

## **News for Immediate Release**

Feb. 7, 2012

## Investments in Parole are Leading to Lower Recidivism, Reduced Victimization

**Harrisburg** – Governor Tom Corbett's proposed budget for fiscal year 2012-13 includes increased funding for the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole to continue its focus on the successful transition of offenders into society.

"One of the most basic responsibilities of government is to protect its residents," Chairman Michael C. Potteiger said today. "This budget will continue to fund positions for parole agents who must be out in the community monitoring parolees and engaging in problem solving strategies to change criminal behavior.

"Parole agents work with offenders using evidence-based practices to change offender behavior. Our results are showing that this works," Potteiger said.

The board's use of proven programs and strategies has led to positive outcomes over the past five years that benefit the citizens of Pennsylvania:

- The board's 3-year recidivism rate is 42 percent, a drop of almost 6 percentage points;
- The number of offenders who successfully completed parole is 6,815, which is a 20 percent increase;
- The percentage of technical parole violators returned to prison decreased 36 percent;
- The percentage of parole absconders has declined from 6.2 percent to 3.2 percent.

These best practices include the use of risk and needs assessments to determine the likelihood an offender will re-offend, evaluate some of the causes of the criminal behavior and determine supervision levels.

Cognitive behavioral programming is provided in group sessions to foster positive, pro-social behavior change in offenders. Agents also refer offenders to drug and alcohol treatment as needed and other counseling interventions.

The budget provides an increase of \$5.3 million, or 5.1 percent, to continue funding for 53 current positions, as well as funding for 13 new positions. These positions are needed to prepare cases for a parole interview and for parole agents to supervise offenders on the street.

The board is one of many participants involved in the Justice Reinvestment Initiative, a comprehensive research-based approach to find ways to increase public safety and reduce spending on corrections.

"If we can make significant changes to the criminal justice system to operate more effectively, without jeopardizing public safety, we can save taxpayer money and decrease the number of crime victims," Potteiger said.

The budget also provides funding for the Sexual Offenders Assessment Board to implement the provisions of the Adam Walsh bill, enacted last year. This law expands the crimes that fall under Megan's Law for convicted sex offenders and strengthens reporting requirements.

One example of decreasing costs this budget cycle is a legislative reform to eliminate the need for counties to send in half of their adult probation supervision fees to the state, only to have the state send the counties a check for the same amount approximately six months later. This common-sense change will reduce administrative costs to the board and significantly reduce other costs for counties that are associated with the delay in receiving these funds.

Visit the Board of Probation and Parole online at www.pbpp.state.pa.us.

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