancing the use of race equity impact assessment by state agencies. CSSD has indicated that they are open to looking at this.
- b. [CT Racial Profiling Prohibition Project](#) (CTRP3) – Ken Barone, IMRP
- a. Meeting next Thursday. Plan to release preliminary findings for 2020 traffic stop which will be 7th such study. In 2020, due to COVID, saw a substantial reduction in traffic stops to mitigate the spread of COVID during traffic stops.
- c. [CT Sentencing Commission](#) (CSC) – Alex Tsarkov, IMRP
- a. A few proposals are likely to be raised in 2022. Next week, the Commission is meeting and then another in January. During these two

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meetings, the Commission will determine which proposals will be proposed to send to the CGA.

- i. Voting – restore voting rights to everyone incarcerated except for those serving life without possibility of parole. Already, those held pretrial and convicted of misdemeanors have the right to vote so this would be restoring the right for those convicted of felonies.
 - ii. Sex offender registry – working on a proposal that would create a removal mechanism off the sex offender registry. Ideally people can petition to get moved out of the registry or to a private registry after a number of years.
 - iii. Cost of incarceration – CSC has a draft proposal for dealing with the cost of incarceration. This law would prohibit the state from collecting fees from formerly incarcerated people
 - iv. Sentence modification – requesting clarification from legislature on whether the legislation passed last year is to be retroactive
- d. [Police Transparency and Accountability Task Force](#) (PTATF) – Andrew Clark, IMRP
- a. Next full meeting November 16th. Finalize efforts to increase diversity in the police force – racial, gender, different abilities.
 - b. Switching gears to determine how to present material to legislature and the public
 - c. State task force has partnered with the CT Bar Association – the group put together 23 recommendations on policing. [Here is the full report.](#)

IV. **Program Utilization by Formerly Criminalized Persons: Linking Recidivism Data to Data Held by U.S. Census Bureau** – Andrew Clark, IMRP

- a. A long-standing project which stems from a 2015 statutorily required report looking at Raise the Age for juvenile justice.
- b. Link local and census data to better inform policymaking. CT is the only state to apply this process to justice systems. Partnered with Yale School of Medicine. Census Bureau has access to, and is allowed to, combine data from many agencies including IRS, movement data, death data, SNAP, Medicare/Medicaid. Will look at youth in CT involved with the juvenile justice system between 2000-2014 with all these data sets. Amazing opportunity to learn about youth and how they fare and which systems they touched. What happens when a juvenile is in the system in the long term.

V. **CREDCJS conference on race and policing** – Aileen Keays

- a. We have secured our most desired speaker, [Dr. Lorenzo Boyd](#) from UNH. We continue to look toward spring for the date and are using Dr. Boyd's, and vendors' availability as basis for securing a date.
- b. We are planning for an approximate guest count of 200 and intend to plan the event as an in-person event with the ability to go hybrid or completely virtual should circumstances change with COVID.
- c. UConn does not have space suitable for an event of this size of, except for at Storrs which we are not pursuing because we feel it is not easily accessible. We

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are 1st looking at the Chrysalis Center in Hartford, UConn Law, maybe CCSU or I could follow up with Gateway to see if their policy has changed.

- a. Rooms for breakout sessions
- b. Another speaker to consider (Preston's recommendation) is [David Kirkpatrick](#) investigator for NY Times. Has conducted study nationally on police stops and death. He has shown the number of black deaths of unarmed motorists is exponentially higher than non-Black motorists. Preston will seek to share it with us

VI. Other business

- a. Andrew's trip to [Germany](#) with Dodd Center for Human Rights
 - a. Purpose - to study Germany's correctional system and CJ practices
 - b. Created a safer system by treating people humanely and letting the punishment be served time instead of the treatment they undergo while incarcerated. Hoping to gather testimonies/experiences from guards/officers, incarcerated people, and gain an understanding of their re-entry process.
 - c. To review Gov. Malloy and his corrections commissioner's [reactions](#) after touring a German prison

VII. Meeting adjournment

- a. Motion was adjourned at 2:59pm

2022 Meeting Schedule

January 10th

March 14th

May 9th

July 11th

September 12th

November 14th