



# TASK FORCE on RELEASED INMATES

128354

*ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS*  
Kenneth L. McGinnis, Director

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# REPORT of the TASK FORCE on RELEASED INMATES

Prepared by  
The Task Force on Released Inmates

Published by  
Illinois Department of Corrections

Kenneth L. McGinnis  
Director

128354

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Springfield, Illinois  
January, 1990



ILLINOIS  
DEPARTMENT  
OF  
CORRECTIONS

KENNETH L. MCGINNIS

Director

1301 Concordia Court / P. O. Box 19277 / Springfield, IL 62794-9277 / Phone (217) 522-2666

January 16, 1990

Honorable Members of the General Assembly  
State House  
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Members of the General Assembly:

Pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution 83, a task force was appointed by Director Michael P. Lane to study the problems of persons released from prison and to make recommendations for the solution of these problems. This report reflects the task force's work over the past year. It warrants your review and serious consideration.

The Illinois Department of Corrections is in the worst prison crowding crisis in its history. In fiscal year 1991, we expect 17,400 inmates to be admitted to prison. Over 5,000 of these admissions will be releasees who violated their parole, either by committing a new crime or violating rules of their parole. Any measure that will prevent these people from returning to prison will benefit the potential victims, the releasee and the State.

It has always been the Department's commitment to provide educational, vocational and treatment opportunities to inmates who want to improve their life. This commitment must be continued in the community to be effective. The recommendations contained in this report will provide the necessary institutional and community support services to assist an inmate in changing his life.

I urge you to review and support these recommendations in the coming session of the General Assembly. Most of the recommendations require additional appropriations to the Department of Corrections for implementation. The National Council on Crime and Delinquency estimates that the total cost of a new prison bed is one million dollars. This includes operating funds, construction costs and debt retirement costs over thirty years. At this price, these recommendations are cost-effective.

Contact the Intergovernmental Relations Office at extension 2104, if you have any questions or require clarification.

Sincerely,

  
Kenneth L. McGinnis  
Director

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Task Force on Released Inmates has been conducting its research and discussions for approximately one year.

The process included review of data provided by the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) and meeting with the Director, Michael P. Lane, to discuss released inmates in the larger context of departmental issues. Tours were made of IDOC maximum, medium, and minimum security facilities, the women's correctional center at Dwight and community correctional center programs, both state-operated and contractual.

The Task Force also conducted public hearings in Chicago, Collinsville, and Peoria. Those providing testimony included criminal justice practitioners, scholars, interested citizens, and representatives of the Illinois Department of Public Aid, Illinois Job Service, and the Illinois Vocational and Educational Council. The hearings reinforced the Task Force's belief that there is a great deal of concern about this issue and widespread support for implementation of the recommendations included in the report.

The Task Force would like to acknowledge the valuable assistance and insight of Ms. Nola Joyce, Manager of Planning and Budget, IDOC. In addition, Ms. Marguerite Richards of the Community Services Division, IDOC provided valuable support and logistical assistance. Others who provided invaluable support to the Task Force included Ms. Sharon Paul, Executive Assistant, Community Services Division, and Mr. Bob Jones and Mr. Francis B. Nelson, Jr., Planning & Research, IDOC.

The concern of the Legislature is exemplified by the Resolution which mandated the formation of this Task Force. The Task Force appreciates the opportunity to serve the citizens of Illinois.

The Task Force stands ready to work with the Legislature, the Illinois Department of Corrections, other appropriate State agencies, citizens and others for implementation of these recommendations.

Michael J. Mahoney  
Chairman  
Chicago, Illinois  
January, 1990

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STATE OF ILLINOIS  
EIGHTY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
SENATE

Senate Joint Resolution No. 83

Offered by Senators Marovitz and D'Arco

WHEREAS, The majority of crimes in this State are committed by ex-offenders; and

WHEREAS, Many prison and jail inmates are released early because correctional facility populations are at or above capacity, but there are currently only 38 parole agents to supervise over 11,000 parolees statewide; and

WHEREAS, The State of Illinois has an annual prison turnover rate in excess of 10,200; and

WHEREAS, The costs of placing unemployed ex-offenders on public assistance rolls, the costs to society of crime committed by ex-offenders, and the costs of incarcerating ex-offenders who return to crime after they are released, are a tremendous financial burden on the taxpayers of this State; and

WHEREAS, Even greater costs of recidivism are the damage caused to a society that must live in fear of crime, and the waste of the potential of the unproductive lives of persons who repeatedly engage in criminal activity; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING HEREIN, that a blue ribbon Task Force be appointed to conduct a comprehensive study of the problems facing persons released from correctional facilities and to make recommendations regarding solutions to those problems; and be it further

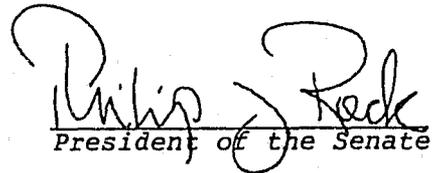
RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall be composed of 12 members who are knowledgeable about recidivism and the problems of ex-offenders, who shall be appointed by the Director of Corrections, and that the members of the Task Force shall select from among their membership one member who shall serve as chairman; and be it further

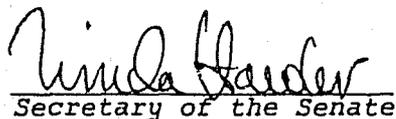
RESOLVED, That the Task Force report its findings and recommendations to the Director of Corrections on or before December 1, 1989, and the Director of Corrections shall report to the General Assembly regarding those findings and recommendations.

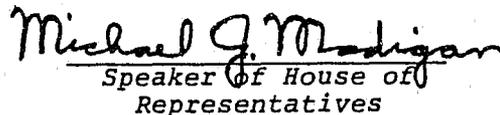
Adopted by the Senate, October 22, 1987.

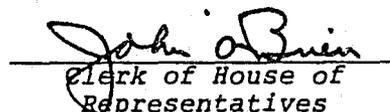
Concurred in by the House of Representatives, with House Amendments Nos. 1 & 2, June 8, 1988.

Senate concurred in House Amendments Nos. 1 & 2, June 28, 1988.

  
President of the Senate

  
Secretary of the Senate

  
Speaker of House of  
Representatives

  
Clerk of House of  
Representatives

FILED  
INDEX DEPARTMENT

JUL 1 1988.

IN THE OFFICE OF  
SECRETARY OF STATE

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution 83, Director Michael P. Lane of the Department of Corrections appointed a task force to study the problems associated with persons released from prison and to make recommendations regarding solutions to those problems. After meeting for a year and conducting public hearings, the Task Force is submitting its recommendations for consideration and implementation.

In 1988, 654,189 index crimes were reported to state and local police. Some of these crimes were committed by inmates released from the Department of Corrections after completing their sentence. Over 90% of the inmates sentenced to prison will eventually be released to return to their community. The real questions are: 1) can inmates return better prepared to live in their communities?; and, 2) do opportunities exist in the community for them to stay crime-free?

There is also an economic issue. It costs \$16,300 a year to house one inmate and \$55 million to build one new prison. These costs do not include the economic and emotional losses of crime victims. Prevention programs will save not only dollars but also human suffering. If these recommendations reduce the recidivism rate from the current 44% to 34%, the savings to the state would approach \$23 million in fiscal year 1992.

The order of the following recommendations reflects the movement of the inmates through the correctional system: institutionalization, release preparation, and community supervision. The recommendations are not in priority order. All are worthy of consideration and support.

This report puts forth recommendations the Task Force believes will improve the chances of ex-offenders in society by providing meaningful institutional programming in preparation for release and encouraging lawful behavior through community support services.

Elliott Curries (1988) commented that the consequences of the future will be shaped by the creativity and boldness of the policies designed to deal with them. It is hoped that this report will result in creative and bold action that will shape a pragmatic approach to the issues of the released inmate.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (continued)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS:
  - a. Increase the appropriation for School District #428 by \$5.3 million to provide a sufficient number of educational and vocational classes and raise the literacy standard to the eighth-grade level.
  - b. Develop a comprehensive, coordinated employment plan for releasees among the Department of Corrections, Department of Rehabilitation Services, and Department of Employment Security.
  - c. Identify released inmates in the Job Training Partnership Act as a significant segment for service.
2. SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAMS: Provide a long-term commitment of \$2 million to continue the substance abuse programs begun in the Department of Corrections with grant funds.
3. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES: Fund \$3 million for institutional and community-based mental health services for inmates and releasees, including a residential treatment program for aggressive releasees with mental health needs.
4. SEX-OFFENDER PROGRAMS: Fund \$3 million for the establishment of a sex-offender treatment program during institutionalization and out-patient treatment during release. These programs should include a community-based treatment program for violent sex offenders on community supervision.
5. LONG-TERM INMATES: Develop an educational and work-assignment track in the Department of Corrections for long-term inmates.
6. INDETERMINATE INMATES: Establish validated, objective release criteria to be used by the Illinois Prisoner Review Board for the paroling of indeterminate inmates.
7. FEMALE INMATES: Review and propose programs for the Department of Corrections specific to the needs of female inmates.
8. RELEASE SCHOOL: Develop a standard, comprehensive release school program by the Department of Corrections.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (continued)

9. COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS:
  - a. Triple the number of community center beds to 2,360 at an estimated cost of \$20 million. Priority should be given to Cook county.
  - b. Examine eligibility criteria to allow long-term inmates an opportunity to participate in the community correctional center program.
  
10. REDUCING COMMUNITY SUPERVISION CASELOADS:
  - a. Reduce all mandatory supervised release terms by one-third or increase the number of agents.
  - b. Develop a formal, written agreement regarding an early discharge policy through cooperation between the Department of Corrections and the Prisoner Review Board.
  - c. Evaluate the case classification/workload management system by the Department of Corrections.
  
11. TRANSITIONAL FACILITIES FOR THE HOMELESS:
  - a. Set aside two beds by the Department of Corrections in existing community centers for homeless releasees.
  - b. Lease a block of ten to fifteen rooms by the Department of Corrections for a temporary home for the homeless releasee.
  
12. EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES: Appropriate \$1 million to provide employment services to releasees.
  
13. NEED FOR VOLUNTEERS: Facilitate the recruitment, training, and matching of volunteers with inmates by the Department of Corrections.
  
14. RECOGNITION CEREMONY: Institute a recognition ceremony by the State for former inmates who have remained crime-free for five years.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (continued)

| RECOMMENDATIONS   | COST<br>(millions) |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Increase the number and quality of educational and vocational programs and employment opportunities. | \$ 5.3             |
| 2. Provide sufficient substance abuse treatment programs.   | 2.0                |
| 3. Increase mental health treatment programs for inmates and releasees.                                 | 3.0                |
| 4. Establish a sex-offender treatment program.  | 3.0                |
| 5. Develop a separate educational and work-assignment track for long-term inmates.                      | 0.0                |
| 6. Establish a release mechanism for indeterminate inmates.   | 0.0                |
| 7. Determine the special needs of female inmates  | 0.0                |
| 8. Develop a comprehensive release school program.  | 0.0                |
| 9. Establish a structured release process by expanding community correctional center beds.              | 20.0               |
| 10. Reduce community supervision caseloads.   | 0.0                |
| 11. Provide transitional facilities for the homeless releasee.  | 0.0                |
| 12. Expand employment opportunities for releasees.  | 1.0                |
| 13. Increase the use of volunteers.   | 0.0                |
| 14. Acknowledge releasees who have remained crime-free for five years.                                  | 0.0                |

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**BACKGROUND**

## BACKGROUND

This section will review sentencing practices and their effects, prison population projections and mandatory supervised release. Any changes affecting the correctional system must take these factors into account.

To understand the situation of inmates and released inmates, one must first become familiar with the environmental and organizational pressures that exist for them. It is difficult to promote and achieve life changes when the pressures promote the status quo.

Today, over half a billion dollars of state resources are dedicated to the Department of Corrections (DOC). The projected growth in the prison population will demand at least six new prisons by 1992. It is certain that this population growth will continue under current sentencing practices.

### Determinate Sentencing

The sentencing structure influences all aspects of the DOC from individual inmate behavior to prison population pressure. The sentencing structure is the framework in which offenders must live and correctional officials must manage.

Illinois embarked on a major reform of its criminal sentencing laws on December 28, 1977 when Governor James R. Thompson signed into law Public Act 80-1099. This law, effective February 1, 1978, amended the Unified Code of Corrections and converted Illinois from an indeterminate system to a system of determinate prison sentences.

The signing of the determinate sentencing act was "widely hailed as ushering in a new era in the sentencing of criminal offenders--one in which sentences would be both fairer across the board and, where warranted, far more severe than had previously been authorized by law" (Schuwerk 1984). Schuwerk (1984), however, points out that there were dissenters who saw the Act as punitive and believed it would overflow the prisons with inmates while doing little, if anything, to control the discretion in sentencing that led to its enactment. In the years following enactment of determinate sentencing, enhancements, such as residential burglary, guilty but mentally ill, and punitive sentences for drug offenses, have all added to the prison crowding problem.

The determinate sentencing act brought with it seven felony classifications. The addition of "Class X" offenses re-codified mandatory prison sentences and lengthened prison terms for serious offenses. Each class is assigned a range from which a judge selects a period of incarceration. For the majority of offenders, judges retain discretion on the decision to incarcerate. In fact, the law states a presumption of probation or conditional discharge for the majority of felonies.

As Table 1 shows, determinate sentencing shortened prison time for less serious offenses and lengthened it for more serious offenses.

Table 1  
Impact of Determinate Sentencing

| Offense Class | Average Length of Stay in Years | Average Sentence Imposed in Years X 1/2 (Day for Day) | Impact of Determinate Sentencing on Length of Stay |
|---------------|---------------------------------|---|--|
|               | 1978                            | 1988  |  |
| Murder        | 11.0                            | 14.6  | +3.6   |
| Class X       | 4.1                             | 5.9   | +1.8   |
| Class 1       | 3.5                             | 3.1   | -0.4   |
| Class 2       | 2.7                             | 2.0   | -0.7   |
| Class 3       | 2.6                             | 1.5   | -1.1   |
| Class 4       | 2.3                             | 0.9   | -1.4   |

Time served for class 1, 2, 3 and 4 offenses decreased with the greatest reductions being 13 months for class 3 and 17 months for class 4. Time served increased for the more serious offenses, by an additional three years and seven months for murder and one year and ten months for Class X.

A major effect of these changes is on the composition of the prison population. In December, 1977, 44% of the Illinois prison population consisted of murderers, class X and class 1 offenders. By February, 1989 that percentage totaled 69%. The total prison population increased by 10,700 while the number of murderers, class X and class 1 inmates in the population increased by 10,800 between December, 1977 and February, 1989. These increases are linked to both the mandatory prison sentences for all class X offenses and some class 1 offenses and to their extended length of stay which resulted from determinate sentencing and later enhancements.

Contained in the indeterminate sentencing structure was a paroling agent, the Parole and Pardon Board, that made decisions on the release of inmates. This board and, to a lesser extent, clinicians within DOC, had discretion to lengthen or shorten an inmate's prison stay based on their perception of the inmate's "clinical readiness" for release (Schuwerk, 1984). A side benefit of this discretionary release function was the ability to regulate prison population through release decisions. Determinate sentencing separated an inmate's degree of "success" in any given rehabilitation program from the release issue. It also eliminated discretion on the release issue by DOC officials.

With the new determinate sentencing structure, coupled with the Illinois Supreme Court ruling on meritorious goodtime (MGT), most discretion concerning an inmate's release was eliminated. An inmate must serve a flat sentence, less day-for-day and up to 90 days of MGT. As stated earlier, even with these provisions, time to serve has increased which

has resulted in higher prison populations. The effect of these actions, to quote Schuwerk (1984):

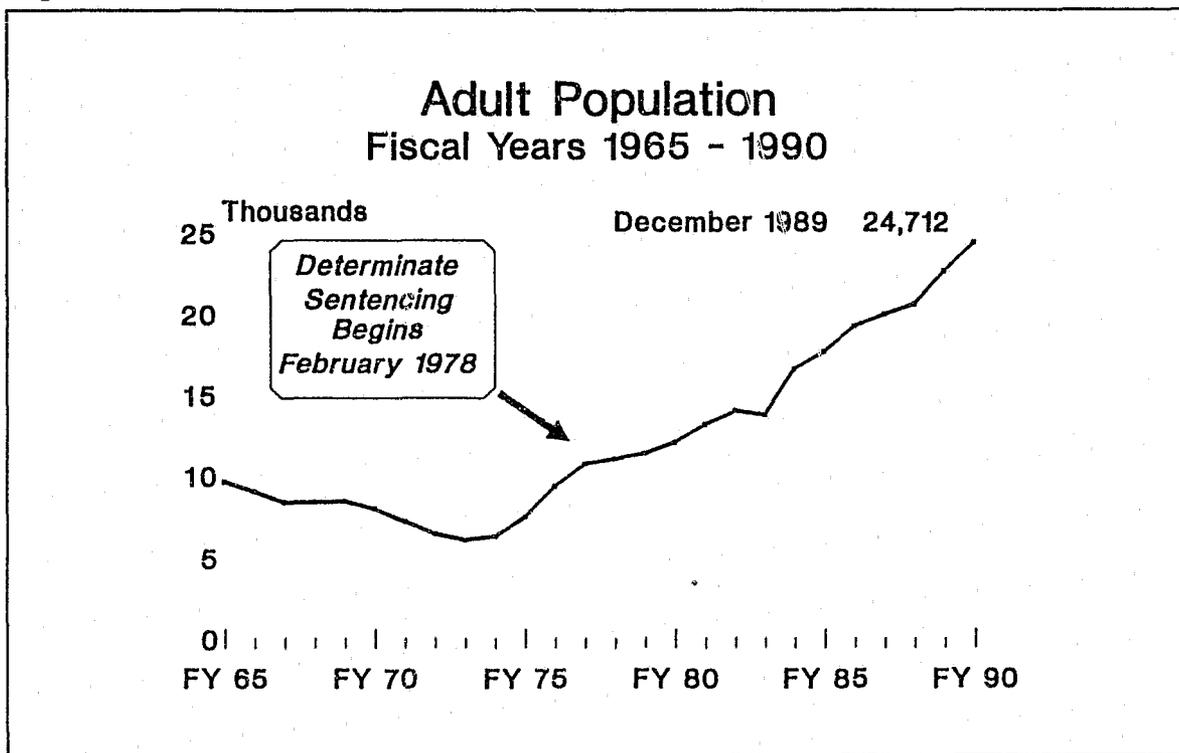
. . . left the DOC in a very difficult position. Stripped of its power to vary the rate of accumulation of good-conduct credits as a safety valve to alleviate overcrowded conditions, the DOC is now largely reduced, in the words of Tennessee Williams, to "depend[ing] on the kindness of strangers." The prospects of the entire prison system slipping into an unconstitutionally overcrowded condition is a very real one, as the Lane court recognized, and both short- and long-term remedial measures are an urgent necessity. It would be a tragedy if the integrity of judicial sentencing decisions were restored only at the price of utterly disabling the DOC.

The crowding of prisons has a double effect. Not only are conditions unsafe but any attempts to promote individual change are hampered. Programming, school, work, and treatment, are all affected by crowding. An individual, whether in society or in prison, will curtail extra activities if personal safety is unsure. Many city residents spend a great deal of time locked in their home out of fear. The same phenomenon occurs in prison. "The nucleus of internal order must be present before counseling, educational, and vocational programs can be developed" (DiJulio, 1988).

Today 24,800 inmates are housed in Illinois prisons designed to hold 18,300. Ten years after the enactment of determinate sentencing there are 13 more prisons in existence with three under construction. The prison population has increased by over 13,456 inmates (a 123% increase) since 1978. Most of this increase can be attributed to a corresponding increase in the number of murderers, class X and class 1 offenders who received mandatory prison sentences.

Figure 1 shows the growth of the prison population. The more recent prison growth is associated with the enforcement of and increased sanctions for drug offenses.

Figure 1.



#### Prison Population Projections

An inmate who walks out of prison in the same condition or perhaps in even worse condition than when he walked in will likely return to prison. Once back in the community the offender often finds little assistance in beginning a crime-free life. By not being able to provide a sufficient level of programs in the institutions and the community, society is helping to ensure a continuing prison crowding crisis.

The Department of Corrections recently updated its annual prison population projections which indicate that Illinois will experience an alarming increase in the state prison population over the next five years. This increase, in conjunction with the DOC's current capacity expansion plan, will result in prison crowding of crisis proportions in the next few years.

Based on the latest data, the DOC projects an inmate population of over 26,000 by June 30, 1990. By fiscal year 1992 the prison population will be over 30,000 inmates. The primary sources of this dramatic increase are twofold:

1. Increased Court Admissions -- Despite demographic data which indicate that court admissions should level off as the portion of the population in the "crime-prone age of 15-25 stabilizes, court admissions have continued to increase by 27% over the last three years. In fiscal year 1989 the court admissions increased by 11% over 1988.

The pressures causing increased court admissions are older offenders (30 years and older) continuing in crime, enhanced drug law enforcement, and increased admissions from Cook and the Collar Counties.

2. Increased Admissions for Parole Violations -- The new projections reflect the decision to bring back the parole agents laid off in fiscal year 1988. These layoffs significantly reduced the admission of parole violators into the prison system and thereby, restrained the growth in the prison population in the past year. It is expected that the return of parole agents will restore parole violation admissions to historical levels.
3. Crackdown on Drug Offenders -- The crackdown on drug offenders since 1985 accounts for 33% of the Illinois prison population growth. Drug offenders are the fastest growing sub-group in the prison population. The prison population increased 28% between June, 1985 and June, 1989, while inmates with drug offenses increased 208%. On June 30, 1989, there were 2,439 inmates in prison for drug and DUI offenses. This is equivalent to three 728-bed prisons.

The future population growth will result in a 4,000 prison bed shortage by fiscal year 1992. This assumes that all planned capacity increases occur and no new criminal sentence enhancements are enacted.

#### Mandatory Supervised Release

There are 12,082 people on mandatory supervised release (MSR) and parole. This population is expected to increase to 17,000 by 1992.

The majority of inmates are released onto mandatory supervised release. They must serve a period of supervised release which varies with the class of the offense. For murder or a class X felony, the period of supervised release is three years; for class 1 and class 2 felonies, two years; and for class 3 and class 4 felonies, one year. These terms are shorter than the parole supervision periods established under indeterminate sentencing. The Prisoner Review Board is also empowered to determine the conditions of release and impose sanctions for violating conditional release status, including revocation. Upon revocation, an offender may be forced to serve the remaining supervised release time, plus up to one year of the original sentence, in prison. The Prisoner Review Board also has the authority to release an offender from supervision at any time prior to the completion of the term.

The average parole agent caseload is 109. This will vary by geographic location with higher caseloads in the Cook County area. This caseload is equal to an average of only 1.1 hour of supervision per releasee per month. Priority is given to supervising high and moderate risk releasees.

## Released Inmates

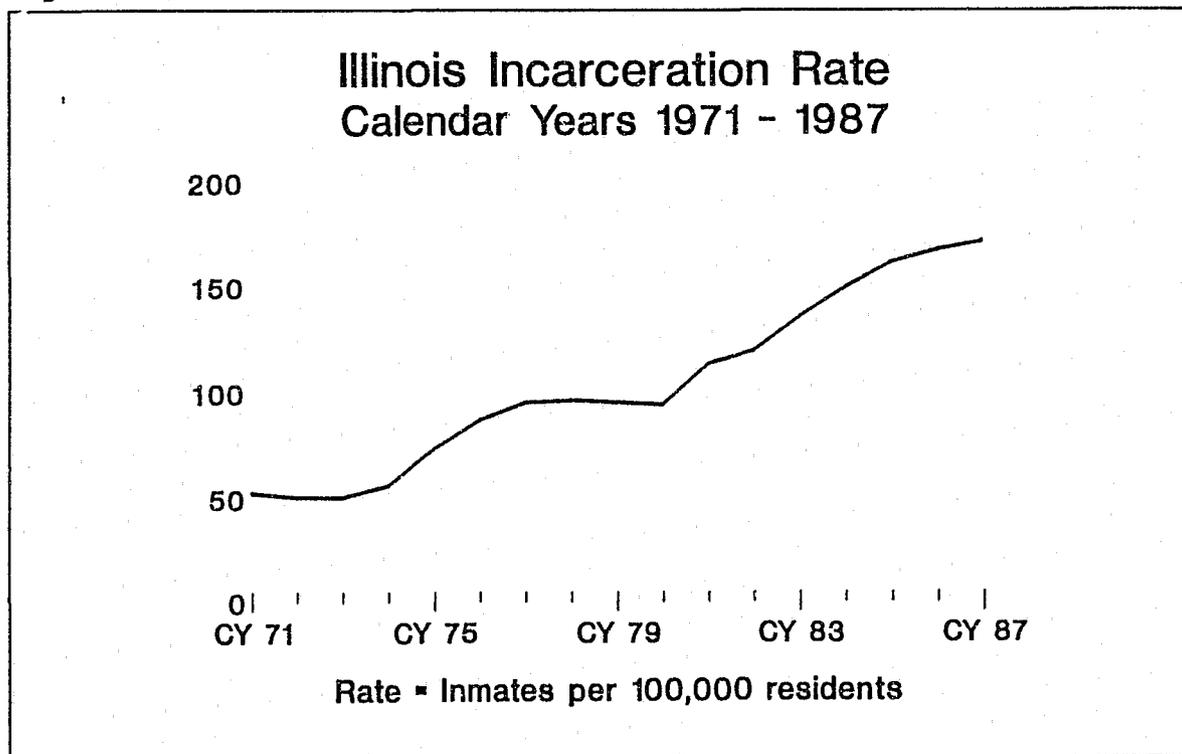
In fiscal year 1990, 11,800 inmates will be released from prison because they completed their sentence. This number will reach 14,000 by the end of fiscal year 1991. Over a three-year period, if nothing changes, 44% of these inmates or a total of 11,500 will return to prison. The returning inmate adds to the prison population problem and the rising cost of incarceration. In order to reduce the chance of an inmate returning to prison, effective and sufficient programming in prison and follow-up services in the community are required.

Released inmates often have underlying problems of substance abuse, mental health issues, and a lack of basic life skills. They must often locate housing, employment, and community services immediately upon release with little assistance. The frustration, bewilderment and lack of support often contribute to the decision of returning to crime.

Treatment and educational programs have been found to reduce the chance of a released inmate returning to prison. Ensuring that a person has a place to live and a means of support will reduce the motivation to commit a crime.

As Figure 2 shows, the incarceration rate has increased three-fold since 1971. This trend will continue unless something is done.

Figure 2.



Any efforts that help to reduce the number of releasees returning to prison will have multiple benefits. There are benefits to the releasees, their families, and communities. In addition, by decreasing the number of returnees, the prisons may become less crowded.

This report puts forth recommendations the Task Force believes will improve the opportunities of ex-offenders to succeed in society. Elliott Currie (1988) commented that the consequences [of the future] will be shaped by the creativity and boldness of the policies designed to deal with them. It is hoped that this report will result in creative and bold action that will shape a pragmatic approach to the issues of the released inmate.

**ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 1. EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

### ISSUE:

Inmates require marketable job skills upon release and the opportunity to use those skills in the community. The Department of Corrections (DOC) must provide a sufficient number of relevant educational and vocational programs and Correctional Industries jobs. Coordination with other state agencies is required to provide the greatest benefit to the released inmate in obtaining employment.

### RECOMMENDATION:

To promote motivation and opportunities for life changes, a coordinated program involving education, job assignments, and community placement is required.

- a. The Legislature should provide \$2.4 million to DOC School District #428 to provide sufficient classes and teachers to keep pace with the growing prison population and to eliminate the waiting list for adult basic education. Within two years, the Legislature should provide funds to School District #428 so the literacy standard can be raised from the sixth-grade level to the eighth-grade level. This change will require an additional \$1.1 million.
- b. The Legislature should replace the \$1.8 million to be lost by School District #428 in fiscal year 1991 from the legislative changes to the Illinois State Scholarship Commission.
- c. The Legislature should mandate the Department of Corrections, Department of Rehabilitation Services and the Department of Employment Security to develop a comprehensive, coordinated employment plan for releasees.
- d. The Job Training and Partnership Act should identify released inmates as a significant segment for service.
- e. The Legislature should provide sufficient resources to the Department of Corrections that will allow inmate pay (SMIC) to keep pace with population growth.
- f. Correctional Industries should continue to develop industries that are beneficial to inmates upon release.

### DISCUSSION:

One of the primary concerns of a released inmate is to obtain and keep a meaningful, well-paying job. An inmate with such a job is less likely to return to crime. To achieve this life goal requires that the inmate possess basic skills as well as a job skill that is in demand. Dr. Dennis Anderson, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, found that inmates who completed their GED and obtained vocational training had lower recidivism rates than other inmates as shown in Table 2.

Table 2  
 Releasees in Criminal Activity  
 One Year after Release  
 by Type of Program

| Prison<br>Programming | Releasees in<br>Criminal Activity |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Vocational/Academic   | 23%                               |
| Vocational            | 25%                               |
| Academic              | 27%                               |
| Neither Program       | 32%                               |

Educational and vocational programs of School District #428 must keep pace with the prison population growth and demands of the job market. The inmate population growth and capacity expansions require the addition of classes and teachers. By fiscal year 1991, it is estimated that \$1.9 million is needed to keep pace with growth. Failure to do so means that fewer inmates will be offered the opportunity of educational and vocational courses.

In 1987, the Department of Corrections implemented a mandatory attendance policy for the adult basic education program. This program requires that all new inmates with a sentence of two years or more be tested for educational achievement. Any inmate who tests below the sixth-grade level in reading and math scores is required to attend adult basic education classes for a minimum of 90 days. There is a waiting list of between 400 and 500 inmates. Seventeen additional educators at a cost of \$478.2 thousand will eliminate the waiting lists.

The federal government and several other states have raised the standard of literacy from the sixth-grade level to the eighth-grade level. The eighth-grade level is more realistic in today's society. To accomplish this, 40 more educators at a cost of \$1.1 million are required.

The Illinois State Scholarship Commission (ISSC) has been a major supplement to School District #428 funding for many years. A recent law, effective in fiscal year 1991, prohibits the ISSC from providing funds to inmates. Without these funds, up to 15 full-time vocational programs and approximately one-third of the two-year academic programs at 15 IDOC facilities will be eliminated. Approximately \$1.8 million is required in fiscal year 1991 to maintain the current level of services.

Coordination between agencies and programs is necessary to gain full benefit of the state's resources. The Department of Employment Security

and the Department of Rehabilitation Services have expertise in identifying and recruiting employers, and providing placements that will aid the releasee. The Departments of Corrections, Employment Security, and Rehabilitation Services should develop and implement a coordinated plan to provide training and employment opportunities to releasees. Releasees must also be identified as a significant service segment by the Job Training and Partnership Act.

Finally, incentives in terms of meaningful work assignments and reasonable pay must be established. Correctional Industries should work toward developing joint enterprises with private business. This will ensure that jobs have a connection with current job markets in the community.

The average monthly pay for an inmate is \$18. This is a minimal amount. An increase in the SMIC appropriation is necessary to keep pace with inmate population growth.

SUMMARY:

Releasing inmates to their community with no better job skills or training than they had at the time of incarceration significantly reduces their incentive and ability to find meaningful employment and remain crime-free. Increased funding must be made available to the Department of Corrections in order to provide opportunities for programming that will provide the greatest benefit to inmates.

## 2. SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAMS

### ISSUE:

A large majority of incarcerated offenders are also substance abusers. The period of incarceration provides a unique opportunity for treating substance abuse and breaking the cycle of drugs and crime.

### RECOMMENDATION:

The Department of Corrections (DOC) has begun to implement a standardized "continuum-of-care" treatment program with the assistance of short term funds from a federal grant and the Department of Alcohol and Substance Abuse (DASA). As these grants expire, a long-term commitment of \$2 million in general revenue funding is required to continue the program in fiscal year 1991. The DOC should continue to coordinate its substance abuse programs with private and not-for-profit vendors.

### DISCUSSION:

The Drug Use Forecasting program, sponsored by the National Institute of Justice, found in 1987 that 73% of all offenders arrested in Chicago tested positive for some type of drug. This statistic had increased to 78% by 1988. A DOC study found that 60% of the inmates released in 1984 reported some drug use. The same study found that the recidivism rate for non-drug users was 32% but climbed to 58% for poly-drug users.

The DOC substance abuse program is designed to provide "continuum-of-care" services. Inmates will be assessed for substance abuse during reception. Standardized institutional programming will be offered during incarceration. The programming will consist of a structured substance abuse education program and a variety of treatment approaches. Follow-up will be provided through community-based services during community center stay and/or community supervision.

During fiscal year 1990, three intensive residential programs will be in operation. These programs are at the Dwight Correctional Center, the Graham Correctional Center, and the Illinois Youth Center-Valley View. They will provide an intensive counseling component where the participants live in the same housing unit. In addition, DASA funds will be used to establish contractual treatment programs in community correctional centers consisting of 30 female and 30 male beds.

The Community Services Division is implementing a pilot supervision program of releasees with substance abuse problems. The pilot involves a caseload of 50 releasees with two agents and one substance abuse counselor. The agents will conduct random contacts and drug tests while the counselor will conduct weekly group meetings, individual sessions, and follow-up on treatment programs provided by community-based programs.

In fiscal year 1991, the funds supporting these programs will expire. General Revenue Funds of \$1.3 million are required to maintain them.

In addition, \$524.0 thousand is needed to add 14 adult and 10 juvenile community beds. Finally \$150.0 thousand is required to fund the assessment component during reception. These programs can only service a minority of needs. Based on evaluations, successful components should be expanded and funded.

SUMMARY:

A significant number of inmates are incarcerated as a direct result of their dependency on drugs and alcohol. Incarceration provides the opportunity to treat substance abuse problems utilizing a continuum-of-care approach which provides treatment and care from reception to community supervision. Additional funding should be made available to the Department of Corrections to allow for continuation of these programs.

### 3. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

#### ISSUE:

Many inmates have chronic mental health needs that may contribute to their criminality. Delivery of mental health services can reduce and modify behaviors that lead to crime.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

Two million dollars are required to purchase mental health services for releasees, including a residential treatment program for aggressive releasees with mental health needs. One million dollars for mental health staff and contractual hours should be funded so institutional caseloads can keep pace with the growing prison population.

This Task Force concurs with and encourages the implementation of the recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on the Mentally Retarded and Mentally Ill Offender. The recommendations from its report concerning released inmates were:

- a. Letters of agreement for pre-release planning for post-incarceration services signed by Corrections, Mental Health and Prisoner Review Board.
- b. Recommend post-incarceration mental health or rehabilitation whenever the Prisoner Review Board determines these services are essential to an inmate's reintegration.
- c. Operate or contract for a halfway house and work release center for the more seriously disturbed offenders who are mentally retarded and/or mentally ill.
- d. Establish linkages between Corrections and post-incarceration service providers through the Community Supervision Unit prior to the inmate's release and monitor throughout the period of community supervision.

A process establishing services for releasees with mental health needs must be coordinated between Corrections and community mental health agencies. At the time of release, Corrections should supply the releasee with a minimal amount of prescribed medication.

#### DISCUSSION:

It is estimated that 10% or 1,270 releasees are in need of mental health services. These problems vary from severe psychosis to depression to inability to cope with life's daily demands. Often these people are left on their own to locate services. High parole caseloads often prohibit agents from assisting in making the necessary contacts. The ex-offender must compete with others in obtaining mental health services.

The Department of Corrections (DOC), by contracting with vendors, can target service areas with a high concentration of ex-offenders who require mental health services. Two million dollars can supplement the local mental health providers and encourage services for ex-offenders.

In many cases, however, the problem is that services do not exist. This is true for the aggressive, assaultive releasee with mental health needs who requires residential treatment. Current mental health residential programs are hesitant to take an offender who is aggressive. This often results in services not being provided. In cases where an offender is accepted for treatment, s/he is often returned to the DOC because of acting out in the residential program. At minimum, one facility is required that provides services to releasees only. This facility should be established on a contractual basis with oversight by the DOC.

The adult medium security institutions have absorbed the overflow of the growing inmate population. These institutions have one mental health professional for between 975 and 1,100 inmates. Adding one mental health professional at each medium facility would reduce the ratio to between 487 and 550. This is in line with the American Association of Correctional Psychologists' recommended ratio of 500 inmates for each mental health professional. This will require 11 additional psychologists and social workers at a cost of \$352.0 thousand. To bring the ratio of psychiatric hours in medium security institutions to 10 hours a week per 750 to 800 inmates will require an additional 44 hours per week at a cost of \$193.0 thousand.

The Pontiac and Joliet Correctional Centers require one additional staff while the Vienna Correctional Center requires an increase in psychological coverage from 25 hours to 40 hours per week. These additions will cost \$82.6 thousand. Finally, because of overall population growth, the Department Corrections three mental health units at the Dwight Correctional Center, Menard Psychiatric Center, and Dixon Special Treatment Center (Dixon Correctional Center) are experiencing increased demand for psychiatric and psychological services. An additional 100 hours per week at an annual cost of \$416.0 thousand are required to meet this demand.

The Governor's Task Force on the Mentally Retarded and Mentally Ill Offender over a two-year period researched the broad issues surrounding the offender who is mentally retarded and/or mentally ill and offered recommendations. This Task Force concurs with its recommendations concerning the released inmate who is mentally retarded or mentally ill and requests that they be implemented.

SUMMARY:

Mental health problems contribute to some inmates criminality. Untreated, these problems may lead to additional problems beyond release including a return to crime. Sufficient funding should be made available to the Department of Corrections and the Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities to provide needed services and to establish a system for transition from prison to the community, allowing for a continuum of service and availability of treatment.

#### 4. SEX-OFFENDER PROGRAMS

##### ISSUE:

Incarceration without treatment appears to be ineffective in deterring sex offenders. These offenders will be released back to the community. The probability of a sex offender committing another sex crime is greater without treatment and follow-up.

##### RECOMMENDATION:

The Legislature should appropriate \$3 million to the Department of Corrections (DOC) for centralizing and standardizing sex-offender treatment programs. Components of the program should include treatment during institutionalization and out-patient treatment after release. Contractual arrangements should be pursued prior to developing an in-house program. Also, a specialized parole caseload with trained agents should be established in association with the out-patient treatment program. This should include the establishment of a treatment program for violent sex offenders. The effectiveness of these programs should be routinely evaluated.

##### DISCUSSION:

As of June 30, 1989, 2,538 (11.3%) of the DOC's adult institutional population was being held for a sex-related crime. Several institutions currently offer sex-offender treatment groups, but the total number served is less than 150. The demand for such treatment services is unknown.

A total of 1,042 sex offenders were on mandatory supervised release or parole. When released, sex offenders are automatically classified for high supervision and receive the maximum amount of agent time available. When the Prisoner Review Board orders participation in treatment, the agent tries to monitor the offender's attendance. The demand is greater than the available services.

The DOC should establish a 200-bed, self-contained sex-offender treatment program at one of the institutions. The focus should be to provide effective treatment to sex offenders just prior to release. The unit should be small enough to be staffed by a few mental health professionals, but large enough to treat a significant proportion of sex offenders prior to release. This unit should be single celled.

Programming should consist of traditional vocational and educational training along with therapy modules. Therapy modules should include individual and group therapy sessions along with medications, if necessary. The therapy modules should focus on relapse prevention and support group development. The goal of the program should be that the offender acquire the ability to recognize and control factors which have led to sexual aggression.

In cases where there is a combination of substance abuse and a sex offense, the substance abuse problem must be dealt with first. It makes little sense to dedicate these scarce resources to individuals who have not successfully dealt with other problems. Substance abuse only aggravates the tendency toward committing sex offenses.

Reinforcement of relapse prevention and the involvement in a sex-offender support group must be continued when the inmate is released. Prior to release, the parole plan should include an out-patient treatment component that will follow-up on the progress made in the institutional treatment component. This must involve the connection of the offender with a community sponsor, preferably an offender who has gone through the program, and involvement in group sessions. The DOC requires sufficient funds to contract for these treatment programs. In addition, specialized caseloads with agents trained to deal with sex offenders should be established. This will provide additional public safety while providing support to the offender.

Also required are funds to establish a treatment program for violent sex offenders. No program of this type exists in the state. The DOC could contract and direct a much needed community based program.

Estimated costs for this program are \$3 million. The institutional component is estimated at \$1.5 million.

SUMMARY:

Although the sex offender does not represent the greatest proportion of the inmate population, the seriousness of the crime and its devastating affect on its victims warrants continued study and funding for treatment and follow-up.

## 5. INDETERMINATE INMATES

### ISSUE:

The State began determinate sentencing 11 years ago, yet today there are 810 inmates still serving an indeterminate sentence. The average time already served by these inmates is 14 years. These inmates can only be paroled by the Prisoner Review Board (PRB). Only 46 indeterminate inmates were paroled in calendar year 1987 and in 1988. A more equitable manner for release must be established.

### RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the PRB be mandated to establish an objective based release criteria decision guide for indeterminate cases. This decision guide should clearly designate the factors that will drive the PRB's decision to release an inmate to parole. This decision matrix should be in place and operating by 1992.

### DISCUSSION:

In 1978 when Public Act 80-1099 went into effect, it changed the sentencing structure for all offenders except those in prison on first degree murder or serving time on a sentence of 20 years or greater. Eleven years later there are still 810 inmates serving time on indeterminate sentences. They have spent an average of 14 years in prison. Some have spent over 40 years.

The PRB has the authority to release these inmates on parole. However, the number of paroles has steadily dropped to less than 100 since 1986. The remaining inmates have little assurance that they will ever be released.

One of the purposes of determinate sentencing was to increase fairness in sentencing and time served. This principle is also applicable to the remaining 810 indeterminate inmates.

One way to increase fairness and some degree of certainty for release is to make the PRB decision-making process objective. Several states are using this type of parole release decision process. This process identifies and codifies the factors to be used in making a release decision. These factors should be associated with the probability of the inmate returning to prison. The release decision would be based on verified, objective data and not on media and public pressure.

It is recommended that the PRB be mandated to contract with an independent criminal justice specialist to develop a release criterion scale by 1992. The PRB should then be required to use it for their release decisions concerning indeterminate inmates.

SUMMARY:

A number of inmates sentenced prior to the implementation of determinate sentencing in 1978 continue to serve their sentence with parole determined by the Prisoner Review Board. An objective method for determining their release should be developed by the PRB to consider the eligibility of some indeterminate inmates for parole.

## 6. LONG-TERM INMATES

### ISSUE:

The long-term inmate, one who will spend seven years or more in prison, is a growing proportion of the prison population. Although they will spend a great deal of time behind bars, they will eventually be released to the streets. Programs must be developed to deal with the specific needs of the long-term inmates and prepare them for release.

### RECOMMENDATION:

The Department of Corrections should develop an educational and work-assignment track specific for long-term inmates and their needs.

### DISCUSSION:

These people were removed from society and are now being returned. They must be prepared for re-entry into society.

There are 5,487 inmates who are serving seven years or more in prison. Some will serve 40 years or more. Although some may die of old age in prison, the majority will be released back to the community. These inmates face two problems. The first is serving their sentence in a meaningful and productive manner. The second is being released into an unfamiliar world. Correctional programming and assistance in maintaining a meaningful relationship with community volunteers can help ease both problems.

Time served by long-term inmates needs to be viewed as a total life experience and not just a small interruption. Most correctional programs are geared to the short-term inmate serving less than two years. A two-track system for short-termers and long-termers with specific objectives needs to be established.

The long-term track should identify institutional job requirements and provide a multi-year training program to achieve certification for specific jobs. Other similar program opportunities need to be provided.

For those long-term inmates who will be released, a specialized de-institutionalization program needs to be developed. This program would prepare the long-term inmate for release into the world that is foreign to him. Participation in the community correctional center program would aid in this re-integration process.

### SUMMARY:

The long-term inmate requires programming which provides for serving the period of incarceration in a productive manner and for preparation for release to a world significantly different than at the time of incarceration. Therefore, programming specific to the needs of the long-term inmate should be established.

## 7. FEMALE INMATES

### ISSUE:

The adult female population represents only 4.6 percent of the total adult population in the custody of the Department of Corrections (DOC). The female population, however, has many unique challenges in housing, recreation, education, industries and programming.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Department of Corrections should continue to review current programs and propose new programs specific to the needs of the female inmate. The Legislature should appropriate funds to support such programs without sacrificing programs for male inmates.

### DISCUSSION:

There are over 1,000 women in Illinois prisons. Most are housed at the Dwight Correctional Center. The Department of Corrections has implemented several unique programs at the Dwight Correctional Center. These include intensive substance abuse treatment, a weekend visitation program for children during the summer months, and vocational training programs.

In addition, the DOC is preparing a Five-Year Plan for Female Inmates and a Feasibility Study of Women and Children Community Correctional Center. These studies should be reviewed by the Legislature.

A major problem is that very often new, special programs are funded by cutting other institutional appropriations. All institutions face similar problems of increasing populations with special needs. To provide additional services to one group at the expense of reducing services to another creates a conflict.

### SUMMARY:

The needs of the female inmate in the areas of housing, education, vocational training, and programming must be evaluated. Adequate funds must be appropriated for female inmate programs without reducing funds for male inmate programs.

## 8. RELEASE SCHOOL

### ISSUE:

While virtually all prison releasees now participate in some pre-release orientation, many inmates return to the community unprepared or ill-equipped for independent living. The pre-release programs at each adult correctional center should be high priority and consist of a standardized, comprehensive, educational module which is meaningful to prison releasees.

### RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Department of Corrections (DOC) Community Services Division coordinate and develop in conjunction with the DOC Adult Division and DOC School District #428 a standard, comprehensive release school program. The goal of the program should be to successfully prepare inmates for reintegration into independent living. Whenever possible, family members should be involved in the program. A community resource directory should be provided to the inmate. In order to maximize the meaning of this program for inmates, it is suggested that the release school program be a school assignment.

### DISCUSSION:

Preparation for release should begin soon after incarceration. DOC recidivism data indicate that 43% of all inmates released from its adult correctional centers will return within three years. Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) data indicate a 32% re-incarceration rate within the first twenty months of release. Even more detailed data from ICJIA (The Pace of Recidivism in Illinois, April, 1986) indicate peak recidivism, as defined by arrest, occurs in the second and third months following release, with a gradual decrease from that point. The assumption is that a key contributing factor to early recidivism is inadequate preparation of inmates for the transition from prison to community life. DOC Administrative Directive 01.07.930 A-C, "Release School," sets forth procedures and topics to be covered in the release school program. In practice the intensity of this class varies considerably from one institution to another, and in no case does it exceed a few hours in length. Because most inmates leave the institution without even basic identification such as a social security card, it is apparent that the release school program should be strengthened.

In addition to covering the topics currently identified in the release school directive, this program should assist inmates in acquiring certified copies of documents such as social security cards, birth and insurance records, military records, school and training transcripts and certificates which may be needed upon release. The release school program should be a vehicle for developing inmate employment histories, training inmates in the proper completion of job and/or public assistance applications, training them in the use of resources such as the Job Service's automated Job Search System, and other private, non-profit,

and public agency resources. Special programming should be provided for non-English speaking inmates.

SUMMARY:

Independent living skills and practical information for obtaining employment and assistance are important components to the success of an inmate released to his community. Therefore, the release school curriculum should be expanded and given higher priority.

## 9. COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

### ISSUE:

The community correctional center program of the Department of Corrections (DOC) acts as a bridge between prison and society. This program helps to ease an inmate back into the demands of living in society. A community correctional center should be the release mechanism of choice.

### RECOMMENDATION:

The DOC should develop a structured release program that allows a rational, gradual return of an inmate back to the community. This requires the DOC to reserve a percentage of all adult beds as community correctional center beds and change eligibility criteria so that long-term inmates can participate in the program.

The number of beds should be large enough to allow all inmates to move through the program prior to release. Initially, the DOC should, at minimum, triple the number of community center beds from 787 to 2,360. Expansion of beds should result from the use of electronic detention as well as the more traditional approach. Preference should be given to contracting with private and non-for-profit vendors and efforts should be made to target the Chicago area. The DOC should host a conference of current and potential vendors to explore the possibility of contracting for beds and building a constituency.

### DISCUSSION:

Recidivism data indicate that 27.6% of the releasees from a community center will return to prison in three years compared to 40.4% of the inmates released from institutions. Additionally, community centers are cost-effective. In fiscal year 1989 the per capita cost at community centers was \$13,152 compared to \$16,326 for institutions. Most of the community correctional center cost was returned to the State through the earnings of residents. An estimated 47 percent of the cost to house an inmate for a year is paid back through rent, taxes, family support, and personal expenses spent in local businesses. The community correctional center program is beneficial but limited to a minority of inmates. There are 787 community center beds. This represents 3.7% of the prison system rated capacity. During fiscal year 1989, 2,031 inmates participated in this program. Of all inmates released, 1,137 or 11.5%, came from a community center.

By tripling the number of community center beds to 2,360, approximately 6,100 inmates could pass through a community center prior to release. This would allow an estimated 34% of all prison exits to benefit from the community correctional center program and hopefully reduce the overall recidivism rate. The long-term goal of the DOC should be that all inmates are released from a community correctional center.

In order to accomplish this goal, current eligibility criteria which restrict participation to inmates who are serving a sentence for a Class

2 felony or less must be changed. Nearly 60% of the inmate population cannot meet this offense criterion. In addition the long-term inmates are the ones in the greatest need for community reintegration. It is recommended that the eligibility criteria be reviewed to allow long-term offenders participation in the community center program.

A major focus of the program is to promote employment and reintegration into the community. This can only be effective if inmates participate in their home community. Sixty-one percent of the inmate population was committed from Cook County. Only 30% of the current community center beds are located in Cook County. Priority should be given to expanding the program in the Cook County area.

The Department is starting an electronic detention program. This is a new and innovative program which deserves further study. Used as part of a structured, gradual, re-integration program, electronic detention becomes the final phase of the inmate's release to the community.

Expansion of the community center program depends on sufficient resources for the planning and constituency-building with community leaders. Dollars, without workable sites, will not lead to the expansion of the program. It is recommended that the DOC hold a conference with potential vendors and community leaders to explore the possibility of establishing new centers in communities.

SUMMARY:

Community correctional center programming should be the release mechanism of choice as it provides a bridge between prison and society and has been demonstrated to reduce recidivism. Ideally, inmates should spend an average of six months in a community correctional center. As a means to that end, the number of community correctional center beds should be significantly increased and criteria re-examined to allow more inmates the opportunity to participate.

## 10. REDUCING CASELOADS

### ISSUE:

The caseloads assigned to parole agents in Illinois are too large and too diverse for agents to provide either effective supervision or assistance to releasees.

The Illinois one, two or three-year mandatory supervised release (MSR) sentencing structure, coupled with current problems in early discharge practices from MSR or parole, contributes to excessively large parole agent caseloads.

### RECOMMENDATION:

All MSR terms should be reduced by one-third. Further, the Department of Corrections (DOC) should work cooperatively with the Prisoner Review Board (PRB) to develop a formal written agreement regarding the implementation of an early discharge policy for those releasees who merit such consideration.

The DOC should evaluate the case classification/workload management system. Based on the evaluation, the DOC should move toward setting and implementing caseload standards.

If supervision terms are not reduced, hiring 25 more parole agents will reduce the average caseload to 82.

### DISCUSSION:

As of August 31, 1989, the Adult Community Supervision caseload of 12,536 releasees consisted of 24.4% murder and class X cases (3-year MSR), 50.9% class 1 and class 2 cases (2-year MSR) and 24.7% class 3 and class 4 (1-year MSR) cases. If all of these cases served a full term, the average MSR period served would equal 23.9 months of supervision. A one-third decrease in all MSR terms (3 years to 2 years, 2 years to 16 months and 1 year to 8 months) would reduce the full term average to 15.9 months, and would, theoretically, reduce the active supervision caseload by 4,178 cases.

However, the current average parole term served is approximately 18 months rather than 23.9. This is largely due to parole revocations and new sentence convictions which occur during the supervision period. Approximately 60% of these violations occur in the first year of supervision, and 90% have occurred by the end of the second year. A one-third, across-the-board, reduction in supervision terms would produce an approximate 25% reduction in the statewide MSR caseload. This would reduce the average parole agent's caseload from 109 to 82 cases.

The additional time available to parole agents should produce two immediate benefits:

1. An ability to better identify and to work proactively to resolve adjustment and situational problems which contribute to recidivism; and,
2. An ability to better identify and document cases which, by virtue of exemplary adjustment, should qualify for early discharge consideration.

The second of these two service-delivery enhancements could, if renewed cooperation is established between IOC and PRB, contribute to a further reduction in caseloads. These caseload reductions could be large enough to allow for specialized caseloads and intensive supervision without increasing staff.

Many chiefs of police throughout Illinois also believe that parole agent caseloads are too large. These large caseloads do not allow parole agents to properly supervise releasees in their communities.

If supervision terms are not reduced, hiring 25 more parole agents will reduce the average caseload to 82.

A comprehensive validation study of the case classification/workload management system should be conducted. The results of this study should then be used to establish both ideal and maximum caseloads for differing levels of supervision intensity. Once a maximum caseload is established, decisions regarding staffing increases and/or caseload reductions (through early discharge policy or reduced supervision terms) can be appropriately developed and supported. The validation study should also include the development of recommendations regarding the use of case classification to drive the implementation of specialized caseloads within parole district operations.

SUMMARY:

Excessively large caseloads overburden parole agents and do not allow for adequate supervision of releasees. Therefore, steps should be taken to reduce terms of supervision and/or fund additional agents.

## 11. TRANSITIONAL FACILITIES FOR THE HOMELESS

### ISSUE:

Testimony indicated that up to three percent of the inmates released from prison and returning to metropolitan areas are immediately homeless or become so within a week of their release. Unwanted by relatives or friends, they are forced to seek shelter wherever they can: public buildings, on park benches, or simply riding the subway or buses all night.

### RECOMMENDATION:

Two beds in each existing community center should be set aside for emergencies, as listed above, especially during the winter months.

Funds should be made available to lease a block of ten to fifteen rooms in hotels or "YMCA's". This would provide a temporary home for the homeless releasee. The inmate should be required to find employment within the first 30 days and allowed to live in these quarters for up to 60 days after finding employment.

### DISCUSSION:

Even with an improved pre-release training system in place, some ex-offenders will still be left without homes and jobs. If each community center were to set aside a minimum of two beds, this would reduce the number of individuals at the crisis level.

Renting a block of rooms in facilities located in major metropolitan areas can work like a half-way out residency. Clients living in these types of facilities would be mandated to work closely with ex-offender (service focused) agencies until they become self-supporting. Clients would be targeted for assistance. Regular, detailed reports by the vendors would be made to parole agents, advising them of the progress of the client.

### SUMMARY:

Given all the opportunities to prepare for release, some inmates will find themselves homeless either upon release or shortly after their release. Therefore, funds should be made available to provide emergency provisions.

## 12. EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### ISSUE:

There is a direct and very strong correlation between employment and crime, as well as between recidivism and employment (Quinney, 1973; Knox, 1981; Cook, 1982; Hogen, 1983; Thornberry and Christensen, 1984; NCJ-105506, 1988). There are over 12,084 persons on parole in Illinois. In the next twelve months up to 500 inmates will be placed on electronic detention. A successful, economically self-sufficient re-integration program demands employment opportunities for participants. Supervision is more often successful when the releasee is gainfully employed. Releasees cannot usually target and access employment opportunities without assistance. Without employment, the likelihood releasees will return to prison is dramatically increased.

### RECOMMENDATION:

One million dollars should be appropriated to the Department of Corrections (DOC) to supplement and solidify existing federal flow-through dollars. These funds will allow full employment opportunities for all released inmates throughout Illinois. Money spent developing employment opportunities is as equally important as money spent on bricks and mortar for new prisons.

### DISCUSSION:

Common sense indicates that meaningful employment at a livable wage is an essential ingredient for inmates to succeed outside of a prison environment. Inmate employment must be considered in terms of: a) the inmate; b) the employment community; and, c) the resources available to assist released inmates seeking jobs.

- a. Inmate - Inmates must be helped to choose employment as a rational alternative to crime. While most may be willing to work rather than commit crimes to survive, many do not have the necessary tools to succeed in the labor market. The typical inmate seeking employment is under-educated, unskilled, unmotivated, lacking in self-confidence and self-esteem, and has a low or non-existent commitment to the work ethic. The additional stress and frustration associated with joblessness must also be addressed. Adequate resources must be allocated within the community to train, educate, motivate, and assist these inmates over the long term. It has often taken a lifetime for an inmate to develop counter-productive traits. They cannot be changed overnight or by merely providing a lead for a job at the "XYZ" company.
- b. Employment Community - Without intervention the employment community is reluctant to hire released inmates. Employers often feel that they are bad risks. Released inmates are feared and mistrusted. Unemployment rates

are high enough in most urban areas to allow employers to exercise their prejudices against released inmates and still fill their job vacancies. Significant gaps in a work record and reference checking by employers make it difficult for released inmates to create a job history. If an inmate is able to get a job without revealing his past, he is often fired when the truth becomes known.

Employment specialists in the community must interact with employers to promote the advantages of hiring released inmates. The advantages include: Targeted Tax Job Credit, knowledge of the released inmate's background, long-term monitoring during the supervision period, and consistent work habits of inmates in work release or on electronic detention. The cost of these specialists would be paid out of increased appropriations to DOC.

- c. Resources - General revenue funds need to be appropriated to both supplement existing revenue sources and guarantee the continuity of services.

There are two alternative sources of secondary funding for released inmate employment services. They are both problematic as primary funding, but would be fine as a secondary source.

The first source is Title XX dollars, which require a match of non-federal funds. It is often difficult for organizations to get this match on an on-going basis when the amount of money is large.

The second traditional source is the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). Using these funds for released inmates is difficult. Access to these funds is limited because allocations outside of large metropolitan areas are small and competition for these funds is strong. Use of these funds is based on high performance-based outcome standards (70% placement rate, 90% positive outcome rate) that are difficult to meet on a volume basis with released inmates. Many agencies are reluctant to accept released inmates into their programs because of a potential loss of JTPA funds.

SUMMARY:

It is essential that an appropriation of \$1 million be made available to adequately, flexibly and predictably meet the employment opportunity needs of released inmates. Without assistance, many offenders are likely to return to prison.

### 13. NEED FOR VOLUNTEERS

#### ISSUE:

Each year over 11,000 inmates will be released back to their home community. An estimated 44% will return to prison in three years, many because they received little or no community support. Volunteers and religious organizations can provide assistance and support networks that the local and state agencies cannot.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

The Department of Corrections should facilitate the recruitment, training, and matching of volunteers with inmates. Volunteers should function as friends, crisis intervenors, and community facilitators. Local churches should be encouraged to provide out-reach services to releasees.

#### DISCUSSION:

Local churches have expressed an interest and demonstrated support for providing volunteers to work with inmates. Studies have shown that with more personal face-to-face contact the releasee is less likely to return to prison. Parole agent caseloads are so large that they limit the amount of meaningful contact possible. Volunteers, properly trained and directed, can assist in the releasee's adjustment process. Volunteers can become the community support component of a successful parole term.

Citizen volunteers can be recruited from churches, synagogues and service organizations. They can provide the human touch necessary to promote change in attitudes and behaviors. A volunteer may be the critical difference for a releasee deciding between returning to prison or remaining a law-abiding citizen.

The chief administrative officer at each departmental facility designates a volunteer services coordinator (Illinois Department of Corrections Rules, part 435). The Department should make the recruitment and use of volunteers a high priority.

#### SUMMARY:

Volunteers are often underutilized in providing assistance and support. Therefore, the Department of Corrections should make a commitment to the increased use of volunteers and develop a plan for their effective use.

#### 14. RECOGNITION CEREMONY

##### ISSUE:

Released inmates carry the stigma of "ex-con" for their entire life. This stigma becomes a key part of one's self-image and affects everything from self-esteem to behavior.

##### RECOMMENDATION:

The State should institute a recognition ceremony for former inmates who have remained crime-free for five years. A former inmate may apply for such a certificate of good citizenship. It is recommended that the Secretary of State establish rules and procedures so that the first ceremony can be held in 1991.

##### DISCUSSION:

Chapter 38, paragraph 1005-5-5, Illinois Revised Statutes, allows the court to enter an order certifying that the sentence has been satisfactorily completed when the court believes it would assist in the rehabilitation of the person and be consistent with the public welfare. Upon entry of the order, the court shall issue to the person a certificate stating that his behavior after conviction has warranted the issuance of the order. This recommendation will fully utilize this provision of the statute. It would be amended to give the DOC authority to recommend releasees to receive these certificates.

This public ceremony informs both the released inmate and the community that s/he has changed his or her life. Such a ceremony will publicize the fact that nearly 60% of former inmates do not return to prison. It may also help publicize the need and benefit of providing support and encouragement to former inmates. This act may encourage other former inmates, by example, that a crime-free life is possible. Finally, any positive publicity concerning the "success" of incarceration is beneficial.

##### SUMMARY:

Recognizing inmates who successfully return to the community is a positive way to reinforce their success, educate the public, and provide encouragement to other inmates upon release. Therefore, a ceremony for recognizing inmates who remain crime-free for five years should be established.

**APPENDIX A**

## TASK FORCE MEETINGS

November 3, 1988  
Illinois Criminal Justice  
Information Authority  
Chicago, Illinois

December 6, 1988  
Dwight Correctional Center  
Dwight, Illinois

January 1, 1989  
Stateville Correctional Center  
Joliet, Illinois

February 28, 1989  
Safer Foundation  
Chicago, Illinois

April 15, 1989  
Logan & Lincoln  
Correctional Centers  
Lincoln, Illinois

May 25, 1989  
State of Illinois Center  
Chicago, Illinois

July 24-25, 1989  
Marriott Lincolnshire  
Lincolnshire, Illinois

October 18, 1989  
Illinois Department of Corrections  
Springfield, Illinois

December 21, 1989  
State of Illinois Center  
Chicago, Illinois

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

November 29, 1989  
Bismark Hotel  
Chicago, Illinois

November 30, 1989  
Regional State Complex  
Collinsville, Illinois

December 1, 1989  
City Council Chambers  
Peoria, Illinois

**APPENDIX B**

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