

Testimony of

Jim Kane

Executive Director
Delaware Criminal Justice Council
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TESTIMONY

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR ALLOWING ME TO TESTIFY ON THIS VITAL ISSUE . MY NAME IS JIM KANE, CURRENTLY, I AM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE DELAWARE CRIMINAL JUSTICE COUNCIL AND I HAVE HELD THIS POSITION FOR THE LAST 10 YEARS. I AM ALSO THE FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSOCIATION AND I HAVE OVER 31 YEARS EXPERIENCE IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE ARENA.

AT THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE COUNCIL, WE TEND TO LOOK AT THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AS A CONTINUUM OF EVENTS INVOLVING CLIENTS AS THEY FLOW THROUGH THE SYSTEM. THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE COUNCIL BEGAN LOOKING AT THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A CONVICTED CRIMINAL, APPROXIMATELY 20 YEARS AGO. WE HAVE REVIEWED SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEMOGRAPHICS OF VIOLENT CRIMINALS, WE HAVE LOOKED AT THESE SAME CRIMINALS AS JUVENILE DELINQUENTS, AND LOOKED AT THE SAME DELINQUENTS AS ABUSED CHILDREN, PRIOR TO THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM. OVER THE YEARS WE HAVE BECOME RATHER ADROIT, AT ARRESTING, PROSECUTING AND CONVICTING SERIOUS JUVENILE OFFENDERS. ONE OF THE FEW THINGS THAT WE KNOW FOR CERTAIN, IS THAT A TWO TIME VIOLENT FELON HAS AN EXCELLENT CHANCE (APPROXIMATELY 80 PERCENT CHANCE) OF BEING CONVICTED OF ANOTHER VIOLENT FELONY (WE HAVE CONCENTRATED MOST OF OUR EFFORTS IN THE LAW ENFORCEMENT AREA ON SERIOUS PREDATORS WHO WE KNOW ARE DIFFICULT, IF NOT POSSIBLE, TO REHABILITATE. WE HAVE CONCENTRATED ON THESE INDIVIDUALS WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE THROUGH CRIME BILL MONEY). WE HAVE USUALLY BEEN ABLE TO REDUCE CRIME IN WHATEVER GEOGRAPHIC AREA, THAT, WE MAXIMIZE OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS. WE HAVE BEEN LESS SUCCESSFUL IN THE AREA OF REHABILITATION.

IN THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS, CRIMINAL JUSTICE PLANNERS IN DELAWARE HAVE CONDUCTED SOME LANDMARK RESEARCH ON THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF SERIOUS VIOLENT ADULT/JUVENILE OFFENDERS, AND SOCIAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS THAT PRODUCE THESE OFFENDERS. OBVIOUS TO THE MOST CASUAL OBSERVER, BUT, IT STILL IS VITAL TO CONTINUE TO INDICATE THAT SINGLE FEMALE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLDS, POVERTY, HIGH SCHOOL DROP OUTS, EXTENSIVE DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE, TERRIBLE HOUSING, AND THE GENERAL CONDITION OF SOCIO ECONOMIC HOPELESSNESS TEND TO PRODUCE OUR WORST VIOLENT CRIMINALS. IN SELECTED GRIDS WITHIN THE CITY OF WILMINGTON, AND DELAWARE AS A WHOLE, WE CAN PROBABLY PREDICT, THAT, THESE NEIGHBORHOODS WILL PRODUCE AN "X" AMOUNT OF INMATES FOR OUR CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES. UNTIL WE CAN DEVELOP SOME TYPE OF FORMULA THAT WILL PROVIDE HOPE FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE, IN A COMPREHENSIVE FASHION, WE WILL CONTINUE TO PRODUCE CRIMINALS THAT WILL EMPLOY LARGE NUMBERS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS, DEFENSE ATTORNEYS, PROSECUTORS, COURT PERSONNEL AND CORRECTIONAL PERSONNEL. WE ARE ALREADY SUFFERING, IN DELAWARE, FROM THE HUGE EXPANSION OF OUR CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES. WE CANNOT HIRE ENOUGH GUARDS TO STAFF THE PRISONS AND THE OVERWHELMING COST TO HOUSE OUR INMATES IS ASTRONOMICAL.

PROGRAMS THAT WE TEND TO KNOW THAT DO NOT WORK ARE: ONE-SHOT EVENTS, OR EVENTS THAT DO NOT IMPACT A CHILD'S LIFE IN A LONG TERM FASHION. OVER THE YEARS, WE HAVE PAID FOR SPEAKERS WHO HAVE (IN SPITE OF THEIR ENVIRONMENT, MADE IT IN THE WORLD) TO CONDUCT ONE DAY SEMINARS TO GROUPS OF YOUNG PEOPLE, WE HAVE FUNDED LARGE AMOUNTS OF MONEY FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOLS ON THE EVILS OF DRUGS AND CRIME, AND WE HAVE FUNDED WELL INTENTIONED PROGRAMS THAT WORK WITH ONE ASPECT OF A CHILD'S LIFE. EXAMPLES COULD BE CHILD ABUSE; TUTORING; CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT. THE SUCCESS, THAT, WE HAVE HAD IN

WORKING WITH THE YOUTH HAS BEEN IN THE AREA OF PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES TO THAT YOUTH. WHERE WE HAVE FUNDED PROGRAMS THAT INVOLVED TUTORING, CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, VALUE DEVELOPMENT, RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND BASICALLY SUPPLY A FAMILY ATMOSPHERE OUTSIDE OF THE HOME, HAVE HAD SOME SUCCESS IN INCREASING THE EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF OUR YOUTH. THESE PROGRAMS HAVE INCLUDED: BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS, POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUES, AND OTHER COMMUNITY CENTERS THAT PROVIDE THIS COMPREHENSIVE ENVIRONMENT. STILL, THESE PROGRAMS WERE SCATTERED IN NATURE. WE PROVIDED THESE PROGRAMS IN AT-RISK NEIGHBORHOODS TO AT-RISK CHILDREN, BUT, WE STILL DID NOT CAPTURE THE VERY, VERY HIGH RISK INDIVIDUAL WHO MAY BECOME VIOLENT PERSONS. OUR STUDIES HAVE INDICATED, THAT, 80 PERCENT OF THE SHOOTER/SHOOTEES IN THE CITY OF WILMINGTON ARE AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES BETWEEN THE AGES OF 14-24. IF YOU LOOK AT THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AND CRIMINALS AS A PYRAMID, IN THE TOP OF THAT PYRAMID ARE TWO TIME VIOLENT FELONS. THE POOL OF INDIVIDUALS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PYRAMID TEND TO BE POOR AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE CHILDREN WHO DO NOT HAVE THE MEANS TO MAKE IT IN SOCIETY.

RECENTLY, WE DEVELOPED A VALUE BASED EDUCATION PROGRAM THAT WOULD PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUTH IN THE CITY OF WILMINGTON. AFTER EXTENSIVE BIDDING, WE CONTRACTED TO A NATIVITY SCHOOL THAT HAS AGREED TO TAKE 25 AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE CHILDREN FROM POOR NEIGHBORHOODS, GRADES 4 AND 5. THE PROGRAM OPERATES FROM 7 A.M. UNTIL 8 P.M. IN THE EVENING, AND CHILDREN ARE WITH SCHOOL PERSONNEL ALL DAY ON SATURDAYS. THEY LEAVE FOR A MONTH IN THE SUMMER TO DIFFERENT COLLEGES TO LIVE IN A DORM. THIS PROGRAM HAS WORKED IN OTHER AREAS OF THE NORTHEAST AND HAS PROVIDED DISADVANTAGED AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES WITH AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SUCCESS. THEY JUST SENT ME THEIR FIRST NEWSLETTER IN LATIN.

IF I KNEW THE ANSWER ON HOW TO REDUCE THE CRIME PROBLEM, I WOULD PROBABLY BE A MILLION DOLLAR CONSULTANT. I DO KNOW THAT THE ONLY WAY TO CHANGE THE BEHAVIOR OF YOUNG PEOPLE BEFORE THEY BECOME VIOLENT IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM IS TO PROVIDE SOME FORM OF COMPREHENSIVE ENVIRONMENT SIMILAR TO THAT, THAT A HIGH FUNCTIONING FAMILY COULD AFFORD.

ON A RELATED SUBJECT, FEDERAL AID TO THE STATES, IN THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS, HAVE REDUCED CRIME DOLLARS, AND WILL CERTAINLY, IN THE FUTURE, REDUCE THE ABILITY OF STATES TO PROVIDE QUALITY PREVENTION PROGRAMS AND TO PROVIDE EFFICIENT ARREST, SPEEDY PROCESSING, AND REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS. WHILE I WAS PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSOCIATION, WE CONDUCTED A POLL OF ALL OF THE STATES IN REGARD TO CUTS ASSOCIATED WITH REDUCTION OF CRIME DOLLARS. THE STATES INDICATED TO US, THAT, APPROXIMATELY 12,000 JOBS WOULD BE LOST ACROSS THE BOARD IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE ARENA. THESE JOBS INCLUDE PREVENTION ORIENTED ACTIVITIES, LAW ENFORCEMENT, PROSECUTORS, DEFENSE, COURT PERSONNEL, CORRECTIONAL EMPLOYEES, AND DRUG TREATMENT PROVIDERS.

IN THE PAST, THE CRIME BILL PROVIDED THE STATES WITH A BALANCED FUNDING APPROACH TO CRIMINAL JUSTICE, SO THAT WE COULD CREATE INNOVATIONS FOR THE DIFFERENT COMPONENTS OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM. I THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND I WOULD BE HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS THAT YOU MAY HAVE.

SUBMITTED BY JIM KANE