

Testimony to
House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee
February 25, 2013

House Bill 2345

Chairman Rubin and members of the committee, I am Kathleen Rieth, the Chief Court Services Officer (CSO) for the 10th Judicial District (Johnson County). I am writing in support of House Bill 2345. While I recognize the division of funds could be disputed, the important issue is to get funding to supervision officers who are monitoring offenders in a way that supports evidenced based practices.

Since the new DUI legislation has been enacted, my office is seeing a greatly increased number of DUI probation assignments. In part this is because the first time DUI's that come through district court have previously been supervised by ADSAP agencies rather than Court Services. There are no longer ADSAP providers and the intent was that these cases should be supervised by CSO's to ensure that evidence based practices are being utilized in order to attempt to reduce the risk of reoffending. Additionally, DUI convictions for third and subsequent convictions with a lower LSI-R (Levels of Services Inventory, Revised) score are supervised by Court Services with higher risk clients being supervised by Community Corrections. Previously the 3rd DUI's have been supervised by Court Services and Community Corrections, but the current DUI law now includes supervision of 4th and subsequent DUI cases by both of our agencies.

The funding that would come to the Judicial Branch if this bill is passed would allow more CSO's to be hired in order to provide the appropriate level of supervision. In the 10th Judicial District, each client placed on probation for any felony receives an LSI-R interview prior to sentencing to determine which agency (Court Services or Community Corrections) will provide the supervision. We work closely with our Community Corrections partner to ensure that clients have the best match of services.

All misdemeanor offenses are supervised by Court Services. LSI-R interviews are conducted post-sentencing. The score the client receives determines which CSO will supervise the client and what the focus of the case plan will be. Clients who have an extremely low LSI-R score are assigned to an officer with a much higher caseload, as these clients will benefit from less contact with a CSO. Those with more elevated LSI-R scores are assigned to staff with what should be smaller caseloads so that they can work with the client on issues that place them at higher risk to reoffend. The goal is to provide cognitive tools and treatment related support as needed to improve decision making and reduce risky behavior and thinking.

It should be noted that just because someone has a first DUI does not necessarily indicate that he or she is at lower risk to reoffend. By using evidence based practices, we hope to be able to demonstrate better results and justification for use of the funding to provide enough staff for appropriate supervision of these cases.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter and for your work on this very important committee.

Respectfully,

Kathleen Rieth

Court Services Administrative Officer

10th Judicial District/Johnson County KS