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RECEIVED

JUL 31 2009 July 31, 2009

Ms. Terry Spieler
Senate Secretary
Missouri Senate
State Capitol, Room 325
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

SECRETARY SENATE

Mr. D. Adam Crumbliss
Chief Clerk
Missouri House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 306-C
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

Dear Ms. Spieler and Mr. Crumbliss:

House Bill 1550, which was signed into law in 2008, expands the jurisdiction of juvenile courts to include youth who are over the age of seventeen but under the age of eighteen for the purposes of status offenses (§211.021.1 RSMo). The law also provides that the new provisions shall not take effect until the General Assembly has appropriated approximately 3.9 million dollars for staff and assistance for its implementation.

Section 211.013 RSMo further requires that the Office of State Courts Administrator (OSCA) conduct a study and submit a report to the General Assembly by June 30, 2009, on the impact of the new provisions, including the impact on juvenile officers' caseload size per juvenile officer in each circuit and the number of youth affected by the change in definition.

I am pleased to report that OSCA has completed this study and respectfully submits the enclosed report to you for distribution to and consideration by the General Assembly. Please be advised that the study only analyzed the impact of HB1550 on juvenile officer caseloads in Missouri's 35 multi-county circuits (state FTEs). However, the report does incorporate the additional training required for all juvenile officers statewide, including the single-county circuits.

The study also documented that, based on information from the Missouri Juvenile Offender Risk and Needs Assessment, older status offenders display high scores on numerous factors associated with status offending. For these youth, supervision alone is not effective. Research has identified many evidence-based programs, such as counseling and functional

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family therapy, that appropriately address and treat the risk and needs of these youths and their families.

The study found that in the 35 multi-county circuits:

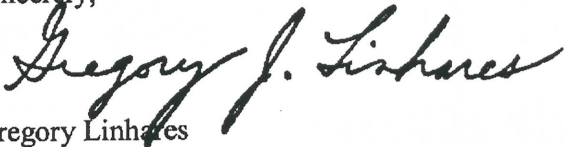
- The total increase in workload is estimated to be 42,685 hours annually, requiring an additional 27 juvenile officers, resulting in an estimated increase of \$1,873,989 in personnel costs (salary, fringe benefits);
 - Though not documented in this study, OSCA assumes that the 10 single-county circuits will also need approximately 27 FTE to handle the workload increase.
- Detention days are projected to increase by 1248 days, costing the state an additional \$17,482 in per diem reimbursement pursuant to Section 211.156 RSMo; and
- The costs associated with providing effective, community-based programs and services and evidence-based treatment to address the underlying psychosocial needs of these youth is projected to be \$1,287,853.

The enclosed report also addresses the training required for all new juvenile officer staff statewide, as well as management training for all circuits on the new policies and procedures necessary to implement HB1550.

In summary, the study found that expanding the jurisdictional age of youth for the purposes of status offenses will result in a significant increase in referrals and subsequently increase juvenile officer workloads. There will also be an increased utilization of detention bed space as well as an increased demand for age appropriate, evidence-based treatment programs and services. In addition, although not addressed in the study, some 17-year-old status offenders will not be able or willing to remain in their homes while they and their parents undergo treatment. As a result, the courts will have no recourse but to place these youth in state custody, specifically with the Department of Social Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to conduct this study and submit this report. Please let me know if you require any additional information.

Sincerely,


Gregory Linhares

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable William Ray Price, Chief Justice
The Honorable Bryan Stevenson, Missouri House of Representatives