



Testimony on HB2146

Submitted To

The House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee

By

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Kansas Department of Corrections

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On behalf of Secretary Zmuda, I appreciate the opportunity to offer this written testimony from the Kansas Department of Corrections on the proposed changes in House Bill 2146. We support the bill as proposed.

As proposed, these modifications to sentencing of persons convicted of drug crimes would reduce the population in Kansas prisons by 295 at the end of fiscal year 2022 according to projections from the Kansas Sentencing Commission. This would be accomplished by placing those same persons on felony probation supervision by local community corrections programs.

Modifications to Kansas sentencing laws for drug offenders is one option to manage the growth that has occurred in this state's prison system in the last twenty years that increased from just under 8,000 in at the end of January of 2000 (female 474, male 7573, total 7,987) to a pre-pandemic number of over 10,000 on March 1, 2020 (female 913, male 9096, total 10,009). While this growth represents all policy decisions of this and prior Legislatures, for all types of crime, amending penalties imposed upon drug offenders as a means to reduce future populations seems to have common interest among multiple constituencies.

This bill would both decrease prison populations and increase the population on probation. As a result, we estimated in our fiscal note a net reduction of expenditures of \$314,408.30 if this bill were passed. This considers a reduction of marginal (food, clothing, supplies, etc.) and medical costs in our facilities and an increased number of persons requiring supervision in the community.

In closing. We appreciate that the Committee, and the Legislature as a whole, are discussing the public policies of Kansas as they relate to the criminal justice system. We will strive to be a resource to you as you continue your policy work.

Thank you