

WEEKLY SESSION NOTES

SENATE REPUBLICAN POLICY COMMITTEE – DAVID G. ARGALL, CHAIRMAN

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

[Senate Bill 500](#) (Baker) would amend the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency Law to establish the County Adult Probation and Parole Advisory Committee within the Commission. Among other duties, the committee would review and comment on grant applications for county intermediate punishment programs and develop a funding plan for county adult probation and parole departments addressing the items delineated in the legislation. The committee would also serve as the County Probation Officers' Firearm Education and Training Commission, including assuming all of its funding, powers, duties and responsibility.

The legislation would further provide for the use of the Justice Reinvestment Fund to support programs and activities to improve the delivery of criminal justice services. It would revise the Justice Reinvestment funding to account for savings expected from the enactment of other legislation and to distribute funding for increased victim compensation (\$250,000 annually), to provide funding (\$400,000 annually) to the Sentencing Commission for risk assessment and justice reinvestment sentencing features, and to provide resources to improve county adult probation and parole. The proposal would also make appropriations to the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency for the purpose of formula funding to county probation and parole departments. [Concurrence in House Amendments: 50-0.](#)

[Senate Bill 501](#) (Killion) would amend Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) and Title 61 (Prisons and Parole) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to make numerous changes related to sentencing of defendants and parole as part of the Justice Reinvestment Initiative – Phase 2. Among other provisions, the legislation would:

- Continue the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing as an agency of the General Assembly and update its duties;
- Direct the Commission to report annually to the Governor, the General Assembly and the Administrative Office of the Pennsylvania Courts on its activities;
- Require the Commission to certify compliance by each county with any guidelines for county intermediate punishment or for restrictive conditions on county probation and to report the results to the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency;
- Provide that restitution for crime victims would have second priority among wage attachments behind support orders and require each county to operate a unit dedicated to restitution collection or to contract with a third party for this purpose;
- Mandate deductions from inmate accounts for the payment of restitution and other fees or fines;

- Restore certain mandatory minimum sentences for violent crimes committed against children;
- Change the name of the State Intermediate Punishment program to the State drug treatment program;
- Establish a Parolee Homicide Review Team within the Department of Corrections to examine the circumstances surrounding homicides committed by offenders under the supervision of the Board of Probation and Parole;
- Provide new authority governing short-sentence parole; and
- Change the motivational boot camp selection so that the judge can prevent placement in the program by the DOC, rather than having to affirmatively determine eligibility.
Concurrence in House Amendments: 38-11.

Senate Resolution 153 (Phillips-Hill) urges Congress to ratify the United-States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) on Trade as soon as possible. **Adopted: 49-0.**

Senate Resolution 275 (Farnese) designates the week of November 17 through 22, 2019 as “Pennsylvania Education for Students Experiencing Homelessness Week” and November 22, 2019 as “Red Shirt Day” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

Senate Resolution 276 (Bartolotta) designates the month of November 2019 as “Construction Cares Month” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

Senate Resolution 277 (Mensch) honors the Special Olympics Pennsylvania on the 50th anniversary of its founding. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

Senate Resolution 278 (Martin) congratulates The Pennsylvania State University wrestling team on its eighth National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Wrestling Championship in the past nine years. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

Executive Session

J. Andrew Crompton – Judge, Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania (Two-Thirds Majority Required). **Confirmed: 42-7.**

Bruce R. Beemer, Judge, Court of Common Pleas, Allegheny County (Two-Thirds Majority Required). **Confirmed: 49-0.**

Nominations to the Court of Common Pleas, Philadelphia County. (Two-Thirds Majority Required). **Confirmed: 45-4.**

John J. Letizia – Board of Trustees of Ebensburg Center. **Confirmed: 49-0.**

James A. Van Blarcom – Milk Marketing Board. **Confirmed: 49-0.**