

Colorado Justice Report

Founded in 1999, CCJRC is a network of organizations, faith communities, and individuals working to eliminate the overuse of the criminal justice system and advance community health and safety in Colorado.

1212 Mariposa St. #6, Denver, CO 80204 | www.ccjrc.org | info@ccjrc.org | 303 825-0122



2019 Legislative Session Preview

By Terri Hurst, Policy Coordinator

We survived another election season! ...and the outcomes of the election have shifted the dynamics at the state Capitol next year.

The Democrats will be in control of both chambers of the General Assembly with a 5 seat majority in the Senate and a 17 seat majority in the House. In addition, the Democrats will be in control of every position in the executive branch, including the Governor and the Attorney General.

While we wait for some of the finer details to emerge, such as whom Governor-elect Polis will choose to serve in his Cabinet and who will be serving on the Judiciary Committees, we know the Legislature will be starting earlier than usual with opening day on Friday, January 4th.

CCJRC is going to be busy this upcoming session. Our work will be focused on reducing technical parole violations, increasing accountability and oversight for the Parole Board and the Department of Corrections, and enacting measures to reduce the prison population. CCJRC will also be involved in sentencing reforms, improving access to harm reduction services across the state, and supporting access to Medication Assisted Treatment (M.A.T.) services for people incarcerated in jail.

Governor Hickenlooper released his final budget on November 1st. It is hard to determine how much of the submitted budget will move forward once Governor-elect Polis begins his administration in January.

Regardless, there are concerning pieces in the submitted budget that CCJRC is actively opposing. In particular, there is close to \$40 million in the proposed budget for prison expansion, which includes moving the functions of the Denver Reception and Diagnostic Center (DRDC) to Colorado State Penitentiary II (CSP II) and reopening CSP II as a reentry facility.

Back in September, the Joint Budget Committee approved \$1 million for the Department of Corrections (DOC) to begin retrofitting CSP II so that the mothballed prison could begin to house people if/when the General Assembly passed legislation to reopen the prison. Because CSP II was built solely for solitary confinement, the prison has to have a yard built in addition to classroom space in order to incarcerate people there. Governor Hickenlooper has requested funding to fully utilize private prison beds throughout the state as well as reopen CSP II. Within the budget request, it states that "legislative change will be sought in 2019," so we know that the reopening of CSP II is on the agenda for the 2019 legislative session unless Governor-elect Polis decides this is not the correct path forward for our state.

Community Corrections Subsistence Payment Support

Beginning November 1st, the Division of Criminal Justice is using funds from the General Assembly to offset the costs charged for the first ten days for people transitioning from DOC to a residential community corrections program. People in community corrections on Diversion, Condition of Probation and Condition of Parole are not eligible. Each community correction provider should provide written information about this 10-day financial support to those who are eligible to receive these funds. This funding is set to expire June 30, 2019 unless the funding provided by the General Assembly is spent prior to that date.

Support Change That Works

With your help, for nearly twenty years, CCJRC has advocated and organized for ending mass incarceration in Colorado. In the last decade, SIX prisons have closed and we are fighting to keep them that way.

We want to thank you for the support you have given CCJRC, and ask you to make an investment for 2019. Your involvement has made it possible for people directly impacted by mass incarceration, over-policing, and racial injustice to have a voice. We are elevating that voice to re-design criminal justice policy, reframe the public safety debate, and close prisons.

Using the enclosed envelope please make a generous tax-deductible donation today to CCJRC.



Kevin J. Beaty/Denverite Juston registering people to vote in Denver County Jail

Invisible Voting Bloc

By Juston Cooper, Deputy Director

We are excited to share that we had an incredible year with civic engagement! CCJRC continued expanding efforts to engage people with criminal records in voting in Colorado's 2018 elections. We registered nearly 900 people to vote by being on site in the Denver jails, Denver probation, and RMOMS. We also knocked on 5,346 doors to talk with voters in precincts in Aurora with the highest African American population.

Most exciting were the conversations we had with YOU! our members. Our dedicated canvassers and volunteers also spoke with approximately 1,800 CCJRC members to encourage them to vote. We had such inspiring conversations at the door and on the phone with voters who shared their stories. We also were so grateful to hear encouragement and appreciation for our efforts. Contrary to past mid-term elections that have historically had lower levels of participation, voters at the doors were very engaging and eager about voting this year.

As my co-worker Alex Landau explained, "Every time we're canvassing, some of the most profound moments come when they are least expected. Whether it's someone who didn't think they couldn't vote but found out from us that they could, or someone sharing gratitude because we made the effort to speak with them about their right to vote; these were the special moments that we had at the door with voters."

Not only did we have a robust ground game this year, but we remained true to the core of who we are by also working on policies that impact voting rights in Colorado. CCJRC participated in a coalition of advocacy organizations to help pass (SB18-150), a new law permitting people on parole to pre-register to vote while on parole and automatic registration upon completion of their sentence; (effective no later than 7/1/19). CCJRC helped draft the bill and amendments, educate legislators on Colorado voting law pertaining to people with a criminal record, and provided testimony in support of the passing the bill.

In addition, we also worked with the Secretary of State (SOS) office on a new SOS rule that mandates all 56 Colorado county jails develop and submit a written plan related to ensuring eligible voters in jail are provided with voter information and meaningful opportunities to register to vote and vote while incarcerated.

Educating people about Colorado law on voter eligibility for people with a criminal record is the backbone of our civic engagement efforts. To better gauge community awareness of the law, this fall CCJRC released the first statewide poll conducted by Public Policy Polling that demonstrated significant confusion around the voting rights of people with a criminal record. We ramped up our media outreach, purchased ad-space on 8 bus shelters around Aurora prior to the election, and launched www.votingwithconviction.org to help bridge that information gap.

Moving forward, CCJRC will release our post-election analysis and report in January. We're also preparing for the District Attorney election in 2020 and will use 2019 to expand our base and engage with voters.



Alex tabling at a community fair

The Power of Volunteers!

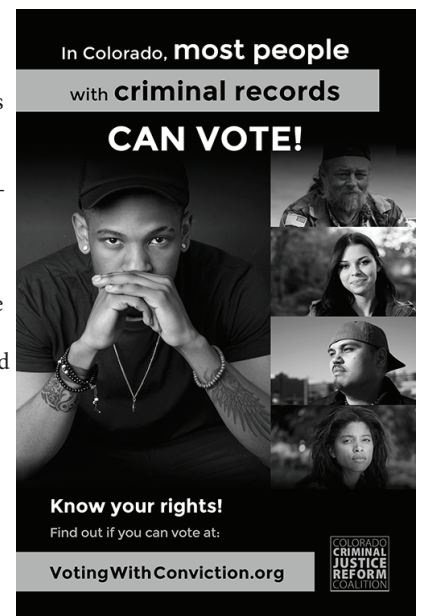
By Jasmine Ross, Civic Engagement Assistant

In 2018, CCJRC Volunteer Program was the most robust that it's ever been. We have had over 80 volunteers support our Voting with Conviction Campaign. Volunteers were instrumental in encouraging people to register to vote and vote through Voter Registration efforts targeting people who have criminal records, door to door canvassing and phone banking.

Volunteers contributed to making 1,300 phone calls to CCJRC members with low propensity to vote and knocked 643 doors targeting African Americans and people with criminal records. CCJRC is extremely excited by the ongoing relationships we were able to build with volunteers in 2018.

As the Civic Engagement Assistant and lead on coordinating our Volunteer Program, I was ecstatic to see the interest in how many volunteers were willing to support our work. With this program having great success we plan to scale our volunteer program in 2019. In 2019 CCJRC would like to see a continued growth in volunteer interest not only in our Voting with Conviction campaign (www.votingwithconviction.org) but other CCJRC campaigns.

We plan to focus on recruiting volunteers who have been previously or currently involved in the criminal justice system to build the civic participation of people impacted by the system. Starting January 2019, CCJRC will host monthly volunteer orientations providing training and development for volunteers, campaign updates, and information for volunteers to follow through our social media and CCJRC's website. If you would like get involved by volunteering, please contact Jasmine Ross at jasmine@ccjrc.org or via phone at 303-825-0122. We look forward to you joining CCJRC's volunteer program.



Community Reinvestment as the New Public Safety Model

By Christie Donner, Executive Director

In 2015, CCJRC began a re-visioning process because we felt that our founding mission of *ending mass incarceration in Colorado* wasn't expansive enough. We realized that it was the overuse of the entire criminal justice system, not just incarceration, which needed to be downsized. We also integrated a much more intensive focus on improving the quality of life and repairing some of the harm that has been inflicted in some communities as a result of decades of over-criminalization and mass incarceration. Consequently, the CCJRC Board adopted a new mission, which is to *end the overuse of the criminal justice system and advance community health and safety*.



HB17-1326 Supporters at Capitol

Community Reinvestment is a new legislative strategy that CCJRC is pioneering that takes savings from criminal justice policy reforms (or other sources of state funding) and reinvest those funds into communities most affected as a way to strengthen community and offer a new approach to public safety that is community-driven, community-led, and publicly financed.

CCJRC has successfully advocated for the creation of three Community Reinvestment initiatives that are currently in effect in Colorado that are providing funding for community-based reentry, crime prevention, and victim services. Combined, these three initiatives will invest over \$50 million over the next several years. Here's a brief update on each of these initiatives.

Community Reentry Grant Program (WAGEES)

Administrative State Department – Department of Corrections
Grant Manager – Latino Coalition for Community Leadership
Enacting legislation – HB 14-1355 and reauthorized in HB18-1176
Annual appropriation – \$5.5 million

CCJRC's first effort at Community Reinvestment was the passage of HB14-1355, which created the first community-based grant program in the Department of Corrections to help people leaving prison through comprehensive reentry services. It started with a modest investment of \$500,000 in its first year. In the 2018 session, the Legislature passed a bill that continued the WAGEES program for another five years and substantially increased funding to over \$5 million a year in order to expand WAGEES, particularly in more rural areas in Colorado.

This fall, new WAGEES grants have been made to nonprofit organizations in Canon City and Sterling, a second WAGEES site was selected in Denver and Colorado Springs, and the Women's Reentry Pilot launched in November! This cutting-edge pilot is designed exclusively to help women leaving prison who have higher needs for medical and behavioral health care. In early 2019, there is also potential to expand WAGEES into three or four new communities like Montrose, La Junta, Cortez/Durango area, and Longmont. Approximately 60% of all the WAGEES case managers were formerly incarcerated themselves and their leadership is forever changing the field of reentry in Colorado and beyond.

Crime Prevention Initiative

(Pilot in SE Colorado Springs and NE Aurora)

Administrative State Department – Department of Local Affairs
Grant Manager – The Denver Foundation and The Pikes Peak Community Foundation
Small Business Lending Manager – CEDS (Aurora) and Accion (Colorado Springs)
Evaluation and Technical Assistance – Latino Coalition for Community Leadership
Enacting legislation – HB17-1326
Annual appropriation -- \$4 million

This legislation enacted substantial parole reforms that reduced the amount of time someone could go back to prison on a technical parole violation and redirects \$4m a year in savings to create a crime prevention initiative piloted in N Aurora and SE Colorado Springs. The funding is channeled to enhance broader community development as a safety strategy by braiding a grant program to provide direct services with a small business lending program to stimulate economic growth.

Additionally, the legislation required that a Local Planning Team made up of residents and others with direct community ties determine the crime prevention priorities that would inform the grant guidelines. By early 2018, each Local Planning Team had determined its crime prevention priorities. The first grant cycle was completed in the Spring of 2018 and \$1.3 million was awarded to 13 grantees in Aurora and \$1.3 million was awarded to 11 grantees in Colorado Springs. The second grant cycle was completed in the Fall of 2018 and \$650,000 was awarded to 12 grantees in Aurora and \$650,000 was awarded to 10 grantees in the Springs. So far, 46 organizations serving the target areas in N Aurora and SE Colorado Spring have received funding. You can see a complete grantee list at www.transformingsafety.org. Additionally, to date, CEDS has made 9 small business loans in N Aurora (total of \$137,848) and Accion has made 5 small business loans in SE Colorado Springs (total \$62,525).

Community-based Victim Services Grant Program

Administrative State Department – Colorado Department of Health & Environment
Grant manager – Latino Coalition for Community Leadership
Enacting legislation – HB18-1409
Annual appropriation – \$850,000

In April 2018, CCJRC released its report entitled, *Victim's Speak*, that published the results of a survey of 500 crime survivors in the Denver metro area, with an oversampling of victims of color. One of the key findings was the lack of community-based support services, particularly evident for men, people of color, and young adults.

Based on these findings, CCJRC worked with a bi-partisan group of legislators to create a community grant program for victim services specifically prioritizing underserved victims. The Latino Coalition released the first Request for Proposal on November 21st and proposals are due January 7, 2019! You can learn more at <http://latinocoalition.org/co-victim-services/>

We are so grateful to the state agencies, the Latino Coalition for Community Leadership, The Denver Foundation, The Pikes Peak Community Foundation, CEDS and Accion who manage the various aspects of the Community Reinvestment Initiatives. We particularly thank all the incredible work that is being done by the nonprofit organizations that are funded through these initiatives for their service to their communities. It is all your effort and heart that is demonstrating that the community can play a profound role in reducing the overuse of the criminal justice system while meeting vital and legitimate community health and safety needs.



YES! Count me in! I want to support CCJRC and help eliminate the overuse of the criminal justice system in Colorado.
Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution!

Your support makes all the difference!

NAME: _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL: _____

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$35 | <input type="checkbox"/> Low Income/senior \$15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Household \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prisoner \$3 (cash or stamps) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainer \$100 or more | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Freedom Fighter \$____ charge me monthly/quarterly | |

Credit Card # _____

Exp date _____

Please return to:

CCJRC 1212 Mariposa St. #6 Denver, CO. 80204

10th Annual Voices for Justice

On Wednesday, September 26, 2018 we celebrated our tenth annual night of fun and fundraising with an open bar, delicious food, and a magnificent silent auction to honor House Representative Pete Lee as our 2018 Game Changer Award Recipient. We would like to thank our sponsors and the many volunteers without whom this night would not have been possible.



CCJRC 2018 Voices for Justice Sponsors Game Changer Sponsor



JOHNSON & KLEIN LAW
CRIMINAL DEFENSE & CIVIL RIGHTS

Supporting Sponsor



Lord Law Firm, LLC,
Greg and Karen Gulley

Contributing Sponsors

Howard and Blanca Lerman
Tony Bubb and Leigh Schilz

Kayvan Khalatbari
Jan and Dave Mackenzie



Advocate Sponsors
Signal Behavioral Health
McAllister Garfield, P.C.



beacon
health options



Freedom Fighter Sponsors
Green Law Firm, P.C.
JHM Consulting, Inc.
Left Hand Management
ACLU of Colorado
Mental Health Council of Denver
Behavioral Healthcare Inc.
Drug Policy Alliance of Colorado
Harm Reduction Action Center
Jeff Thormodsgard

Rupert-Late Sponsors
Dr. Jean Scandlyn
Lakeside, P.C.

Justice Sponsors

Jim Lunsford and Jane Vannoy
Independent Director
Alice and Dean Castro
Crisis Center
Roberta Harrington
Stephen Baker
Tennessee Magazine
B. Talbot & Village
Audi's Studio
Amy Brown and Jim Jenkins
Colorado Behavioral Healthcare Council
Hager Law Office, P.C.
Colorado Community Health Alliance
Colorado Health Foundation
John and Gary Ferguson-Gonzalez
Preston Digital
Marshall Souther
Mary Lewis
McGuire Law Office
New Era Colorado
Norm Mueller & Christine Murphy
Vitality & Health, Inc. Investigations
Work Options for Women
Denver Election Division
Denver Works

MANDY M. RIGG



The Colorado Health Foundation



CCJRC is a proud member of
Community Shares of Colorado!