

House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice Testimony in Support of House Bill 2741, Standardized Conditions of Supervision

The Kansas Criminal Justice Reform Commission designated a subcommittee to develop standardized terms and conditions of supervision in collaboration with the Council of State Governments. People from the courts, prosecution, defense, State Parole, the Department of Corrections, Court Services, and Community Corrections were included in the subcommittee. The group was tasked with developing conditions which were: Limited in number, addressing behavior associated with risk, foster behavior change, support positive outcomes, research-supported and evidence based, focus on supervision goals, and have a rehabilitative value.

Core questions of focus for each condition included asking: Is it realistic? Is it relevant? And is it research-supported? I was one of the group members who collaborated to develop the terms and conditions included in this recommended bill.

The focus of community supervision should be to provide people with the supervision and interventions needed based on their individual risks and needs. Court Services, Community Corrections, and State Parole assess individuals they supervise to determine the person's individual risks and needs. We then develop a plan specific to that person to address areas of concern. These conditions of supervision provide the general terms which apply to all people under supervision. Additional special conditions can be ordered by the court based on their assessed needs or their crime of conviction.

Developing standardized conditions benefits supervision agencies and people being supervised. Currently there is a wide range of conditions between agencies. This can cause confusion for people under supervision which can needlessly lead to technical violations. It is not unusual for a person to be under the jurisdiction of multiple agencies. Standardizing the terms between agencies means a person has one set of rules to follow rather than multiple different sets of conditions.

This bill also works to reduce the supervision conditions which are not evidence-based. While some conditions currently being used conform with wise living, they aren't necessarily supported by research to reduce recidivism. Research has shown which areas in a person's life are most likely to result in future criminal activity and which areas are less impactful. People under supervision may have many needs, however supervision staff must focus their attention on problems that lead to recidivism.

I support HB2741 and would recommend this committee vote to approve its implementation.

Respectfully,
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