

**Testimony of the PA Board of Probation and Parole on JRI 2  
Before the House Judiciary Committee – June 18, 2019**

Good morning Chairman Kauffman, Chairman Briggs and members of the House Judiciary Committee. On Behalf of Governor Wolf, Chairman Johnson and members of the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole we would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak today about our support for the package of bills known as Senate Bills 500, 501 and 502. They are better known as the Justice Reinvestment Initiative 2 or JRI 2. We are Board members Everett Gillison and Jim Fox. The Board commends you and all members of the legislature for your efforts to continue to put the Commonwealth at the forefront of criminal justice reform. Your positive consideration of this three bill package takes the next step in that leadership role amongst states nationwide.

Senate Bill 500 establishes the County Adult Probation and Parole Advisory Committee under the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. The bill will help to streamline county probation finances, and will help clarify the jurisdictional issues that arise between county probation and state parole supervision. The bill will provide an impetus for county probation and parole reform.

Senate Bill 501 will change our agency's name to the Pennsylvania Parole Board, and will implement under a new section to create short sentence parole or automatic parole. Short sentence parole will automatically grant parole for an incarcerated individual sentenced to a minimum sentence of two years or less at

their minimum date if they meet a list of predetermined criteria. The focus will be on lower level-nonviolent offenders. The bill will also add an option for brief detention of technical parole violators as key research has proven this to be a way to reduce recidivism while safely reducing prison population.

Senate Bill 502 focuses on revisions to the Crime Victims Act. It would shift the burden of notifying the victim of his or her rights from a law enforcement agency to the individual officer in charge, and it adds to the prosecutor's duties to provide notification on behalf of the victim to the Office of Victim Advocate.

Again, on behalf of the Board of Probation and Parole, we want to thank you for the opportunity to appear before you and we will answer any questions the committee may have.