Current Criminal Justice Policies in Utah

Utah Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice

October 17, 2018

This presentation reports on the impact of HB 348 that passed during the 2015 General Session.
Eco-system map

- Criminal justice system
- Policies
- Family & peer-support
- Education & employment
- Housing
- Programming & treatment
- Health trends
In 2013...

- 40 percent of prison inmates were serving time for a non-violent offense
- Nearly 2/3 of inmates released from prison to parole returned to prison within 3 years, &
- There was a significant gap in the availability of substance use and mental health treatment for those offenders in need
Philosophy

• Focus prison beds on serious and violent offenders
• Strengthen probation and parole supervision
• Improve and expand re-entry and treatment services
• Match resources to offender's needs
• Support local corrections systems, &
• Ensure oversight and accountability
Policy recommendation:
Focus prison beds on serious and violent offenders
Figure 1. The percent of the prison population that is non-violent

The share of the prison population that is non-violent declined the first years of implementation, numbers remain similar between 2017 and 2018.

Revocation caps continue to reduce parole and probation revocation prison length of stay.

Figure 2. Prison length of stay by type

The share of the prison population that is non-violent declined the first years of implementation, numbers remain similar between 2017 and 2018.
Admissions to prison is exceeding prison releases, causing an increase in the prison population. While remaining below pre-reform levels, the prison population can be seen trending above the “with reform” line.

Figure 3. Net prison admissions

Figure 4. Actual prison population versus projected with and without reform
Policy recommendation:
Strengthen probation and parole supervision
Class A probationers make up a larger percent of the probation population, implying that the system is focusing its resources on those who are of high risk to reoffend.

The overall probation population increased similarly before and after current criminal justice policies.
Figure 7. Parole population

- fy 14: 3,500
- fy 15: 3,600
- fy 16: 3,700
- fy 17: 3,800
- fy 18: 4,007
1-year Parole Outcomes

• Outcome variables
  – technical violation
  – new conviction

• Control variables
  – age
  – gender
  – race/ethnicity
  – marital status
  – violent offense
  – offense severity
  – first parole start
  – risk to re-offend
Technical Violations

Figure 8. Percent expected to be revoked on a technical violation by parole type

Previous parole violators are continuing to cycle through the system.

Figure 9. Percent expected to be revoked on a technical violation by cohort

Overall, parolees on their first parole start are less likely to be revoked than those serving their second or more start.
Technical Violations Cont.

Figure 10. Percent expected to be revoked on a technical violation: First parole starts only

When restricting the analysis to those serving their first parole start, there is no difference in the likelihood of being revoked on a technical violation across groups.
There is an increased likelihood of being revoked on a new conviction in the second post-reform period.

The percent of new convictions that are violent has declined post-reform.

Figure 11. Percent expected to be revoked on a new conviction

Figure 12. Percent of new convictions that are violent
• Findings hint at;
  – Increased need of effective interventions for previous parole violators
  – Examining fidelity & current capacity to fully implement reform policies
  – Look at current enforcement practices
  – Understanding findings in context to general health trends
    • Nation-wide Opioid epidemic
Policy recommendations: Match resources to offender's needs & Support local corrections systems
Risk and Needs Jail Screening Process

- Half of Utah’s offender population* is in need of a substance use referral
- 40 percent are in need of a mental health referral
- One third screen positive for a possible co-occurring disorder, and
- Close to 70 percent of offenders are moderate or high risk to reoffend

*Includes those booked on a Class B Misdemeanor and above.

Figure 13. Percent in need of substance use referrals by county
Policy recommendation: Improve and expand re-entry and treatment services
The number of clients served for substance use treatment in Utah’s public behavioral health system is increasing.

Table 1. Admissions to substance use treatment by level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of service</th>
<th>Pre-annual ave.</th>
<th>Post-annual ave.</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>964</td>
<td>1,328</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive Outpatient</td>
<td>3,108</td>
<td>3,224</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outpatient</td>
<td>8,155</td>
<td>8,222</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detox</td>
<td>841</td>
<td>1,126</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ongoing Efforts

• Promising initiatives
  – Women’s improvement network initiative
  – Project freedom
  – Washington County pilot program

• Importance of implementation science
  – (e.g., assuring fidelity around new supervision policies)
  – quality of treatment
Policy recommendation: Ensure oversight and accountability
Next Steps

• For CCJJ
  – Closer look at parole revocations
  – Probation outcomes
  – Evaluation of current treatment standards

• For the system as a whole
  – Implementation with fidelity
  – Organizational capacity
  – Increased data sharing
Thank you

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