

# Nebraska State Legislature

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**COMMITTEES**

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## **Committee on Justice Reinvestment Oversight Annual Report September 2015**

This letter will serve as the first annual report of the Legislature's Committee on Justice Reinvestment Oversight, along with the transcript of the Committee's hearing on September 11th, 2015. This letter will outline the Justice Reinvestment oversight structure; the hearing will provide further detail regarding implementation of LB605 (2015).

LB605 created the Committee on Justice Reinvestment Oversight as a special legislative committee to maintain continuous oversight of the Nebraska Justice Reinvestment Initiative and related issues. The bill took effect on August 30, 2015, and the Revisor of Statutes assigned Section 76 of LB605 to Section 50-434 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes. The statute requires the Committee to deliver an annual report to the Governor, the Clerk of the Legislature, and the Chief Justice.

The Executive Board of the Legislative Council has named five members of the Legislature to serve as members of the Committee, including the chairperson of the Judiciary Committee who shall serve as chairperson of the special legislative committee. The five current members are:

1. Senator Seiler
2. Speaker Hadley
3. Senator Krist
4. Senator Mello
5. Senator Campbell

The Committee has worked with the "Phase II" Council of State Governments (CSG) team to clarify the oversight structure for implementation of LB605. The attached document from CSG provides an explanation of the oversight structure, which includes three main components:

- Nebraska Justice Reinvestment Oversight Committee, which will include the members of the Legislature's Committee on Justice Reinvestment Oversight joined by a broad group of stakeholders
- Steering Committee, which includes the Director of the Department of Correctional Services, the Probation Administrator, the Parole Board Chair, and the State Court Administrator
- Issue Specific Teams, which will cover six different topics

As noted above, the public hearing on September 11, 2015 will provide further detail regarding the Justice Reinvestment oversight structure and implementation of LB605. The hearing will include invited testimony only, but will be open for members of the public to attend. For more information about the hearing, please contact my office.

Attachments:

Nebraska Phase II Justice Reinvestment Oversight Structure  
Nebraska Revised Statutes, Section 50-434

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Les Seiler".

## Nebraska Phase II Justice Reinvestment Oversight Structure

### **Nebraska Justice Reinvestment Oversight Committee**

The Nebraska Justice Reinvestment Oversight Committee will guide policy efforts to further Justice Reinvestment goals, and will meet at least annually to receive formal updates and reports on implementation progress. It will consist of the five senators from the Legislature's Committee on Justice Reinvestment Oversight, outlined in statute, joined by a group of stakeholders from the judicial and executive branches, who will closely resemble the Phase I working group.

### **Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee will consist of director-level practitioners who set priorities and monitor data trends and progress. This middle layer of oversight will be comprised of state agency heads directly affected by the implementation who will meet regularly to ensure that implementation is moving forward.

### **Issue Specific Teams**

Six issue specific teams will be composed of all levels of staff directly involved in areas of LB 605 policy change. These smaller teams will meet frequently to create implementation work plans and ensure implementation success.

#### *Supervision Practices*

Purpose: To ensure that supervision procedures incorporate new provisions from LB605 and to promote collaboration across all affected agencies. LB 605 topics covered by this team include: sanction and incentive matrices, custodial sanctions, and supervision step downs based on risk of recidivism.

#### *Reentry Planning and Coordination*

Purpose: To ensure a standardized reentry process that coordinates across all affected agencies and incorporates new provisions in LB 605, including the post-release supervision and parole board guidelines.

#### *Data Metrics*

Purpose: To create data collection and reporting processes to monitor policy implementation and outcomes related to LB 605.

#### *Sentencing*

Purpose: To address the adoption of sentencing changes in LB 605 through stakeholder engagement, monitoring and training. To monitor implementation for changes in charging and adjudication practices.

#### *Restitution*

Purpose: To ensure LB 605 provisions related to restitution are adopted by affected agencies and that the agencies collaborate with community-based victim advocate groups to strengthen restitution practices.

#### *County Reinvestment*

Purpose: To enhance collaboration between state agencies and county stakeholders around the County Justice Reinvestment Grant Program and other LB 605 provisions that will affect the county jail population and county systems.

**50-434. Committee on Justice Reinvestment Oversight; created; members; duties; report.**

(1) The Legislature finds that while serious crime in the State of Nebraska has not increased in the past five years, the prison population continues to increase as does the amount spent on correctional issues. The Legislature further finds that a need exists to closely examine the criminal justice system of the State of Nebraska in order to increase public safety while concurrently reducing correctional spending and reinvesting in strategies that decrease crime and strengthen Nebraska communities.

(2) It is the intent of the Legislature that the State of Nebraska work cooperatively with the Council of State Governments Justice Center to study and identify innovative solutions and evidence-based practices to develop a data-driven approach to reduce correctional spending and reinvest savings in strategies that can decrease recidivism and increase public safety and for the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of Nebraska state government to work with the Council of State Governments Justice Center in this process.

(3) The Committee on Justice Reinvestment Oversight is created as a special legislative committee to maintain continuous oversight of the Nebraska Justice Reinvestment Initiative and related issues.

(4) The special legislative committee shall be comprised of five members of the Legislature selected by the Executive Board of the Legislative Council, including the chairperson of the Judiciary Committee of the Legislature who shall serve as chairperson of the special legislative committee.

(5) The Committee on Justice Reinvestment Oversight shall monitor and guide analysis and policy development in all aspects of the criminal justice system in Nebraska within the scope of the justice reinvestment initiative, including tracking implementation of evidence-based strategies as established in Laws 2015, LB605, and reviewing policies to improve public safety, reduce recidivism, and reduce spending on corrections in Nebraska. With assistance from the Council of State Governments Justice Center, the committee shall monitor performance and measure outcomes by collecting data from counties and relevant state agencies for analysis and reporting.

(6) The committee shall prepare and submit an annual report of its activities and findings and may make recommendations to improve any aspect of the criminal justice system. The committee shall deliver the report to the Governor, the Clerk of the Legislature, and the Chief Justice by September 1 of each year. The report to the clerk shall be delivered electronically.

**Source:** Laws 2014, LB907, § 11; R.S.Supp.,2014, § 28-1501; Laws 2015, LB605, § 76.

**Effective Date:** August 30, 2015