



Eastern Ohio Correctional Center
Wintersville, OH
Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Guernsey,
Harrison, Jefferson, Monroe, Noble

Franklin County CBCF
Columbus, OH
Franklin

Lucas County Correctional
Treatment Facility
Toledo, OH
Lucas

MonDay Community Correctional
Institution
Dayton, OH
Darke, Green, Miami, Montgomery,
Preble, Fayette

NEOCAP
Warren, OH
Ashtabula, Geauga, Lake,
Portage, Trumbull

NorthWest Community Corrections Center
Bowling Green, OH
Defiance, Fulton, Henry,
Williams, Wood

STAR Community Justice Center
Franklin Furnace, OH
Adams, Brown, Clinton, Highland,
Lawrence, Pickaway, Pike, Ross,
Scioto

Stark Regional Community
Correction Center
Louisville, OH
Holmes, Stark, Tuscarawas, Wayne

West Central Community Correctional Facility
Marysville, OH
Champaign, Clark, Delaware, Logan,
Madison, Marion, Morrow, Union

W.O.R.T.H. Center
Lima, OH
Allen, Auglaize, Hancock, Hardin, Mercer,
Putnam, Paulding, Shelby, Van Wert

Senate Finance – General Government and Agency Review Subcommittee

Am Sub HB 49

Proponent Testimony of: Cary Williams
Executive Director, Northwest Community
Corrections Center

May 23, 2017

Good afternoon, Chairman Jordan, Vice Chairman O'Brien, and members of the Senate Finance General Government and Agency Review Subcommittee. My name is Cary Williams and I am the executive director of Northwest Community Corrections Center and a trustee for CorJus, a collaborative and innovative trade association for Community Based Correctional Facilities (CBCF). I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony today in support of TCAP (Targeted Community Alternatives to Prison) and CBCF access to Probation Improvement and Incentive Grant (PIIG) funding, as well as to reiterate the importance of continued investment in community corrections, specifically CBCFs.

Four of the five counties my facility serves, Defiance, Fulton, Henry, and Williams, are part of the five county TCAP pilot, which also includes Lucas County. The regional TCAP program provided the opportunity to create CBCF like programming in our regional jail. A deviation cap was created to allow judges the discretion to send certain offenders, who through their behavior left no other option, to prison. The regional TCAP program includes non-violent felony 4 and 5 offenders, which takes an additional step beyond the bill in front of you. As you learn about each of the TCAP pilot programs, you will hear how each one is very different in design. The reason they are able to be different, is the TCAP process allows the discretion to fill the needs of individual communities and courts. The main criticisms from county and local officials have been that this language does not provide enough funding at \$23.00 per day and minimizes judicial discretion. I would like to speak to both of those concerns in hopes of clearing up any misconceptions.

First, the \$23.00 per day language is being misinterpreted. Local courts will still have the ability to utilize CBCFs and other community programs on top of the diversion funding. The courts will continue to have options. Nearly \$60 million will be invested by the state over the biennium to divert offenders to local criminal justice options and will work towards reducing our historically high prison population. To be clear, this is not an effort to merely incarcerate individuals locally instead of in prison. This is an innovative undertaking aimed at mass incarceration at all levels. The local TCAP pilot has not only received financial support from the state, but has also increased collaboration and communication in Northwest Ohio. Both pieces are critical in achieving our shared goals of rehabilitating and keeping Ohio safe.

Second, I have heard on many occasions that TCAP will eliminate discretion. This concern is only true if we are satisfied with the "status quo". As TCAP really relates to discretion, these dollars can be used for local incarceration, local outpatient services, local aftercare services, and local programs to enhance offender access. TCAP could be used to enhance Intervention-in-Lieu of Conviction options and to enhance the availability of Prosecutorial Diversion Programs. These are just some of the possibilities that come to life through TCAP dollars as we look to improve local services based on local needs. As we stand here and evaluate whether TCAP is an effective idea or the legislature infringing on local "discretion", I believe the real concern is this: TCAP is challenging the system to change, and change is the most difficult thing we can ask any human being to do.

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Each county throughout Ohio has very different criminal justice and behavioral health needs. TCAP and PIIG Grants afford the discretion and creativity to deal with local issues. Every county in Ohio, both rural and urban, have needs identified which stand as obstacles to progress. Every judge has their opinion on what efforts should be made in their counties. Because of these differing opinions, we ask that you keep the House language that adds CBCFs to the list of entities that can apply for PIIG Grant funding. Many judges around the state, especially in many rural counties served by CorJus facilities, view it as a conflict to accept money to not send people to prison. However, many of those judges do see the need for evidenced-based programs in their communities. These judges trust CBCFs to develop those programs. We have asked a lot of our judges here in Ohio, a simple language change would allow many of them to reconcile their philosophical beliefs on sentencing with the need for additional services in their counties. Even with this language change, we acknowledge that no application for funding should be approved without collaboration with the courts.

Lastly, as you consider TCAP and PIIG as opportunities to invest in development and expansion of local resources, I also ask that you remember the importance and necessity of the existing community corrections network. Within Ohio's trailblazing community corrections field, CBCFs offer a unique pairing of being lock-down facilities, while offering the highest levels of treatment dosage in the community. Under the current administration, along with Director Mohr's vision and the leadership of you, the legislature, CBCFs have expanded due to fiscal investment and belief in change. This expansion has allowed CBCFs to become criminal justice hubs in many of our communities. CBCFs have expanded and created treatment efforts directed at the opiate epidemic, strengthened mental health services, increased and developed outpatient and aftercare services, and diverted additional offenders through our residential programs. CBCFs are a natural fit for beginning opiate addiction treatment because of our existing treatment components, built-in community linkage, and cost-effectiveness. For opioid antagonist therapy to be effective, it must be provided in conjunction with other alcohol or drug recovery programs. Treatment programs at CBCFs are already comprised of evidence-based programs to combat substance abuse and criminal thinking. The expansion of MAT services, along with existing programmatic components in CBCFs, allows the offender to address both the cognitive and physical devastation wrought by opiate addiction.

Along with our already strong treatment programs aimed at substance abuse and criminal thinking, many CBCFs have capitalized on expansion to open new doors to areas of employment and education. STAR Community Justice Center in Scioto County, has utilized the extra space afforded to them through moving to a previously closed DYS facility, to collaborate with local community and technical programs to offer vocational education including welding, carpentry, electric, and HVAC programs. Several CBCFs have also become GED testing sites so that offenders can more readily have access to obtaining their valuable certification.

Despite the amazing innovation and growth shown by CBCFs, they remain a cost-effective option for the Ohio taxpayer. Last year, CBCFs diverted over 7,400 offenders from prison at a

cost of just over \$10,000 per offender. This year, that number should be closer to 8,000. Around 90% of the offenders served by CBCFs are sentenced on a Felony 3, 4, or 5. According to numbers published by ODRC, it costs over \$40,000 to serve that same Felony 3, 4, or 5 in a prison setting. Cutting CBCF diversions could send thousands of additional offenders to prison each year, at four times the cost. I think the average taxpayer would agree that is not a fiscally responsible move.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to discuss the benefits of TCAP and the ways CBCFs can continue to provide innovative, safe, and cost-effective options for both state and local entities. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.