# OHIO CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

*TCAP TESTIMONY*

*HB 49*
*SUBMITTED TO THE*
*OHIO SENATE SUBCOMITTEE*
*ON*
*FINANCE: GENERAL GOVERNMENT & AGENCY REVIEW*
*By: Veronica Perry, President and Molly Gauntner, Vice President*
*Ohio Chief Probation Officers Association*
*May 20, 2017*

*Chairman Jordan, Ranking Member O'Brien and members of the Senate Finance Subcommittee on Government & Agency Review:*

*I am Molly Gauntner, Vice President of the Ohio Chief Probation Officers Association.*

*On behalf of my Association please consider my testimony a strong endorsement for the Targeted Community Alternatives to Prison (TCAP) grant.*

*The counties that were awarded the TCAP pilot grants have had the opportunity to implement programming that is directly targeting the devastating opiate epidemic in their communities. According to a May 28, 2017, article in the Columbus Dispatch, at least 4,149 Ohioans died from unintentional drug overdoses in 2016. This represents a 36% leap from the previous year when Ohio lead the nation in the most overdose deaths. An average of 11 people died each day in 2016 from heroin, fentanyl, carfentanil or other drugs.*

*The TCAP funding provided the pilot counties the opportunity to collaborate with Sheriffs' Departments and treatment providers to implement Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) in their jails and to hire additional clinicians to work exclusively with the justice-involved opiate population.*

*As community corrections practitioners, we are obligated to utilize best practices in our work with the probation population. We have invested thousands of hours in training and development to implement programming and supervision strategies that research indicates have the greatest impact on recidivism reduction and community safety. Without your support, and without the passage of TCAP, we will not have the resources to continue to provide quality services.*

*According to the Council of State Governments, March 2017 Justice Reinvestment Report, nationally, Ohio has the third highest rate of adults on probation supervision. In January 2015, there was over 240,000 individuals on probation or one in every forty-eight Ohioans. Funding to continue to enhance our probation services is critical.*

*Our goal is to assist in the recovery of our citizens and provide them with the tools necessary to maintain sobriety upon their release. The extra resources that TCAP has afforded has impacted not only the opioid epidemic in the pilot counties, but it has also had a direct impact on the recidivism rates in these communities. In Medina County, 85% of the inmates who received MAT services as part of the TCAP pilot program have remained actively involved in the program.*

*With your support, we will continue making positive changes in our courts and in our communities.*

*Probation Departments across the state have (and will continue to) utilize state grant dollars and resources to partner with community program and treatment providers, including Community Based Correctional Facilitates (CBCF) and Halfway Houses, to address recognized, community needs. Therefore, we urge you to remove the language that allows the Community Based Correctional Facilities (CBCF) to apply for the Probation Improvement and Incentive Grant (PIIG) dollars. Probation is the most utilized criminal justice sentencing option for judges and maintaining appropriate dollars to support the hundreds of thousands of individuals on probation is critical to its success. Additionally, the CBCF's have their own funding line item that is significantly larger than that of probation's.*

*In closing, we would like to reiterate that we fully support the TCAP initiative and thank you for your ongoing support of community corrections. We are committed to continuing to develop and*

*implement successful community control alternatives to incarceration that will reduce the costs and harmful effects associated with recidivism and addiction.*

*This budget bill has the ability to save lives and protect communities.*

*Thank you for your time. I am happy to answer questions.*

*Molly Gauntner*