

NACJ

Nevada Attorneys for Criminal Justice

President

John Piro

Vice President – South

Randolph M. Fiedler

Vice President – North

Walter Fey

Secretary

Sarah Hawkins

Treasurer

Maizie Pusich

Past President

Augustus Claus

Board of Directors

Paola Armeni

Robert Arroyo

Erika Ballou

Peter Cleary

Scott Coffee

Franny Forsman

Stephanie Kice

Caitlyn McAmis

Ivette Amelburu Maningo

Julia Murray

Robert O'Brien

Michael Pescetta

Marc Picker

Randall Pike

Lisa Rasmussen

Lori Teicher

Rene Valladares

Brenda Weksler

TO: Assembly Judiciary Committee

FROM: Nevada Attorneys for Criminal Justice (NACJ)

DATE: March 6, 2019

RE: AB236 – Hearing March 8, 2019

Comments on AB236

Support for AB236

Basis for Support

NACJ is, on balance, supportive of AB236. AB236 is the product of a thorough, detailed review of Nevada's criminal justice system. While NACJ does not agree with everything about the bill, on balance it is a strong compromise which will update Nevada law, save \$640 million, and make the system more effective and fair.

The process behind the bill should especially be highlighted. AB236 is the product of the Advisory Commission on the Administration of Justice, a group of stakeholders from across the criminal justice system. This bill benefited from input by representatives of judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, victims' advocates, prison and parole/probation officials, and legislators. The members of the Commission are Democrats, Republicans, and non-partisans.

The ACAJ did not act alone in formulating this bill; it was assisted by the Crime and Justice Institute, a respected think tank which assists states in reviewing their criminal justice statutes. This was made possible by a grant from the Justice Reinvestment Initiative, a federal program initially started under the second Bush administration and whose involvement was requested by a joint appeal from then-Governor Sandoval, the leaders of the Senate and Assembly, and then-Chief Justice Douglas. This bill is the end result of

a wide-ranging debate and discussion, and reflects a substantial degree of political and policy consensus, both within the state and within the US as a whole. Put another way, this bill is not just a set of abstract ideas that Commission members had; it is backed up by hard data and driven by empirical research into the best practices that other states are using. The goal of this bill is to rationalize Nevada's practices according to what works, and to bring us in line with the broad political consensus of the rest of the country.

Not everyone on the Commission agreed with the final result in all particulars, and for that matter, NACJ does not agree with this bill in all particulars. But compromise is necessary to obtain consensus. The measures in this bill are the ones which enjoyed a broad amount of support by many stakeholders, and which are most strongly supported by the facts. The minor quibbles that NACJ (or anyone else) has with this bill should not be allowed to derail a major feat of reform. AB236 is a substantial accomplishment by the Commission, and NACJ supports its passage.

Jim Hoffman
NACJ Legislative Committee