



Notice of Public Hearings

New York State Commission on Sentencing Reform **Denise E. O'Donnell** **Chair**

Tuesday, November 13, 2007 9:30 AM – 4:30 PM
New York City Bar Association
42 W. 44th Street
Manhattan, NY

Thursday, November 15, 2007 9:30 AM – 4:30 PM
Roosevelt Hearing Room C
Legislative Office Building - 2nd Floor
Albany, NY

Monday, November 19, 2007 9:30 AM – 4:30 PM
Buffalo and Erie County
Public Library Auditorium
One Lafayette Square
Buffalo, NY

SUBJECT: The Future of Sentencing in New York State

The New York State Commission on Sentencing Reform is conducting a series of public hearings around the State beginning November 13, 2007.

Governor Eliot Spitzer established the Commission pursuant to Executive Order No. 10 on March 5, 2007 to conduct a comprehensive review of New York's "current sentencing structure, sentencing practices, community supervision, and the use of alternatives to incarceration" in order to provide the State with "crucial guidance to ensure the imposition of appropriate and just criminal sanctions, and to make the most efficient use of the correctional system and community resources." Following its inaugural session, the Commission conducted a series of meetings where state and national sentencing experts provided an in-depth review of New York's existing sentencing structure, sentencing practices and criminal justice system, as well as the many challenges facing that system and constructive proposals for reform.

In its Preliminary Report, the Commission concluded that while New York has made commendable progress in enhancing public safety through the combined use of limited correctional resources and a broad reliance on community-based alternatives to incarceration, there is tremendous opportunity for improvement. The Report is available online at the following web address:

<http://www.criminaljustice.state.ny.us/legalservices/sentencingreform/2007prelimsentencingreformrpt.pdf>

Issues that the Commission is interested in exploring at the public hearings, and that witnesses should address, include, but are not limited to, the following:

- How do New York's existing sentencing laws impact offenders, victims and their families? How should these laws be streamlined, simplified or otherwise revised?
- The State's drug sentencing laws were last revised in 2004. What, if any, additional changes should be made to these laws?
- Should the State expand its use of alternatives to incarceration if such expansion can be accomplished without compromising public safety?
- What, if any, steps should be taken to enhance the quality and availability of substance abuse treatment programs and other community-based programs throughout the State?
- What improvements can be made to the manner in which offenders are supervised in the community and how should supervision be aligned with risk?
- The Commission has recommended that certain offenders who violate the terms of their supervision be subjected to graduated sanctions or other alternative sanctions in lieu of being returned to State prison. What types of sanctions should be utilized and how should they be implemented?
- How can New York improve institutional programming for incarcerated offenders, such as Shock, CASAT and Willard?
- How can New York's existing policies and procedures for preparing offenders for re-entry from prison to the community be improved?
- Are New York's laws governing the rights of crime victims in the sentencing and correctional process adequate? What, if any, statutory or other changes should be made to enhance the rights of crime victims in the sentencing and correctional process?

Persons wishing to testify or attend should complete the hearing reply form and return the completed form as indicated as soon as possible, but no later than Monday, November 5, 2007. It is important that the form be fully completed and returned promptly so that persons may be notified in the event of emergency postponement or cancellation.

Oral testimony will be limited to 10 minutes in length. In preparing the order of witnesses, the Commission will attempt to accommodate individual requests to speak at particular times in special circumstances only. Such a request should be made on the reply form or communicated to Commission staff as soon as possible. If you are testifying, twenty copies of your written statement should be submitted on the day of the hearing at the hearing registration table. Alternatively, written testimony may be e-mailed as an attachment to: Patricia.Greco@dcjs.state.ny.us. Written testimony should be submitted no later than one week after the hearing date.

Questions about this hearing may be directed to Patti Greco of the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services at (518) 485-6084 or at the above e-mail address.

**The Future of Sentencing in New York State
Reply Form**

Respond by November 5, 2007

Mail or fax to: Patti Greco, DCJS-CSR, 3rd floor, 4 Tower Place, Albany, NY 12203; fax: 518-457-2416

- I request the opportunity to testify at the ___ [November 13/NYC]
___ [November 15/Albany] ___ [November 19/Buffalo] hearing.

- I request the opportunity to attend, but not testify, at the ___ [November 13/NYC]
___ [November 15/Albany] ___ [November 19/Buffalo] hearing.

- I will require assistance and/or handicapped accessibility information. **Please specify the type of assistance required:**

NAME: _____

TITLE: _____

ORGANIZATION: _____

ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

FAX TELEPHONE: _____

TOPIC OF TESTIMONY: _____
