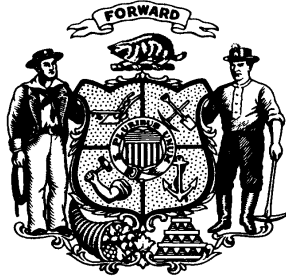


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September 2014

Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson
Wisconsin Supreme Court
Room 16 East State Capitol
P.O. Box 1688
Madison, WI 53701-1688

Dear Chief Justice Abrahamson,

The Joint Legislative Council's Study Committee on Problem Solving Courts, Alternatives, and Diversions was created by the Joint Legislative Council and has been meeting since June of 2014. The committee's charge is as follows:

The Study Committee is directed to review the 50+ courts currently in operation in Wisconsin that utilize nontraditional adjudication methods, the effect they have on recidivism, and the net fiscal impact of these courts. The committee shall examine courts, such as veterans courts, drug and alcohol courts, mental health courts, and drunk driving courts, in Wisconsin and nationally and consider: (a) effectiveness of existing problem-solving courts in Wisconsin in reducing recidivism, the costs to administer these courts, and the savings realized; (b) best practices of existing problem-solving courts, both in Wisconsin and elsewhere, and potential implementation of these practices at the state level; (c) efforts to establish problem-solving courts that serve multiple counties, impediments to these efforts, and potential changes to improve regionalization of such courts; and (d) appropriate role and structure of state-level training and coordination.

A membership list of committee members is enclosed with this letter.

At the August 20, 2014 meeting of the committee, the members approved two recommendations that it would like to share with you. The first is to maintain the

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special projects manager position in the Director of State Courts office to support training efforts for county treatment court personnel. By making this recommendation, the committee acknowledges the key role that adequate training contributes to effective treatment court programs.

The second recommendation is to support the Director of State Courts in continuing the collaboration with the Department of Justice in developing an integrated web-based data system for the collection of participant-level data from Wisconsin treatment court projects that focus on diversion and alternatives to incarceration. The purpose of this integrated system is to collect and provide ongoing monitoring of data to assure the treatment courts' fidelity to evidence-based practices.

The committee appreciates the Supreme Court's commitment of resources to studying and implementing effective justice strategies and alternatives to incarceration, and is pleased to contribute to this effort. Please contact me if you have any questions about these recommendations.

Sincerely,

Representative Garey Bies, Chair
Study Committee on Problem-Solving Courts,
Alternatives, and Diversions

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Enclosure

cc: Sara Ward-Cassady, Deputy Director for Court Operations, Director of State Courts office.

Nancy Rottier, Legislative Liaison, Director of State Courts office