



## Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants



## Federal Prison Chapter

*A National Effort to Reduce Crime  
Through Federal Criminal Justice Reform*

## Federal CURE, Inc.

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25 June 2007

Washington, DC

## **FedCURE Report - Violent Crime-Prevention and Solutions from the Experts: A Summit on Crime Policy.**

Friday, 22 June 2007

8:30 am- 1:30 pm

2141 Rayburn House Office Building

Hosted by Representative Bobby Scott, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Crime,  
Terrorism and Homeland Security

Alicia T. Graham of Kimmitt, Senter, Coates, & Weinfurter, Inc., Washington,  
DC, attend the summit on behalf of FedCURE and filed this report.

### SPEAKERS

#### Panel II

Robert A. Hahn, Ph.D., M.P.H., Coordinating Scientist, Violence Prevention Review and Excess  
Alcohol Consumption Review

Mark Soler, Executive Director, Center for Children's Law and Policy

Daniel Conley, Suffolk County District Attorney, Vice President of the National District  
Attorneys Association

John Tuell, Director, Child Welfare-Juvenile Justice Systems Integration Initiative, Child Welfare  
League of America

Jeffrey Butts, Research Fellow, Chapin Hall Center for Children, University of Chicago

Jason Zeidenberg, Director, Justice Policy Institute

Andy Block, Founder and Legal Director, JustChildren Program, Legal Aid Justice Center  
Recipient, 2007 Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year in Virginia

Brian Mackie, Prosecutor, Washtenaw County

Alfred Blumstein, Professor, J. Erik Jonsson Professor of Operations Research and Urban  
Systems at the H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management at Carnegie Mellon  
University

Nancy Gannon Hornberger, Executive Director, Coalition for Juvenile Justice

***Violent Crime-Prevention and Solutions from the Experts: A Summit on Crime Policy.***Panel III

Timothy P. Condon, Ph. D., Deputy Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse

Bill Piper, Director of National Affairs, Drug Policy Alliance

Julie Stewart, President, Families Against Mandatory Minimums

Alexa Eggleston, Director of National Policy, Legal Action Center

Roberta Meyers-Peebles, Co-Director, Legal Action Center's National H.I.R.E. (Helping Individuals with criminal records Reenter through Employment) Network

Pat Nolan, President, Justice Fellowship

Dr. Peter Scharf, Research Professor, Texas State University, Executive Director, Center for Society, Law and Justice

Sally Prouty, President and CEO, The Corps Network

Gene Guerrero, Senior Policy Analyst, Open Society Policy Center (Washington, D.C.)

Dr. Pam Casey, Principal Court Research Consultant, National Center for State Courts

Panel IV

Virginia Sloan, Director, The Constitution Project

Brian Walsh, Senior Legal Research Fellow, The Heritage Foundation

Don Santarelli, Esq., Bell, Boyd, and Lloyd, LLP; Chairman, National Committee on Community Corrections; Chairman, Federal City Council Committee for Corrections for D.C.

Madeline DeLone, Executive Director, The Innocence Project, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, NYC

Martin Pinales, President, National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers; Founding Partner, Sirkin, Pinales & Schwartz, LLP, Cincinnati

Amy Baron-Evans, Sentencing Resource Counsel, Federal Public and Community Defenders; Federal Defender Office

Ruth Friedman, Director, Federal Capital Habeas Project; Federal Public Defender for the District of Maryland, Southern Division

Diann Rust-Tierney, Executive Director, National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

Jonathan Hafetz, Brennan Center, New York University

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ATTENDEES:

About one-third of the people in attendance were interns for various organizations as well as for some congressional offices, who took notes and did not really interact with the panel. The other two-thirds was composed of representatives from groups such as the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, Girls Incorporated, and Restorative Justice, as well as retired workers of the criminal justice system. These attendees asked the bulk of the questions during the brief question and answer period between panels. As with most of these types of hill events, they didn't circulate an attendance list.

*Violent Crime-Prevention and Solutions from the Experts: A Summit on Crime Policy.*

The morning began with Panel II, as the first panel had convened on Thursday afternoon.

Panel II concentrated on issues within the juvenile justice system, including the role of social service programs in rehabilitating offenders who are minors. Dr. Hahn and Ms. Hornberger emphasized that keeping a separate system for juveniles is essential, as offenders are most amenable to treatment at this stage in their life. Hahn also pointed out that transferring juveniles to adult facilities often results in an increased likelihood of re-offense following their release. This statement was echoed by Mr. Block, who added that recidivism rates are very low among juveniles, and thus treating them alternatively is beneficial both to the offender and to the community. Mental health was another topic that the panelists covered, with some disagreement about how prevalent mental conditions are among juvenile offenders. Hornberger claimed that 50-75% of juvenile offenders have undiagnosed or untreated mental disorders, while Mr. Botts placed this number at closer to 20-25%. However, there was general agreement among the panel that intervention programs are especially crucial for preventing mentally ill juveniles from re-offending.

The third panel discussed ways to decrease recidivism for all offenders, including juveniles and those convicted of drug offenses. A constant theme throughout this panel was how to change current punishments and sentencing laws in order to achieve this goal. Dr. Condon noted that when drug users are incarcerated, it provides a “reachable moment” for those seeking to intervene. Furthermore, he cited a study that found that when treatment is continued after release, 35% of the prisoners remained drug-free after the treatment, and 70% remained arrest free. Another means to reduce recidivism among drug users was increasing the number of problem-solving courts, such as drug courts, which Ms. Casey discussed during her presentation. Ms. Egelston, Ms. Prouty, and Mr. Guerrero all suggested alternatives to incarceration, stressing the need for community programs that would reconnect the convicted with society. Egelston concentrated on programs for those convicted of drug charges, while Prouty's proposal covered a broader range of people charged with lower-level offenses. Meanwhile, Guerrero pointed out that incarcerating juveniles in particular tends to increase recidivism, and that these offenders would be better served by social programs. Mr. Nolan introduced the idea of restorative justice, in which crime is considered “victim-harming” rather than “law-breaking,” and thus punishment centers around reparations to the victim rather than isolating the offender from the community. Another topic that surfaced during the panel's discussion was the problem of re-integrating convicted offenders into society upon their release. Ms. Meyers-Peebles stressed the need for leadership at the federal level to eliminate laws that allow employers to discriminate against those with arrest records, including those that may have never been convicted.

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The fourth panel diverged from the previous two, focusing on issues surrounding the gradual erosion of habeas corpus, both in regards to domestic offenders as well as foreign nationals who are held in American facilities such as Guantanamo Bay. Concerns about current application of the death penalty were also aired during this discussion by Ms. Friedman, Ms. Rust-Tierney, and Ms. DeLone. Another point of interest, raised by Ms. Baron-Evans, was the existence of loopholes in the federal sentencing system that allow dropped charges and charges of which the defendant was acquitted to factor into the offender's sentence, dramatically increasing the length of incarceration.

As a whole, the summit brought up many issues for the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security to consider when crafting crime policy throughout the session. Especially prominent among these were better ways to deal with the problem of substance abuse in both juvenile and adult populations, and also how to improve the current correctional system to reduce the rate at which recidivism occurs.

Alicia Graham,  
Kimmitt, Senter, Coates, & Weinfurter, Inc.,  
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*Serving Federal Prisoners and Their Families  
Working to Reinstate Parole and to Increase Good Time Allowances*

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