

Reitz, Nate (MSGC)

From: Mary C Hoogheem <[REDACTED]> on behalf of Catherine Johnson
<[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, September 6, 2018 8:52 AM
To: Guidelines, Sentencing (MSGC)
Subject: Request for Input - CHS Policy Modifications
Attachments: Request for Input - CHS Policy Modifications Letter.docx.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Please see the attached letter. Feel free to contact my assistant, Mary Hoogheem, at 612-348-5042, if you have any questions or concerns.

Catherine Johnson
Hennepin County
Director – Dept. of Community Corrections & Rehabilitation
Hennepin County Government Center – C2353
300 South 6th St, MC533
Minneapolis, MN 55487-0533
[REDACTED]

*Equity focused. Client centered. Employee driven.
There are no problems, only opportunities.*

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HENNEPIN COUNTY

MINNESOTA

September 6, 2018

Christopher Dietzen, Chair
Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission

Dear Mr. Dietzen:

As the Director of Hennepin County's Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCCR), I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide input into the discussions you are having around criminal history score modifications.

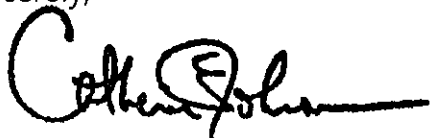
First, with regard to custody status point (CSP), DOCCR would be in favor of eliminating the CSP. We agree with Dr. Laskorunsky's conclusion after running statistics on the predictive ability of the criminal history score; the small reduction in predictability by eliminating the CSP does not pose a significant public safety risk. Hennepin County has a long history of validating risk assessment tools locally, both through Community Corrections and District Court. As administrators, we must consider predictability but in balance with fairness, equality, and utility. Should the commission decide to forgo this option, we recommend limiting the CSP to ½ point and ending custody status upon discharge from probation.

Second, we support changes to both the decay period and the misdemeanor point. Specifically, we would be in favor of starting the decay period upon sentence to probation and reducing the decay period for both misdemeanors and gross misdemeanors. We fully support the elimination of the misdemeanor point.

Third, any suggestion of a change in policy that increases prison stays will likely result in an over-capacity situation for our prison system that will require an investment in the prison infrastructure. We believe that our repeat offender situation is best served by infusing fiscal support for rehabilitative services and the sustainability of evidence based practices in corrections field agencies across the state. The guideline changes suggested do not attend to the repeat offender issue short of warehousing the offender. The Department of Corrections' own recent research shows the ineffectiveness of such a practice.

Finally, when this research is combined with the negative impact a severe violent offense list and sentencing changes dependent upon such a list would have on communities of color, particularly young, black men, we cannot support changes that will increase both the number and length of prison stays. There is no research to support such a course of action, and we cannot support a policy change that will have such a clear detrimental impact on disparities within our criminal justice system. While retribution is clearly a factor in sentencing, with the exception of life in prison, it must be carefully weighed against the impact of the imposed retribution and the need for rehabilitation. Nearly every incarcerated person will come back to our communities and the length of time they have spent incarcerated can have a negative impact on their success and the safety and security of our communities when they do return.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Catherine Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Catherine Johnson

Director, Department of Community Corrections & Rehabilitation

Hennepin County Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation

300 South Sixth Street, Minneapolis, MN 55487

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