



Roger Werholtz, Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor

Testimony on HB 2337
To
The House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee

By Roger Werholtz
Secretary
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The Department of Corrections supports HB 2337. HB 2337 amends the composition of Community Corrections Advisory Boards and the award of community corrections grant funding. HB 2337 is the result of a cooperative effort between the department and the Community Corrections directors.

Local community corrections advisory boards are a critical component in governance of the Community Corrections agencies throughout the state. Those boards are composed of members of the community representing law enforcement, prosecutors, judiciary, court services officers, education professionals, social service and health care professionals as well as the general public. Members are appointed by county commissioners, city officials, judges, or due to an employment or professional position in the community. HB 2337 would amend K.S.A. 75-5297 to provide for the appointment by county commissioners of an executive director of a community mental health center or if there is no community mental health center within the geographical boundary of the agency, a representative of a mental health service provider.

The department believes the addition of a community mental health center director or service provider would be an important addition to Community Corrections Advisory Boards. Addressing the mental health and substance abuse issues of offenders are significant aspects in the successful reintegration of offenders under community corrections supervision.

HB 2337 would also repeal the maximum number of members that could be appointed to the advisory board by striking the current limit of 15 members. Additionally, the term of a board member would be increased from two to three years.

HB 2337 would also amend K.S.A. 75-52,105 to provide for quarterly payments of grant funds rather than semiannual installments. The quarterly payments of grant funding would aid community corrections entities timely meet their needs and coincides with their current obligation to provide quarterly reports to the department regarding their expenditures and compliance with operational standards. Additionally, current law for community corrections services for juvenile offenders already provides for quarterly payments. Since a number of community corrections agencies provide services to both juvenile and adult offenders under community supervision, uniformity would increase administrative efficiency for those local boards.

Finally, HB 2337 incorporates community correctional supervision standards embodied in the *Correctional Services Standards* adopted pursuant to K.S.A. 75-5296 into both community corrections grant requests and the evaluation of their program. Extensive research in the field of community corrections has resulted in operational and supervision standards considered best practices nationwide. These standards range from assessing the risk posed by an offender and his or her needs; through treatment, interventions, and sanctions. Currently, community corrections entities report and are audited for compliance with these standards. This legislation would tie grant funding to these critical standards.

The department urges favorable consideration of HB 2337.