

## DISCLAIMER

Electronic versions of the exhibits in these minutes may not be complete.

This information is supplied as an informational service only and should not be relied upon as an official record.

Original exhibits are on file at the Legislative Counsel Bureau Research Library in Carson City.

Contact the Library at (775) 684-6827 or [library@lcb.state.nv.us](mailto:library@lcb.state.nv.us).

# STATE OF NEVADA



## A REPORT TO GOVERNOR KENNY C. GUINN

Presented By:

### **The Study Committee on Corrections**

Jackie Crawford, Chairman  
Department of Corrections

Mark Amodei  
State Senator

Greg Brower  
State Assemblyman

David Friedman, Assistant to the Chairman  
Andy Abboud, Dir. of Government Relations  
Venetian Resort Hotel Casino

Richard Kirkland, Director  
Department of Public Safety

The Honorable Jack Lehman  
Eighth Judicial District Court

Sheila Leslie  
State Assemblywoman

Dorla Salling, Chairman  
Board of Parole Commissioners

Valerie Wiener  
State Senator

Lonnie Wright, Professor  
Community College of So. Nevada

**Original on file in the Research Library**

October 2002

ASSEMBLY JUDICIARY

DATE: 2-5-03 ROOM 3138 EXHIBIT D

SUBMITTED BY: Jackie Crawford

*D-1 of 3*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Governor Kenny C. Guinn appointed the Study Committee on Corrections to examine Nevada's correctional system and make recommendations to bring it into line with nationally accepted principles and practices. After examining the correctional system for six months, and taking testimony from experts, private citizens, former offenders, service providers, legislators and government officials, the Study Committee concluded that:

- Nevada classifies twice as many inmates into high and medium security than the national average, putting too many inmates into "hard beds."
- Nevada is one of few states without a "community corrections" strategy that focuses on community-based programs, and putting supervised inmates to work in the community.
- Nevada prisons do not have sufficient programming opportunities.
- Nevada releases unprepared inmates into the community without re-entry assistance and community support.
- The Department of Corrections lacks certain critical resources to be responsive to the public and to function more effectively.

The Corrections Study Committee identified four specific challenges and recommended specific solutions to meet these challenges.

**Nevada needs better, more cost-effective management of non-violent, property and drug offenders.**

- NDOC should reserve "hard beds" only for those offenders who require the most secure environments by delaying further "hard bed" construction at High Desert State Prison and re-directing some CIP funds to re-build the Indian Springs Camp from a 200-bed to a 604-bed Community Work Center.
- Nevada should form a Community Corrections Division within NDOC to supervise work centers with NDF, manage re-entry services, promote community-based programs and secure aftercare for offenders leaving prison.

**The risk to public safety is greater—and high recidivism results—when offenders are released from prison without re-entry planning, transitional services and/or community support.**

- NDOC should partner with a non-profit who can use federal housing funds to build a Re-entry Center in Southern Nevada with transitional housing for offenders leaving prison, pregnant offenders, and those serving intermediate sanctions. NDOC could save a projected \$3 million in annual operating costs.

- NDOC should create re-entry centers and transitional services.
- Nevada should establish non-incarceration intermediate sanctions for offenders so Parole & Probation can better manage "technical violators" in the community, without returning them to prison.

**Nevada lacks appropriate institutional programming, treatment, education and employment to prepare offenders to succeed upon release to the community.**

- NDOC should move the existing Mental Health and Program Services Unit (MHAPS) out of the Medical Division and make it a separate Correctional Programs Division.
- Nevada should create a "correctional education authority" within the State Department of Education to coordinate and oversee all academic and vocational education.
- Nevada should expand work opportunities for inmates and have the Legislature re-evaluate the forestry camps revenue requirements and uses.

**The Nevada Department of Corrections needs additional resources to be more responsive to the public and to function more cost-effectively, including:**

- A Victims Services Unit in the Director's Office.
- A Grants/Research Unit in the Director's Office.
- A Public Affairs Unit in the Director's Office.

## CONCLUSION

"Hard beds" will be utilized only for the most serious and long-term offenders. Community supervision is a more economical way to manage non-violent, property or drug offenders.

With programming resources, Nevada's offenders will improve themselves, earn income and become productive. National research demonstrates that inmates who receive programming while in prison, and guidance and support as they re-enter their communities, are less likely to return to prison.

Children of inmates are five times more likely to go to prison than are other children. Rehabilitation reverberates into the families of offenders and can keep families off public assistance and keep future generations out of prison.

Nevada's communities will be safer and our correctional and supervision systems will function more cost-effectively and more efficiently.