

# JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

[As amended: January 31, 2001; Reviewed September 26, 2017]

## JURISDICTION

The IAC Justice and Public Safety Committee is responsible for all matters relating to criminal justice and public safety, including, but not limited to, law enforcement, courts, corrections, firearm control, criminal justice planning, crime prevention, common law and civil law matters, public safety communications, jails, and juvenile corrections and delinquency prevention.

## STATEMENT OF BASIC PHILOSOPHY

Idaho's counties have primary responsibility in the state for providing a justice and public safety system. Counties are best suited to coordinate local criminal justice activities since all major law enforcement agencies are located within county boundaries. Counties have primary responsibility in planning, coordinating and establishing priorities in allocating resources since they are faced with increased law enforcement and jail costs and additional standards imposed by the courts. Counties have an obligation to exercise a strong leadership role in planning and problem solving at the local level. It is essential that a partnership exist with other governmental entities to achieve success in meeting the needs of the justice system.

## COURTS

**Court Fees And Fines**—IAC opposes the establishment of any additional court fees or fines proposed to fund non-court programs unless sufficient money is returned to the county to offset the cost of operation. However, IAC strongly supports the use of fines and fees for the cost of providing the Peace Officer Standards and Training program including the existing fee and any future fee increases.

**Child Support Collection Laws**—IAC strongly supports state responsibility for child support enforcement.

**Court Reporters**—IAC supports the requirement that court reporters type their own transcripts as part of their salaries and acknowledge that the county owns the transcript.

**Federal Peace Officers**—IAC opposes legislation which defines federal peace officers as Idaho peace officers.

**Law Clerk Salaries/Trial Court Administrators**—IAC supports legislation that requires the state to pay the salaries and benefits of law clerks as employees of district court judges. In addition, IAC supports legislation that would require the state to pay the salaries, benefits and support costs for the support staff of the trial court administrators' offices.

**Technology**—IAC supports the funding and encourages the Idaho Supreme Court to

designate funding to update Idaho State Tracking and Reporting System (ISTARS) and continue to furnish equipment and training for counties that supports improved technology.

**Court Assistance Office**—IAC supports the creation of the Court Assistance Office program funded by the state and the efforts to improve courthouse accessibility.

**Jury System**—IAC supports efforts to improve the jury system in Idaho.

## **JAILS**

**Minimum Jail Standards**—IAC supports the Minimum Jail Standards adopted by the Idaho Sheriffs' Association and each county. IAC also supports the annual update of those standards to keep with current practices as long as the updated standards are financially feasible.

**State Inmates**—Since state inmates housed in county jails continue to pose a significant fiscal impact, staffing and liability burden on counties, IAC recommends the following:

- A. The state recognizes county fiscal problems and makes all efforts to adequately fund the Department of Corrections in order that counties receive timely reimbursement for holding state prisoners at a reasonable rate.
- B. IAC supports and encourages the Department of Corrections to remove all problem state prisoners from county jails upon notice by the county.

**Privatization of State Prisons**—IAC opposes privatization of state prisons until all opportunities for county partnerships have been fully explored, including maximizing the use of state-funded program beds in county jails.

## **DRUGS**

IAC recognizes that drug trafficking is one of the single most important challenges to the criminal justice system and recommends the following:

- A. IAC supports all efforts at the federal, state and local level to continue the war against drugs as well as the expansion of substance abuse prevention efforts.
- B. IAC supports adequate funding of drug task forces at the local level to continue the fight against drug abuse.
- C. IAC supports adequate state or federal funding to clean up drug labs.
- D. IAC supports alternative drug sentences including the creation of drug courts and

stricter sentencings for repeat offenders.

## **JUVENILE CORRECTIONS**

IAC supports alternatives to incarceration for juvenile offenders to include:

- A. Continued funding of the Department of Juvenile Corrections.
- B. Support for non-secure holdover facilities by multi-county or regional programs where troubled youth can be held for a brief period of time.

IAC supports and encourages local grants and technical assistance provided through the Department of Juvenile Corrections.

IAC supports the availability of an appropriate mix of facilities and programs aimed at rehabilitating troubled youth and urges on-going and stable funding for the Department of Juvenile Corrections to assist counties and cities with diversion and prevention programs to avoid incarceration of juveniles.

IAC supports the “Balanced Approach-Restorative Justice” model on which the Juvenile Corrections Act is based.

IAC supports the minimum standards and training established by the Juvenile Justice Training Council for county juvenile detention and probation officers.

IAC supports the certification of county juvenile detention and probation officers through POST Academy.

IAC supports the funding for and encourages the Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections to designate funding to implement the Idaho Juvenile Offender System (IJOS) and provide or make available funding through grants or other means for connectivity, equipment, training and any other technology needs necessary for counties to carry out their responsibility mandated under the Idaho Juvenile Corrections Act.

IAC recognizes as a formal subcommittee of the IAC Justice and Public Safety Committee, the Youth and Justice Advisory Committee or similar entity created to review juvenile issues and make recommendations to the IAC membership concerning funding, programs, other services, policies and procedures.

## **JURISDICTION OF COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT**

IAC recognizes that pursuant to Idaho Code § 31-2227, Sheriffs and Prosecuting Attorneys are the chief law enforcement officers in each county, irrespective of city and state officers, and IAC will oppose any legislation that contradicts the intent of Idaho Code § 31-2227.

IAC supports the use of legible fully reflectorized front and rear license plates as a positive aid to law enforcement and public safety.