

# Committee on Justice Reinvestment Oversight Annual Report

September 2018

*Prepared and Submitted pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 50-434(6)*

The Nebraska Legislature established the Committee on Justice Reinvestment Oversight (hereinafter, the “Committee”) with the passage of LB 605 in 2015.<sup>1</sup> The Committee is charged with “maintain[ing] continuous oversight of the Nebraska Reinvestment Initiative and related issues,”<sup>2</sup> and has spent the last few years working with the Council of State Governments Justice Center, the Governor, the Chief Justice of the Nebraska Supreme Court, and various other stakeholders to ensure the complete and effective implementation of Nebraska’s justice reinvestment efforts. The Committee submits this fourth annual report of its work as required by statute.<sup>3</sup>

Although the Committee did not meet formally during the 2018 calendar year, the work of the Committee continued informally throughout the year. As in past years, members of the Committee have been intimately involved in monitoring the state of Nebraska’s justice system and the impact of Nebraska’s justice reinvestment efforts. Members of the Committee serve on the Judiciary Committee of the 105<sup>th</sup> Nebraska Legislature, which is generally tasked with reviewing legislation that might impact Nebraska’s criminal justice system. Members of the Committee also serve on the Nebraska Justice System Special Oversight Committee established with the passage of LR 127 in 2017. The LR 127 Committee is tasked with oversight of the adult justice system in the state,<sup>4</sup> and the first report of the LR 127 Committee was completed in December of 2017.<sup>5</sup> A second report of the LR 127 Committee will be submitted in December 2018. Considering the in-depth involvement of the individual members of the Committee across all facets of the Legislature’s oversight of the Nebraska criminal justice system, the Committee continues to pursue its work as instructed by statute in various ways.

Nebraska statute instructs the Committee to “work cooperatively with the Council of State Governments Justice Center”<sup>6</sup> (hereinafter, “CSG”) in pursuing its justice reinvestment oversight mission. In the fall of 2017, the state’s formal relationship with CSG with respect to Nebraska’s

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<sup>1</sup> Legislative Bill 605 (2015), available online at <http://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/104/PDF/Slip/LB605.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Neb. Rev. Stat. § 50-434(3).

<sup>3</sup> Two reports have been submitted by the Committee pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 50-434(6). The first was issued in September 2015, and can be found online at [http://nebraskalegislature.gov/pdf/reports/committee/select\\_special/jro/jro\\_2015.pdf](http://nebraskalegislature.gov/pdf/reports/committee/select_special/jro/jro_2015.pdf). The second was issued in September 2016, and can be found online at [http://nebraskalegislature.gov/pdf/reports/committee/select\\_special/jro/jro\\_2016.pdf](http://nebraskalegislature.gov/pdf/reports/committee/select_special/jro/jro_2016.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> See generally Legislative Resolution 127 (2017), available online at <http://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/105/PDF/Enroll/LR127.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> The LR 127 Committee’s 2017 report is available online at [https://nebraskalegislature.gov/pdf/reports/committee/select\\_special/cso/2017\\_lr127.pdf](https://nebraskalegislature.gov/pdf/reports/committee/select_special/cso/2017_lr127.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Neb. Rev. Stat. § 50-434(2).

justice reinvestment effort was completed. As a result, CSG has not been directly involved in Nebraska's justice reinvestment efforts over the past year as they had been in the past.

The Committee's work through calendar year 2018 has consisted of its members making efforts to oversee and review Nebraska's criminal justice system in various ways. From formal meetings of the Committee, to individual members' work on issues impacting the justice system, the Committee is confident that the Legislature's intent in creating the Committee on Justice Reinvestment Oversight is being achieved. The Committee will continue its work, and the Committee is dedicated to looking for ways to ensure that it continues to appropriately monitor the status of Nebraska's justice reinvestment efforts and the state's criminal justice system.

It is worth noting that the Committee may still meet formally during the 2018 calendar year, as efforts are underway to schedule such a formal meeting.