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**Testimony for the Little Hoover Commission
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What do you believe should be the goals for parole in terms of public safety, the parolee and his family and the community to which the parolee is returning?

Response:

- The mission of the Parole and Community Services Division (P&CSD) is to protect the public and to assist parolees in their reintegration to society.
- To accomplish this the P&CSD must:
 - Classify the parolee based on risk and needs so as to provide appropriate supervision and surveillance as well as assistance in the transition from imprisonment to discharge;
 - Collaborate closely with law enforcement and community groups to provide a range of programs and services and to develop a public awareness that offer parolees the opportunity for change;
 - Work with the communities as partners in public safety, public service and offender reintegration;
 - Hold parolees accountable for their actions and impose appropriate sanctions and/or incarcerate those who engage in serious misconduct; and
 - Respect the rights of crime victims, provide them with access to appropriate information, and obtain their input when establishing parole plans.

How progress toward those goals should be measured and communicated to policy-makers and the public?

Response:

- The California Department of Corrections is undergoing several evaluations of parole programs including:
 - The Preventing Parolee Crime Program—conducted by California State University, San Marcos--due to the Legislature January 1, 2004;
 - The Second Striker Program—conducted by California State University, San Marcos--due to the Legislature January 1, 2006;

- Parole Outpatient Clinic—conducted by University of California, Los Angeles—due to the Legislature January 1, 2007; and
- Substance Abuse Programs—conducted by University of California, Los Angeles—due on varying dates.
- To provide an accurate assessment of program effectiveness, an evaluation must measure several factors impacting on the problem. Reliance on evaluating recidivism alone does not reflect the program’s total cost-effectiveness and/or success. For example, a parolee who is returned to prison may have been returned for a crime that was less severe than the initial commitment offense. The reduction of the severity of a second offense could positively reflect a program’s impact on the parolee and therefore could be deemed a success.

How the Youth and Adult Correctional Agency (YACA), Board of Prison Terms (BPT) and the CDC defines and exercises their leadership roles on parole issues, including developing, implementing and coordinating correctional and parole policies. Please address the ways the entities work together and with local law enforcement and community organizations to advance the goals of parole?

Response:

- The P&CSD exerts leadership on parole issues by:
 - Coordinating with YACA and the BPT to address parole issues;
 - Responding to inquiries from the Governor’s Office, the Legislature, other government agencies and stakeholders, and the public on issues impacting parole;
 - Researching, developing and implementing systems to address parole issues;
 - Providing and training staff to supervise the parole population;
 - Providing subject matter expertise on pending legislation that impacts parole;
 - Developing and disseminating policy and procedures to field staff that implements and conforms to recent legislation;
 - Coordinating with the BPT on policy and parole issues that impact P&CSD and the BPT;
 - Meeting and conferring with the California Correctional Peace Officers Association on regulations and policy that impacts workload of parole agent staff;
 - Establishing cost-effective programs and services that mitigate barriers to a successful transition into society;
 - Collaborating with the local communities to assist parolees to make their transition back to their community and family.

- P&CSD developed and participates in the Law Enforcement Consortium which is a quarterly forum where all major law enforcement and corrections organizations in California confer to identify problems of mutual concern and to identify potential solutions.
- Maintaining associations with community-based provider groups and coalitions to ensure parole programs function at an optimum level and to solve problems that would degrade their effectiveness. This includes providing:
 - Guidance to and working collaboratively with grantees for programs such as the Going Home Project and the Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction Grant program;
 - Testimony at public hearings concerning parole issues and the siting of parole programs; and
 - Guidance and expertise for community-based providers who have been awarded federal grants to provide services to parolees (such as the Going Home Project).
- Assuming a leadership role in the administration of the Proposition 36 Program by participating on state and county Advisory Boards.
- Participating and providing program expertise in the Council on Mentally Ill Offenders which is mandated to investigate cost-effective ways to meet the long term needs of adults and juveniles with mental disorders who are either likely to become offenders, or who have a history of offending.
- Participating in the Urban Institute Round Table, a discussion group that explores issues impacting communities throughout California.
- Improving the decision-making process concerning parole violations that are not mandatorily reportable to the BPT by:
 - Providing training to administrative and Unit Supervisor staff on the decision-making process when considering parole violations or revocation;
 - Developing a decision-making matrix to provide staff with a standardized means to provide the tools to make better decisions when confronted with parole violations and to provide appropriate sanctions that would ensure public safety.

Current or planned efforts to improve parolee success, better protect public safety and reduce the costs associated with high numbers of parolees returning to prison.

- P&CSD provides leadership as a participant on the Police and Corrections Team (PACT):
 - This is a partnership between state and local law enforcement agencies to create safer communities and reduce parolee involvement in criminal activity;

- Located in several communities including Oakland, Sacramento, Redlands, and San Bernardino with future programs planned for Riverside, Los Angeles, Vallejo, Bakersfield, Fresno and Woodland; and
- The PACT Orientation Meetings offer a "one-stop shopping" atmosphere presenting available service providers to encourage parolee stability within the community. The partnerships maximize all available resources improving public safety and a parolee's positive reentry.
- Proposition 36 Program Management: Proposition 36 seeks to place into treatment programs non-violent probationers, parolees and defendants who are charged with a non-violent drug possession offense and/or who violate a drug-related condition(s) of parole. The P&CSD is in the process of assuming administrative oversight from the Board of Prison Terms for the Proposition 36 Program.
- Second Striker Parolee Program
 - Parole supervision to Second Strike Parolees reduced from 70:1 to 40:1 caseload to enhance public safety and to reduce the recidivism rate of this population.
 - Program expansion to provide additional access to second strike parolees including program expansions in the Residential Multi-Service Centers, Computerized Literacy Learning Centers, Substance Treatment and Recovery, and the Employment Development Department Employment Program.
- P&CSD provides mentally ill parolees with services through the Mental Health Services Continuum Program which is an enhancement to the mental health treatment provided by the Parole Outpatient Clinics.
- P&CSD provides leadership and administrative oversight to the Enhanced Outpatient (EOP) Program. To ensure public safety and the needs of the EOP parolee population, supervision ratio has been reduced to 40:1.
- P&CSD provides administrative oversight and leadership for the Sex Offender Containment Program by providing specialized caseload supervision (40:1) and contracted treatment programs through community-based providers for this population.
- P&CSD has implemented and administers the Transitional Case Management Program for parolees who are diagnosed as having Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. The program consists of 8 contract providers that provide services in 25 counties. Providers begin services in the institution. Coverage to 37 counties is planned for the future.
- P&CSD administers and oversees the 25 contracts within the Community Correctional Reentry Centers (CCRC) Administration.

- Community-based entities, under their contracts with the California Department of Corrections (CDC), provide inmates who are within 120 days of release, with housing and programs that prepare them for release into the community.
- The CDC, through the P&CSD and Parole Region IV, is collaborating with the City of Redlands to establish a residential facility that would combine the components of the CCRC program with those of the Residential Multi-Service Centers to enhance the service delivery to facility residents.
- The P&CSD operates and oversees the Preventing Parolee Crime Program (PPCP):
 - The PPCP provides essential services that help reduce parole failures in the community and subsequent returns to prison. Program components allow parole units to work more effectively with parolees and provide an alternative to revocation (\$15.4 million).
 - The PPCP includes:
 - Computerized Literacy Learning Centers which is designed to increase a parolee's literacy skills by focussing on basic proficiency in reading, writing, and computational skills. (21 sites) (8,000 parolees per year) (\$3.2 million);
 - Substance Abuse Treatment and Recovery is an instructional-based treatment program designed to teach parolees how to address and prevent substance abuse. (28 sites) (4,600 parolees per year) (\$3.1 million);
 - Residential Multi-Service Centers provide homeless parolees with shelter and sustenance as well as programs to enhance their chances of a successful parole (6 sites) (228 beds) (\$4.42 million);
 - Offender Employment Continuum (OEC) provides parolees with an opportunity to further their education, obtain vocational training or be placed directly into a job. OEC contractors provide orientations to eligible inmates at selected institutions, provide parolees with a mandatory 40-hour cognitive skills workshop, and assist them to find employment (6 sites) (3,000 parolees) (\$1.8 million);
 - Jobs Plus Program: Provides employment services to parolees based on an individual assessment of their motivation to work, employment skills and employment barriers (10 sites) (4,000 parolees per year) (\$2.75 million);
 - Employment Development Department (EDD): EDD provides parolees assistance in obtaining employment through 46 full-time EDD job specialists who are located in selected parole units. The EDD program is not a component of the PPCP. (54 designated sites) (\$2.8 million)

- Controlled Substance Urinalysis Testing: Under contract with an outside provider, this program is part of an overall treatment/control methodology for inmates and parolees who have a history of substance abuse. (\$3.0 million).

The greatest challenges to improving parolee success and what would be required to overcome them?

- Challenges include:
 - Identifying the specific needs of each parolee and the kinds of services and supervision that is required before and after imprisonment.
 - Identifying specific programs and contractors within the community that are cost-effective and will meet the needs of the parolee population.
 - Overcoming the “Not In My Backyard” (NIMBY) syndrome with regard to siting parole offices and parole programs in communities. Protracted public hearings drive up program costs and diminish program effectiveness.
 - Further detailed training of parole agent staff regarding referrals of parolees to the correct program based on their specific requirements.
 - Motivating parolees to seek out assistance either within his or her community or through parole programs.
 - Finding the correct balance and mix of parole programs statewide.
- Potential solutions:
 - Provide parole agent staff with more detailed training on existing and future programs, expand services symposiums at each parole region, and develop high quality parolee programs. Further educate staff of appropriate programs and services, which will provide them with effective tools to manage their caseloads.
 - Quality programs are not developed in a vacuum. The P&CSD should continue to vigorously research the market place for innovative cost-effective programs that meet the needs of California’s parole population.
 - The P&CSD should continue to play an active role in the community to collaborate with local jurisdictions during public hearing concerning parole issues and the location of critical parole programs.