

Michigan Joint Task Force on Jail and Pretrial Incarceration

August 2019

Issue 1

“The result of our hard work will be well worth it – a legacy of a justice system that other states will look to as a national model.”

-Chief Justice Bridget McCormack

Major Takeaways

1. Michigan jail populations nearly tripled in the last 35 years.

2. Michigan’s rural counties experienced significant jail growth over the last 40 years and currently hold more people in jail than urban areas.

3. Michigan counties spent nearly one-half billion dollars on corrections and jail costs in 2017.

Contact Information

General Inquires:

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Task Force Website:

www.courts.mi.gov/micjreform

New Resources:

[Meeting Presentation](#)

[Meeting Handout](#)

First Task Force Meeting

The Michigan Joint Task Force on Jail and Pretrial Incarceration held their first meeting on Wednesday, July 24, 2019, and heard remarks from Speaker Lee Chatfield, co-chairs Chief Justice Bridget McCormack and Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist, and each task force member.

The Task Force is receiving technical assistance from The Pew Charitable Trusts and is charged with examining data and crafting ambitious, innovative, and thorough recommendations that expand alternatives to jail, safely reduce jail admissions and length of stay, protect the public, and improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of Michigan’s justice systems.

National Data Presentation

Technical assistance staff from The Pew Charitable Trusts presented initial findings about jail population trends from national data sources and the Michigan Treasury Department’s county financials dashboard. Local data from Michigan jails and courts will supplement these findings in future meetings.

Michigan jail populations nearly tripled in the last 35 years. Approximately 6,000 people were held in Michigan county jails in the 1970s and, despite the index crime rate peaking in the early 1980s, Michigan’s jail population increased to nearly 16,600 people by 2016. Michigan crime rates are at a 50-year low, yet county jail populations have not reflected that decline. In fact, the last time the crime rate was this low (1960s), the jail incarceration rate was a third of what it is today. Notably, while the male inmate population increased by 167% since 1975, the female inmate population increased by 503%.

Michigan’s rural counties experienced significant jail growth over the last 40 years and now hold more people in jail than urban counties. Between 1978 and 2013, the federal Census of Jails showed rural jails increased their share of Michigan’s jail population from 15% to 24%, while the portion in urban jails decreased from 34% to 19%.

Michigan counties spent \$478 million for county corrections and jail costs in 2017 – nearly three times the average amount spent on community/economic development and recreation/culture.

Michigan Joint Task Force on Jail and Pretrial Incarceration



Getting to Know Your Task Force Members!

- **Chief Justice Bridget McCormack**, Co-chair
- **Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist II**, Co-chair
- **Dr. Amanda Alexander**, Detroit Justice Center
- **Hon. Thomas Boyd**, Judge of the 55th District Court of Ingham County
- **Sheriff Jerry Clayton**, Washtenaw County
- **Craig DeRoche**, Prison Fellowship and former Michigan Speaker of the House
- **Hon. Prentis Edwards, Jr.**, Judge of the 3rd Circuit Court of Wayne County
- **William Gutzwiller, Sr.**, City of Essexville
- **Dale "DJ" Hilson**, Muskegon County Prosecutor
- **Monica Jahner**, Northwest Initiative
- **Dr. Sheryl Kubiak**, Wayne State University Dept. of Social Work
- **Lt. Jim Miller**, Allegan County Sheriff's Office
- **Rep. Mike Mueller**, 51st House District
- **Hon. Dana Nessel**, Michigan Attorney General
- **Takura Nyamfukudza**, Chartier & Nyamfukudza, P.L.C.
- **Bill Peterson**, Alpena County Commissioner
- **Sen. Jim Runestad**, 15th Senate District
- **Sen. Sylvia Santana**, 3rd Senate District
- **James Talen**, Kent County Commissioner
- **Robert VerHeulen**, Kent County Road Commissioner
- **Rep. Tenisha Yancey**, 1st House District

Task Force Meeting Schedule

Task Force Meeting #2 (Friday, August 23)

Kirkbride Hall
700 Cottage Dr. #200
Traverse City, MI 49684

Business Meeting: 9:30am-12:30pm
Public Testimony: 1:30pm-4:00pm

Task Force Meeting #3 (Friday, September 20)

Grand Rapids Community College
Student Community Center Rm 234
122 Lyon St NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Business Meeting: 9:30am-12:30pm
Public Testimony: 1:30pm-4:00pm

Task Force Meeting #4 (Friday, October 18)

Wayne State University Law School
Spencer M. Patrich Auditorium
471 W Palmer St
Detroit, MI 48202

Business Meeting: 9:30am-12:30pm
Public Testimony: 1:30pm-4:00pm

Task Force Meeting #5 (Tuesday, November 19)

Michigan Senate
Boji Tower
Senate Hearing Room – Ground Floor
124 W Allegan St
Lansing, MI 48933

Business Meeting: 10:30am-12:30pm
Public Testimony: 1:30pm-4:00pm

Task Force Meeting #6 (Thursday, January 9)

Michigan Senate
Boji Tower
Senate Hearing Room – Ground Floor
124 W Allegan St
Lansing, MI 48933

Business Meeting: 9:30am-11:00am