

# MINUTES

## HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

**DATE: March 7, 2018**

The subcommittee meeting was called to order by Representative VerHeulen at 12:00 p.m.

Roll was taken: Present - Representatives VerHeulen, Brann, Miller, and Pagan

Absent - None

### I. Approval of Minutes from Previous Subcommittee Meeting

A motion was moved by Representative Pagan to approve the minutes from the subcommittee meeting held on February 28, 2018. The motion prevailed, a majority of the members voting in the affirmative.

### II. Presentation on Problem-Solving Courts and the Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program

Jessica Parks, Deputy Director, Trial Court Services, appeared before the subcommittee. She provided members with three documents relative to problem-solving courts and the Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program (SSSPP). She proceeded to highlight program metrics.

Michigan is a national leader in giving the public access to treatment courts. There are 185 problem-solving courts in the state providing access to 97% of the state's population: 127 drug/sobriety courts, 25 veterans courts, and 33 mental health courts.

There were 2,914 participants discharged from drug/sobriety courts during FY 2017. Of those, 1,814 participants (62%) successfully completed the program; 31% were discharged unsuccessfully due to non-compliance, absconding, or committing a new offense; and 7% were discharged for reasons such as voluntary withdrawal, transfer to another jurisdiction, medical discharge, or statutory ineligibility. Graduates were far less likely to commit another crime after two years and unemployment was drastically reduced.

There were 221 veterans discharged from veterans courts during FY 2017. Of those, 146 participants (66%) successfully completed the program. Graduates averaged 396 days of consecutive sobriety. Out of drug/alcohol tests, 2% were positive among graduates. Graduates averaged 525 days in the program.

There were a total of 1,247 participants in the mental health courts: 678 in adult district court, 476 in adult circuit court, and 93 in juvenile court. Graduates were far less likely to commit another crime after two years and more than half of unemployed adults found employment by the time they graduated.

The number of SSSPPs continues to increase. There were 19 programs two years ago, 23 last year, and there are 25 programs now covering 28 counties. In FY 2017, the programs were working with 1,205 probationers. SSSPP participants are 36% less likely to reoffend compared to probationers on regular probation. Only 14% of graduates are unemployed at discharge, while 67% of those were unemployed at admission.

A number of new initiatives are under way to include: implementing problem-solving court certification, changing eligibility requirements to allow more participants in the SSSPP, changing the definition of violent offender to increase eligibility and participation in drug/sobriety courts, funding for medication-assisted treatment programs, and studying juvenile drug courts to identify strengths and weaknesses, assess quality, and improve operations in targeted areas.

Discussion ensued (questions and answers).

### III. Announce Next Subcommittee Meeting

The next subcommittee meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 21, 2018 at 12:00 p.m. The meeting will be held in Room 426 of the Capitol Building. Agenda: report House Substitute for HB 5566, the FY 2018-19 budget bill for Judiciary.

### IV. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the subcommittee, Representative VerHeulen adjourned the meeting at 12:25 p.m.