

## Critical Corrections Issues in the Legislature

# 2004 budget, bedspace crisis under study

With a deficit of \$1.5 billion looming for the 2004 fiscal year and a projection that the state will run out of prison beds in the very near future, much of the focus in the legislature is on the budget and bed space. Of the 28 state agencies, 22 will see their general fund allocations slashed. The Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) is one of the few actually getting an increase, although it is just 1 percent. With various cost increases to account for, there will still be a need to cut MDOC programs and personnel.

### House cuts prison education

The Granholm administration proposed an appropriation of \$1.6 billion in state general funds for the MDOC. The proposal first went to the House Subcommittee on Corrections Appropriations chaired by Rep. Mike Purnford. The committee adopted it in large part, including a \$2.6 million cut in prisoner education to eliminate all academic programs at Level V. However, the governor's proposal to put non-violent prisoners nearing parole into corrections centers or on tether failed. Although it would have saved 1,375 prison beds, prosecutors opposed this version of the Conditional Reintegration Program

because "truth-in-sentencing" legislation passed in 1998 requires prisoners to serve their entire minimum sentence in a secure facility. The MDOC's fall-back position, which will save 700 beds, is to place people in the community who the parole board has declined to release but who are not deemed a risk to the community.

Barbara Levine, executive director of CAPPS, said the department's new strategy "raises interesting questions. It plans to put

into community placement people the board has 'flopped' not because they are a risk to the community but because the board wants a 'further demonstration.' Further demonstration of what? If they have served their minimum, completed required programs and are not a risk to the community, why are they being denied parole?"

After the MDOC's budget was passed out of the subcommittee and the full appropriations committee, it went to the floor of the House. There, Rep. Jack Brandenburg, majority vice chair of the subcommittee, surprised everyone by offering, for the first time, an amendment that would cut an additional \$8.5 million in spending for prisoner education. Brandenburg said he wants the money to be spent on adult literacy programs in the community.

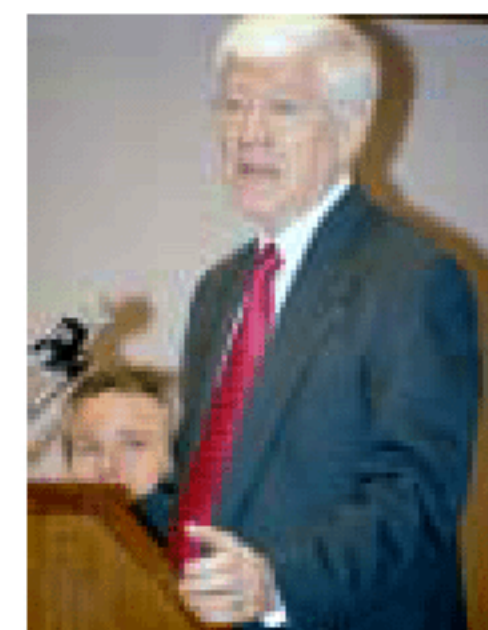
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## Parole Board Changes Proposed

*Legislation that would expand the Michigan Parole Board from 10 to 15 members and change the composition has been introduced by Sen. Mark Schauer. For CAPPS' response, see page 4.*

## May conference draws experts in many fields

*Former state legislator Lynn Jondahl (right) was the keynote speaker at the May 9 conference co-sponsored by CAPPS. Experts from various fields discussed ways to reduce the state's ever-growing prison population. See the full story and more pictures beginning on page 7.*



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### Staff

Barbara Levine  
*Executive Director*

LeAnn Voigtritter  
*Administrative Assistant*

115 W. Allegan St., Suite 950  
Lansing, Michigan 48933  
Phone: (517) 482-7753  
Fax: (517) 482-7754  
capps\_mi@ameritech.net  
www.capps-mi.org



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*“ . . . vocational programs . . . decrease recidivism because they give people problem-solving skills and self-confidence . . . ”*

Since GED completion is required by statute, academic programs cannot be eliminated. Therefore, such a cut would virtually eliminate vocational programs for prisoners including the eyeglass repair program that works in partnership with the Lions Club, the building trades and horticulture programs that have partnered with Habitat for Humanity and at least nine other training programs that give prisoners marketable skills.

The House passed the amendment and the budget went to the Senate where Sen. Alan Cropsey, chair of the Senate Subcommittee on Corrections Appropriations, opened hearings by announcing that the subcommittee would oppose the \$8.5 million cut for prisoner education.

In testimony before the Senate subcommittee, Levine praised the decision to oppose the cut. “Beyond the specific knowledge they impart, academic and vocational programs have been proven to decrease recidivism because they give people problem-solving skills and self-confidence and a chance to engage in alternative ways of thinking,” she said. The MDOC budget bill has since been reported out of the Senate and gone to a conference committee, which restored the dollars for vocational education,

### *Senate Examines Private Youth Prison, Health Care Costs*

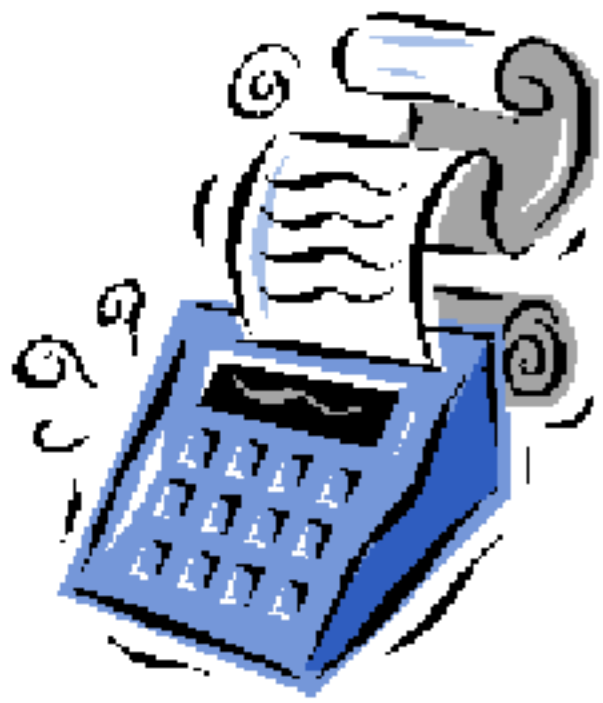
Two other issues that received particular attention during the Senate budget hearings were the treatment of juveniles waived into the adult system and the costs of prisoner health care.

The Michigan Youth Correctional Facility (MYC) in Baldwin, which is privately operated by Wackenhut Corp., houses male prisoners ages 14 through 19.

It is rated as a Level V facility, although the true security classification of half its young inmates, some of whom have committed only property or drug offenses, is Level I or II.

Under the current contract (which is presently up for renewal), the cost per prisoner is \$70.30 per day. This does not include rent the state pays Wackenhut of \$28.53 a day for each inmate. The state has been paying for the operation of the Baldwin prison with grants from the federal government under the Violent Offender Incarceration & Truth-in-Sentencing Grant Program (VOI/TIS).

The proposed budget calls for a \$770,000 appropriation for the addition of 30 prisoners at MYC through double bunking. It also requires \$1 million from the general fund to replace VOI/TIS funding, which is beginning to expire.



*Some question value of housing youngsters in maximum-security adult prison.*

Noting that double-bunking is supposed to save money, Levine questioned why it should cost \$26,000 per prisoner annually. She observed: "Now that we are running out of

federal funds to pay for the youth facility, what is the incentive for having a private prison at all? Is it true that some counties are sending juveniles to prison rather than to juvenile facilities because that shifts the cost to the state? If so, why not create a financial incentive, like the jail reimbursement program, to encourage counties to treat kids as kids, instead of sending them to the MDOC?" Levine asked.

Penny Ryder of the American Friends Service Committee raised questions about the programming at MYC and the amount of staff turnover. She also questioned the quality of health care prisoners receive from the privately-operated health care service provider, Correctional Medical Services.

To explore these issues further, the committee invited more testimony the following week about waived juveniles and prisoner health care.

Former state senator Jon Cisky, now a criminal justice professor at Saginaw Valley State University, urged senators to place resources in county treatment programs instead of the MYC.

Cisky testified on behalf of Wolverine Human Services which provides residential and non-residential treatment programs for children. He said those juveniles who go

into the adult prison system have a lower chance of succeeding when they are released than those who go to juvenile facilities. He called placement of youth in the Baldwin prison "a dead end."

Robert Morris of Wayne County's Department of Community Justice also spoke against incarcerating juveniles in adult prisons. He explained how Wayne County has greatly reduced the number of juvenile offenders it places in public and private juvenile institutions. Instead it contracts with private service providers who give intensive support and supervision to juvenile offenders who stay in their homes.

Morris said the Wayne County model has been very successful and urged the committee to explore its applicability to other counties.

Wackenhut Corp. officials asserted that earlier problems with program adequacy and staff turnover had been corrected, although 38 percent of the staff has less than a year's experience. They also said it was

necessary to operate MYC as a Level V prison because its inmates are "dangerous people" who have committed "heinous offenses," and that they are providing the state a cost saving of 20 percent.

Richard Russell of the MDOC Bureau of Health Care explained the range of medical services available to prisoners. These include nursing home facilities, a geriatric unit, and several levels

of care for the mentally ill. He also described a facility designed to house wheelchair

bound inmates near the prison hospital and explained that its opening was delayed by the need to erect a second fence. (The facility is rated Level 2 because some of the prisoners are lifers or sex offenders.)

Russell also explained the role CMS plays as a "turnkey," negotiating contracts with subcontractors like Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Asked what the biggest health care issues facing the MDOC are, Russell ranked Hepatitis C first, then the growing population of prisoners who are aging and/or disabled. Controlling the cost of pharmaceuticals was ranked as third.

*Former senator calls placement of youth at MYC "a dead end."*

*Now that we're running out of federal funds to pay for the youth facility. what is the incentive in having a private prison at all?*

*Readers who wish to comment on any of the issues raised in the appropriations process should write to Sen. Cropsey or Rep. Pumford at their office addresses (see article on page 5) or may e-mail them at [senacropsey@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senacropsey@senate.michigan.gov) or [mpumford@house.mi.gov](mailto:mpumford@house.mi.gov)*



# Proposed parole board expansion, revised makeup first step toward change

*Senate bill important starting point for discussion*

CAPPS has consistently stressed the role that parole board policies play in prison expansion and has urged parole reform. SB 507, sponsored by Sen. Mark Schauer, may spell the beginning of much-needed change.

The bill would expand parole board membership from 10 to 15, and would allocate eight of the seats as follows: three to law enforcement, two to prosecutors, and three to certified social workers. The remaining appointments would be made wholly in the governor's discretion.

CAPPS views the proposal as an important starting point for discussion but has several concerns.

*CAPPS urges the legislature to re-examine the entire 1992 package and to enact statutory boundaries that will control the exercise of parole board discretion no matter who the members are or which governor appoints them.*

The current board is not experiencing a case backlog and expansion would cost at least a half million dollars in salaries, travel costs and staff support. However,

case processing has become highly mechanical, relying increasingly on forms and check boxes, and less on personal knowledge of the prisoner. A larger board could devote more individualized attention to each case. And if the expanded board actually paroled significantly more people, it would quickly pay for itself. Therefore, CAPPS does not oppose the concept of a larger board. HOWEVER, expansion alone will not address the problems created by the current board for two reasons.

First, if seats on the board are to be allocated by professional background, there should be overall balance. The current board does not have a single member who has ever worked inside a prison, and SB 507 does not require that any member have any corrections background. This is too far a cry from the pre-1992 board which, for 55 years, was comprised of corrections professionals. CAPPS recommends that three additional seats be allocated for members with corrections experience, at least two of whom must have worked directly with prisoners in a professional capacity, such as warden, psychologist or teacher. CAPPS also recommends that the two seats for prosecutors be balanced by two attorneys with experience representing

offenders, leaving two members to be appointed in the governor's discretion.

Second, CAPPS is concerned that changing the composition of the parole board is not adequate to insure consistent, principled decision-making over time. When the board was reconstituted in 1992, the change was part of a package of bills that established criteria for parole decision-making and required the MDOC to develop parole guidelines. Eleven years later, we have seen how that legislation resulted in the addition of 10,000 prisoners to the system.

CAPPS urges the legislature to re-examine the entire 1992 package and to enact statutory boundaries that will control the exercise of parole board discretion no matter who the members are or which governor appoints them.

The legislature should establish basic release criteria that reflect the role that parole should play in an indeterminate sentencing scheme. This should include a statutory presumption of release after service of the minimum sentence unless there are objective, post-sentencing reasons, such as institutional misconduct or current risk to the community, that justify continued incarceration.

As the CAPPS recommendations numbered 21-23 suggest, the legislature should ensure that the factors scored in parole guidelines and sentencing guidelines are coordinated, not duplicated. Criteria for re-paroling technical parole violators should be established. Parole decisions that depart from statutorily required guidelines should be subject to review just as sentencing decisions are.

***Readers who wish to comment on SB 507 should write to Sen. Schauer by mail (see article at page 5) or by e-mail at: [senmschauer@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senmschauer@senate.michigan.gov)***

## When it's time to act

# Some tips for writing legislators



It is important to contact legislators about your position on bills that have been introduced or legislation you believe should be introduced. When a lawmaker gets personal letters from constituents that clearly explain how a situation affects their lives, it makes it easier for the legislator to understand the issues and to make changes. To be persuaded that there is public support for policy changes like those CAPPs recommends, legislators must hear from individual citizens.

Depending on the purpose of your letter, you may wish to write your own representative or senator, the sponsor of a bill or the members of a key committee that is considering a bill.

You can find the name of your elected law maker by going to the internet. To find your senator see: [www.senate.michigan.gov/](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/). To find your representative see: [www.house.michigan.gov/locaterep.asp](http://www.house.michigan.gov/locaterep.asp)

Most public libraries have public access to the internet and can help you find the site. If you can't gain access, you can call 517-373-2400 for the Senate and 517-373-0135 for the House.

The members of key committees are listed on the CAPPs website at [www.capps-mi.org](http://www.capps-mi.org) (Legislative Links).

Below are some tips designed to help you be more effective with your letter:

- Address the letter correctly.

The Honorable (full name)  
State Representative  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 30014  
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Dear Representative (last name):

The Honorable (full name)  
State Senator  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 30036  
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Dear Senator (last name):

- Write clearly. If you send a handwritten letter, make sure it's legible. Include your name and address.
- Be brief. Tell the legislator your concern in the opening paragraph. If possible, keep the letter to one page.
- If you are asking for help with a problem, include all the relevant details. Try to limit the letter to one issue and say what you'd like them to do; don't include a laundry list of complaints.
- Don't ask the legislator to fix problems that are outside his or her jurisdiction. A legislator can't, for example, change a sentence or reverse a conviction.
- Always be polite. Praise any actions the legislator has taken that you agree with.
- Thank the legislator for considering your position and taking the time to read your letter.

Please copy CAPPs whenever you send a letter to a legislator. It is important for us to know what legislators are hearing from our members.

# Recommendations give policy makers food for thought

... a gold mine of concrete ideas ...

**A**lthough they were developed independently and represent the views of different constituencies, the recommendations for improving Michigan's criminal justice system proposed by CAPPs and the Prisons and Corrections Section of the State Bar have much in common. Both call for data-driven decision making, accountability for the parole board and a revision of its policies, changes in the sentencing guidelines, modification of "truth-in-sentencing" requirements, better re-entry programming and more use of community-based sanctions. Collectively, the comprehensive and highly detailed proposals are a gold mine of concrete ideas for legislators and other policy makers.

The CAPPs recommendations were adopted by the CAPPs board of directors on March 7, 2003. The Bar Section's recommendations, called "A Blueprint for Cost-effective Criminal Justice in Michigan," are modeled after the American Bar Association's "Blueprint for Cost-effective Pretrial Detention, Sentencing, and Corrections Systems," which is a general set of guidelines designed to be adapted for use in particular jurisdictions. The Michigan Blueprint was adopted by the Prisons and Corrections Section Council on Feb. 1, 2003. The council speaks only for the section, not the State Bar as a whole. However, the State Bar's Representative Assembly has endorsed consideration by policy makers of the ABA model.

**B**oth organizations think there should be a state-level criminal justice council to do long-range planning and coordinate the efforts of all stakeholders in the criminal justice system. While the details vary, both also call for substantially increased data collection and analysis.

Addressing current "hot button" issues, both groups believe sentencing guidelines should apply to probation violators, drug courts should be expanded, and truth-in-sentencing should be altered to allow the amount of disciplinary credit permitted under federal prison funding standards.

**C**oncerns about parole also produced similar suggestions. Both organizations propose that release upon the completion of the minimum sentence should be the norm unless a prisoner has a poor institutional record or there are objective factors indicating a significant risk to the public. Both want parole guidelines to be coordinated with sentencing guidelines so the offense and the offender's prior record are not repeatedly given control-

ling weight. And both want parole board decisions to be subject to judicial review, much as sentencing judge's decisions are. The review process for parolable lifers is also addressed by both groups.

In the area of offender programming, both sets of proposals seek:

- Assurance that required academic, vocational and treatment programs are available sufficiently in advance of the prisoner's earliest release date
- A requirement that the MDOC develop individualized re-entry plans to help prisoners adjust to the community upon release
- The re-establishment of community placement eligibility for low security prisoners nearing parole
- More investment in services for probationers and parolees
- Use of progressive community-based sanctions in lieu of sending probationers and parolees to prison for non-criminal conduct.

Each organization also has innovative proposals of its own. CAPPs urges the establishment of a public oversight body for the MDOC, the development of a pilot mental health court on the drug court model, and the passage of legislation to apply the rule of *People v Aaron* (requiring an actual intent to kill) retroactively to prisoners incarcerated for felony-murder before 1980.

**T**he Prisons and Corrections Section recommends increased funding to the Michigan Auditor General so it can independently determine the effectiveness of MDOC programs, security classification and compliance with statutes, rules and standards. It also recommends more systematic review of prisoners who are terminally ill, chronically physically ill, incapacitated or over age 65 to determine their suitability for commutation.

In the most unique and controversial suggestion, the Bar Section calls for the MDOC to be split into two agencies, one to operate prisons and the other to oversee community supervision, including probation and parole. The rationale is that the separation of functions would help insure adequate recognition and funding of community-based supervision, and would allow each agency to focus on its inherently different missions.

The CAPPs recommendations follow. The Bar Section's Blueprint was published in the Spring 2003 issue of the Section's newsletter – *Prisons and Corrections Forum*. Both sets of recommendations can be found on the CAPPs website at [www.capps-mi.org](http://www.capps-mi.org).



# Budget crisis backdrop for conference on prison overuse

Recommendations on ways to reduce the state's ever-growing prison population were the focus of the May 9 conference in Lansing.

The forum – “Cost-Effective Corrections: Setting Priorities for Scarce Resources” – brought together experts in the fields of corrections, crime prevention and children's services, legislative staff, community leaders, prisoner family members and researchers.



Stephen Gobbo (left) from the Bar Section and Barbara Levine from CAPPS opened the day-long conference in Lansing.

“Because of the budget crisis here in Michigan, diverse groups such as the ones at this conference are being given an opportunity to work together,” he said.

Michigan's corrections policy has been unarticulated except by get-tough campaign literature, the policies of the Michigan Parole Board and the growing MDOC budget, Jondahl said.

“You could make a case that Michigan's policy is ‘lock ‘em up and throw away the key’.

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*“We have to look at the ‘farm system’ feeding the prison population.”*



*-- Lynn Jondahl of Michigan Prospect*

The event was sponsored by CAPPS and the Prisons and Corrections Section of the State Bar of Michigan. Each organization had independently developed a comprehensive set of suggestions for policy makers. (See story, page 6)

Stephen Gobbo, chairperson of the Bar Section and moderator for the conference, explained that both sets of recommendations are designed to reduce excessive incarceration and to encourage criminal justice practices that are cost-effective and fair.

The morning session provided background information and set the stage for a lively panel discussion in the afternoon.

The state's budget crisis and the role that corrections spending plays in siphoning funds from other government services, including those that prevent crime, was explained. Attendees also learned about the impact of the state's sentencing guidelines on the prison population, parole policies which keep offenders in prison after they are eligible for release, national trends in parole and sentencing reform, community-based sanctions and crime prevention.

Lynn Jondahl, former Michigan House member and executive director of Michigan Prospect, was the keynote speaker.



## Hearing a variety of voices

Members of the afternoon panel were, from left: Sen. Alan Cropsey, David Morse of PAAM, Dennis Schrantz of the MDOC, Heaster Wheeler of the NAACP, Sandra Girard of Prison Legal Services and Probate Court Judge Nancy Francis. Introducing the panelists (at right) is Stephen Gobbo.





Tom Clay

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*“Because MDOC operations are taking a larger share of the state’s resources every year, changes in corrections policies will be needed to reduce expenditures.”*

There is very little understanding by policy makers of parole and how it fits into the corrections system,” he said.

Jondahl said there are promising trends away from over reliance on prison as a sanction and cited the repeal of Michigan’s mandatory drug laws. He also called for more focus on the relationship between poverty and corrections.

“We have to look at the ‘farm system’ feeding the prison population,”

he said.

Tom Clay, senior research associate at the Citizens Research Council, explained Michigan’s budget dilemma.

He said the gaps between revenues and expenses, like the \$1.7 billion anticipated in the 2004 fiscal year, will not be eliminated even if we achieve sustained economic growth.

The problem has been caused, Clay said, not only by a weak economy and the decline in the stock market but because tax cuts have been eroding the revenue base, and government has failed to take action that would permanently balance the budget.

Because MDOC operations are taking a larger share of the state’s resources every year, changes in corrections policies will be needed to reduce expenditures, he said.

Revision of the state’s sentencing guidelines, adopted in the late 1990s, will be needed

to reduce the number of offenders coming into prison overall and the number of offenders coming to prison with short sentences, said Prof. Charles Ostrom, a researcher from Michigan State University who was a consultant to the state Sentencing Commission, before it was abolished.

He said the guidelines should be changed to take “truth-in-sentencing” into consideration and should include probation violators. He noted that at least one other state has a requirement that prison impact statements be attached to all prison-related bills and said he believes that if a commission is reconstituted its recommendations should go into effect unless the majority of legislators say no. This would help avoid the ratcheting up of individual sentences, he said.



Barbara Levine

Barbara Levine, executive director of CAPPs, talked about parole policies that have created, in large measure, the hefty growth in the state’s prison population over the past decade.

In explaining how the Michigan Parole Board functions, Levine noted that legislative sentencing guidelines, the sentences judges actually impose and plea negotiations between prosecutors and defense attorneys all assume a high likelihood of parole once the defendant serves the minimum sentence. However, the parole board’s discretion is basically unfettered, and it denies parole at the minimum more than half the time.

“So,” Levine said, “when we talk about parole board policies and practices, we are talking about power – the power to control individual lives, the power to protect the public from clearly dangerous offenders, the allocation of decision-making power within the criminal justice system, and the power to impact state resources by requiring the operation of dozens of facilities to house prisoners who, by law, are eligible for release.”



Charles Ostrom



Robert Diehl



Other speakers included Robert Diehl, president of the Michigan Association for Community Corrections Advancement, who explained the state's community corrections law and the operation of Huron House, a probation residential treatment program he runs in St. Clair County.

Diehl said there are about 14 probation residential programs in Michigan. By providing or coordinating a variety of services including mental health treatment, vocational and academic education, job seeking skills, day reporting and substance abuse monitoring and treatment, they are an alternative to incarceration.



*Judith Greene, center, with other conference guests.*

He said the centers, which require work, demand offender accountability and provide restorative justice to the community, impose 24-hour structured supervision. Defendants with minimum sentencing guideline scores of 0 to 9 months and probation violators with scores of 0 to 6 months are eligible.

Judith Greene, a nationally-known criminal justice policy analyst from New York, told the audience that a number of states are addressing the problem of prison overuse by returning sentencing discretion to judges, by revamping parole board policies and by handling violations of parole and probation in a "smarter" way.

"There is a reawakening around the country caused by the nationwide budget crisis which is causing states to put an increasing emphasis on community sanctions," Greene said.

She singled out Ohio as an example of the change in focus.

Because of

sentencing

changes and parole reform, Ohio's prison population dropped by about 3,000 during a period when Michigan's population increased by 4,000, she said. These changes included the adoption of determinate (flat) sentencing and the resulting abolition of parole for prisoners sentenced under the new scheme.

New sentencing guidelines in Ohio "pushed judges toward using community alternatives" for certain low-risk offenders and the state began pumping money into community corrections programs to handle the shift, Greene said.



*Judge Patrick Bowler*

She said new parole

guidelines for current prisoners produced an immediate turnaround in the paroling of low-level offenders and the prison population dropped as a result.

The parole guidelines do, however, place substantial weight on the "offense category". The Ohio paroling authority was looking at the circumstances surrounding the crime and assigning offense categories based on charges that were never brought, were dismissed or that had resulted in acquittal.

The Ohio Supreme Court held in *Layne v Ohio Adult Parole Authority*, 97 Ohio St. 3d 456, 780 N.E.2d 548 (2002), that while the paroling authority could consider any relevant circumstances, to insure meaningful parole eligibility and preserve the integrity of plea agreements, it had to set offense categories based only on the offense of conviction. The decision resulted in many Ohio prisoners having their parole dates advanced.

District Court Judge Patrick Bowler of Grand Rapids, president of the Michigan Association of Drug Court Professionals, talked about the drug court he operates. He said that drug courts, which are growing nationally, target treatment at an individual's situation. The program is a bright spot in Michigan's efforts to reduce prison commitments.

*"There is a reawakening around the country caused by the nationwide budget crisis which is causing states to put an increasing emphasis on community sanctions."*

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(Continued from page 9)

*High quality early childhood programs and family supports can help prevent violent behavior by helping parents develop effective parenting skills . . .*



*Sharon Claytor Peters*

“The criminal justice system has failed to address the substance abuse problems that plague our communities. Drug treatment courts are a partial answer to the problem,” Bowler said.

Felons who are drug addicts and who can be safely managed in the community are identified for the program when they are arrested and are placed in treatment within about 14 days. They are required to take drug tests and attend a 12-step treatment program.

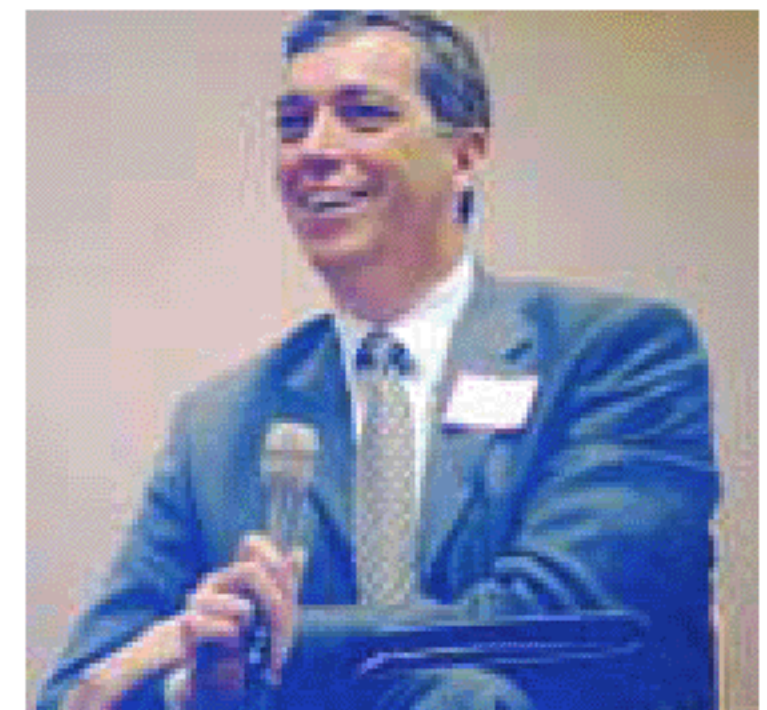
Offenders meet weekly with the judge to review their progress; offenders who fail to follow the rules are immediately sanctioned, usually with a brief stint in the county jail. Those who complete the program are honored in a graduation ceremony, one of a number of positive reinforcements used.

National and state studies show success in reducing recidivism and continuing drug use.

Bowler said his court is considering other specialty courts including ones for mentally ill offenders and those convicted of domestic violence.

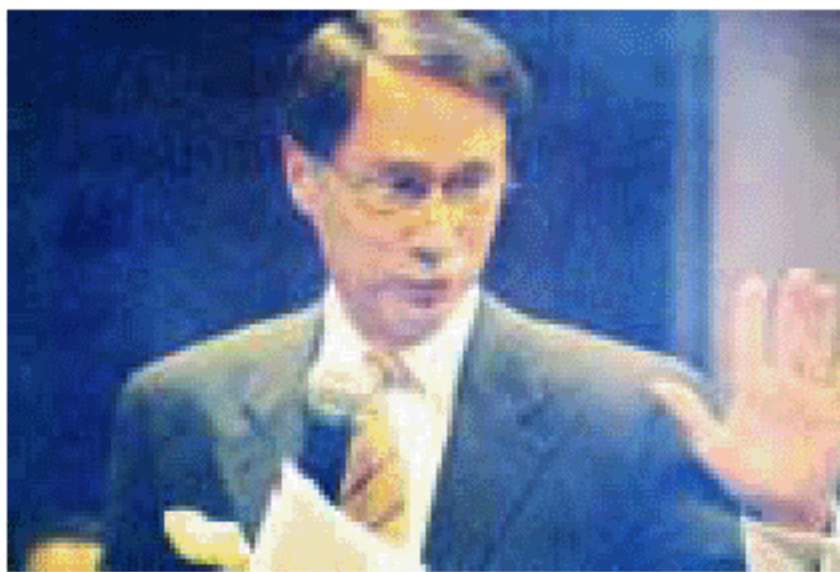
Sharon Claytor Peters, president and CEO of Michigan’s Children, explained recent findings in the area of brain development and urged more resources be placed in early childhood intervention to prevent the life experiences that result in crime and prison.

Peters said children’s earliest experiences have long term consequences for their developing brains. High quality early childhood programs and family supports can help prevent violent behavior by helping parents develop effective parenting skills, and by giving children the tools they need to form relationships, control or regulate their own behaviors, and develop cognitively and emotionally.



*Sen. Alan Cropsey*

A panel, moderated by Senior Capitol Correspondent Tim Skubick, discussed issues relating to sentencing, parole and the readjustment of prisoners returning to the community. Audience members had the opportunity to pose a broad range of questions to the panel members, who were: Sen. Alan Cropsey, chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Appropriations Subcommittee on Corrections; Hon. Nancy Francis of the Washtenaw County Probate Court; Sandra Girard, executive director of Prison Legal Services of Michigan, Inc.;



*Capitol Correspondent Tim Skubick*

David Morse, president of the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan; Dennis Schrantz, chief deputy director of the Field Operations Administration in the Michigan Department of Corrections; and Heaster Wheeler, executive director of the Detroit Branch of the NAACP.

The conference was funded in part by a grant from the JEHT Foundation and a gift from Atty. Daniel E. Manville.

Transcripts of the speakers’ remarks will be prepared and made available on the CAPPS website.



*Panel members from left: Heaster Wheeler, Sandra Girard and Hon. Nancy Francis.*



## More faces from the May 9 conference



## Be part of the solution -- Join CAPPS

### Citizens Alliance on Prisons and Public Spending Membership Form

CAPPS, 115 W. Allegan St., Suite 950, Lansing, MI 48933; Phone: (517) 482-7753;  
Fax: (517) 482-7754; E-Mail: CAPPS\_MI@ameritech.net; website: www.capps-mi.org

My tax deductible contribution, payable to "CAPPS," is enclosed.

My membership category is:  Organizational — \$100  Sustaining — \$100

Individual — \$25  Student — \$10  Prisoner — \$10

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_



## Visit the CAPPS website; see our new look

CAPPS' website ([www.capps-mi.org](http://www.capps-mi.org)) is being revitalized to freshen its appearance, expand its content and put greater focus on timely information such as legislative testimony. All the information currently on the CAPPS site will be updated. The changes will be completed shortly.

A "What's New" section will include CAPPS and Bar Section recommendations, the most recent legislative information and material from the May 9 conference. As events warrant, it will also include news releases, speeches and editorials.

The website contains information on prison expansion, the state's budget crisis and community-based sanctions. Viewers can go to the site to read CAPPS publications including its newsletter, *Consensus*.

Visitors will be able to link to legislative sites and find their legislators and pending bills. They will be able to find other advocacy organizations, research reports and sites relating to the parole and sentencing issues that are the focus of CAPPS' advocacy efforts.

Over time, the site will include stories about individual offenders to illustrate how we incarcerate people who present no threat to public safety. When the data analysis is complete, a description of the prisoners currently in the system who are eligible for parole will be posted.



**CAPPS**  
CITIZENS ALLIANCE ON  
PRISONS & PUBLIC SPENDING  
115 W. ALLEGAN STREET,  
SUITE 950, LANSING, MI 48933

*The Citizens Alliance on Prisons and Public Spending, a non-profit public policy organization, is a coalition of organizations and individuals concerned about the social and economic costs of prison expansion. Because policy choices, not crime rates, have caused our prison population to explode, CAPPS advocates re-examining those policies and shifting our resources to public services that prevent crime, rehabilitate offenders, and address the needs of all our citizens in a cost-effective manner.*