

JRC

Justice Reform Consortium



Vol. 4 #2 January 25, 2013

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The Governor's Budget

Governor Branstad has included in this year's budget an increase in funding for community-based corrections (CBCs). The increase doesn't fully fund the CBCs, but it does make some significant progress in opening the vacant facilities that have been shuttered for quite some time. However, as expected, there are concerns.

The 1st Judicial District in Waterloo was seeking \$1,140,322 for operational costs and an additional 20 new Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions, and the governor's budget has recommended an increase in the 1st Judicial District Community-Based Corrections (CBC) by \$687,409. Also, the governor recommends an increase of 14.5 FTEs.

What does that mean in simple talk? It means this: [The Women's Center for Change](#) is a building (see photo below) in Waterloo that was built two years ago. It has the capacity to house 45 women in a residential setting, but that portion of the building (north end) has been sitting empty since construction was completed in April, 2011. Most people refer to a building such as



this as a halfway house.

Kraemer Brothers.com

Without funding, the facility is half empty. That's not what halfway house is supposed to mean. The south side of the building contains offices and a conference room. That part of the building is occupied, but only during business hours when parole and probation officers are utilizing the much needed office space to see clients and perform other duties. The north side of the building sits empty, except for the unused equipment and furnishings that are new, but have warranties that have long expired.

The governor's budget recommendation probably will allow the north side of the building to open its doors to women in the 1st Judicial District who are lined up on waiting lists to move in. Currently, some of those women are housed in another facility in Waterloo that also houses men. Some of the women on the waiting list are in prison and awaiting a bed to make the transition from the Iowa Correctional Institute for Women at Mitchellville back into society. A few women are waiting to serve a brief sentence under Iowa's Operating While Intoxicated laws.

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 and 2015 budget recommendations are designed to provide for some of the needs of the Iowa Department of Correctional Services, 1st Judicial District. If the Legislature agrees, the doors to the Waterloo Women's Center for Change might be able to open later this year with an additional 14 ½ employees (FTEs) and funding to provide for a portion of the operational costs. That's where we have a huge concern. Is it possible to partially fund a project that cannot operate without all the pieces in place? If you halfway fund a halfway house does it become a quarter-house? Okay, bad joke aside, if you haven't visited the facility it's difficult to understand why someone would want to partially open the unused portion. It would not take that much more to utilize fully the entire residential portion.

Likewise, the governor's budget recommendation allows an increase in \$647,015 and 12 FTEs for the 3rd Judicial District CBC. The 3rd Judicial District is located in Northwest Iowa (Woodbury and surrounding counties). The funding will help open up the Linn A. Hall Center, the newly built residential facility in Sioux City. The 3rd CBC District was seeking \$867,410 and 14 new FTEs.

The proposed budget also includes additional funding for the 7th Judicial District Department of Correctional Services. The 7th Judicial District was looking for funding of \$714,147 and will receive \$467,880 if the governor's budget is enacted unchanged. Additionally, the 7th Judicial District requested 13 FTEs and the proposal calls for 9.5 new FTEs. The 7th Judicial District has a [work release center](#) that is not operating at full capacity at this time. The funding and increase in FTEs will allow the Davenport area CBC to house more transitional offenders.

And finally, the 8th Judicial District Department of Correctional Services, located in southeaster Iowa, will receive an increase in funding for the expansion of the Ottumwa Residential Correctional Facility. The CBC had requested \$687,678 and 9.35 new FTEs. Under Governor Branstad's proposal it would receive \$350,382 and 6.4 new FTEs.

The projections above are proposals made by the governor at the request of the Department of Corrections (DOC). Iowa's General Assembly can increase the funding, decrease the amounts, or eliminate any proposals in its entirety or partially. It is up to you to contact your legislators and ask them to, at a "minimum", go along with the governor's recommendations, but to reach further into the pockets of the state's pants and pull out some of that surplus revenue to spend on our state's community-based correctional facilities.

A 195-page document produced by the Fiscal Services Division of the Iowa Legislative Services Agency is available at https://www.legis.iowa.gov/DOCS/LSA/SC_Fisc/2013/SFBAL000.PDF

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CORRECTION: In the most recent edition of the Justice Reform Consortium Newsletter (January 6), we informed readers about a workshop on learning how to design your own criminal justice advocacy plan that suits your style and your needs. There were a couple of incorrect pieces of information in that notice. Please use the corrected version below:

MARK YOUR CALENDARS
IOWA CURE LEGISLATIVE WORKSHOP

WHEN: THIS SUNDAY! JANUARY 27, 2 TO 4 P.M.

WHERE: GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH,
38TH & COTTAGE GROVE AVENUE, DES MOINES, IA

WHAT: Learn how to design a criminal justice advocacy plan that fits your lifestyle and personality

WHO: This workshop is sponsored by Iowa CURE (Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants), but is open to anyone who feels there is a need for change in the Iowa criminal justice system.

COST: Free (There will be a free-will offering basket for contributions to cover workshop expenses)

LEADERS: Marty Ryan and Stephanie Fawkes-Lee, Legislative Advocates for the Justice Reform Consortium will be our leaders. They have many years of experience in working with our legislators.

The workshop will last approximately 1-½ hours followed by coffee and refreshments. Area legislators have been invited to attend the latter part of the program.

PLEASE REGISTER!

You will receive valuable information, which includes a legislative agenda for 2013, as well as basic lobbying information about how the legislature works.

Please contact Marty Ryan at mrtyryn@gmail.com to let him know that you are coming so that he may prepare an appropriate amount of written materials.

If you are a member of the Iowa CURE community inside the walls of an Iowa prison, PLEASE share this information with your family and friends. Together we can make a difference. We need to come together and plan how we can work for a prison system based on restorative justice (making things as right as possible for everyone touched by crime).

Planning Committee Members:

Carolyn Walker Uhlenhake,
Mary Kay Dial,
Sr. JoAnne Talarico

The JRC Legislative Agenda for 2013 – Where are we?

Capital Punishment – We hope that this is the last time we'll have to mention this issue for this year. Other than a senator or two, there is no interest to debate this matter. We are confident the votes necessary to pass this bill in either chamber do not exist.

Restraints of pregnant prisoners – The Department of Corrections (DOC) has made some changes in its confidential policy. But since it's confidential, we can't be sure. The Des Moines Register has a feature article by Jason Clayworth on this issue. We are eagerly awaiting the opportunity to work with other organizations and legislators to ensure the safety and comfort of the unborn baby and mother through sensible legislation that will provide consistency throughout the state.

Certified translators – [Senate Study Bill 1034](#) and [House Study Bill 6](#) relate to interpreters and translators for limited English proficient participants in legal proceedings and in court-order programs. We will follow up on any activity associated with these bills as it occurs.



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Please help us with your generous contribution today.

I want to help Justice Reform Consortium with its goal of working toward restorative justice.

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Jean Basinger
Justice Reform Consortium
c/o Trinity United Methodist Church
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Des Moines, IA 50311

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Interesting links worth viewing:

For Drug Users, a Swift Response Is the Best Medicine

<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/01/08/for-drug-users-hope-in-a-swift-response/?emc=eta1>

On the Chopping Block 2012: State Prison Closings

<http://sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/On%20the%20Chopping%20Block%202012.pdf>

UPCOMING EVENTS

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AMOS held its second Court Watch training this week at Bethel AME Church in Des Moines. Thirty people completed the training and AMOS now has sixty trained Court Watchers. Because of word of mouth and Thursday's (January 24) [Des Moines Register Opinion](#) AMOS has several additional people interested in becoming Court Watchers. A date for a third training has not been set but it will be sometime in March. If you have not attended a training session and would like to, please let us know. And if you know anyone else who you think would be interested feel free to pass this information along.

AMOS Justice

organizingforjustice@gmail.com

AMOS (A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy), is a local IAF (Industrial Areas Foundation) broad-based, non-partisan, community organization comprised of 28 community institutions. We believe that ordinary people, working together, can accomplish great things in a democracy and have a say in the destiny of their own community.

The next [Friends of Iowa Women Prisoners](#) meeting is at noon on **Tues., February 19th** at Wesley United Methodist Church, 800 East 12th.

In February, Jason Carlstrom, chair of the Iowa Parole Board will be our presenter. Mr. Carlstrom graduated from Simpson College in 1995, worked as a professional pilot until 2001 when he attended Drake Law School. He worked in private practice until September 2010 when he started working in the Dickinson County Attorney's office. In November of that year he was elected to the position in November 2010 and took office in January 2011. He was appointed chair of the Iowa Board of Parole by Governor Branstad in July of 2012 and started his term in September of last year. He looks forward to addressing us and encourages those present to ask questions and participate in the discussion.

Bring your lunch. The place and time are consistent throughout the year. The meetings are always held on the third Tuesday of the month, and always held from noon to 1:00 pm at Wesley United Methodist Church located at 800 East 12th Street in Des Moines. The location is a block west of East High School. Please contact [Vi](#) for more information.

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[Voices to be Heard](#) is a support group for families and children of an incarcerated loved one. The group gathers to support and comfort those who know too well the grief that comes to those left behind when someone they love is incarcerated. The group meets on the first and third Tuesdays of the month at Union Park Methodist Church (East 12th & Guthrie in Des Moines) from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. The group brings in speakers, performs outreach, provide support groups and leadership classes. It is a good idea to contact Melissa ahead of time because the group provides dinner and a head count is preferred. Contact Melissa at 515/229-2645 for more information.



The 2013 Winter Edition of the Iowa CURE Newsletter and the legislative agenda of the Justice Reform Consortium are now posted on our website. <http://www.iowacure.org/>

The Iowa Chapter of CURE will have a legislative workshop on Jan. 27 from 2 to 4 at Grace United Methodist Church, 38th and Cottage Grove in Des Moines. Marty Ryan and Stephanie Fawkes-Lee will provide the leadership for this event. There will be state legislators present with whom participants can visit informally. If you are planning to come please RSVP to Marty at mrtyn@iowacure.org so he can prepare a packet of materials for you.

Justice Reform Consortium member organizations: Iowa CURE & Iowa Coalition 4 Juvenile Justice; Friends of Iowa Women Prisoners; Trinity United Methodist Church; Methodist Federation for Social Action; Voices to be Heard; ACLU of Iowa; Social Action Committee, Des Moines Presbytery; Des Moines Chapter of WILPF; American Friends Service Committee; Plymouth Congregational Church, Board of Christian Social Action; Iowa Annual Conference, UMC; Iowa NOW and Des Moines NOW; National Association of Social Workers; Beacon of Life; Citizens for Undoing Racism-War on Drugs Task Force.

This newsletter published by:



Fawkes-Lee & Ryan, Public Policy Advocates <http://iowappa.com/>

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