

JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM ASSESSMENT AND REINVESTMENT TASK FORCE

Friday, May 17, 2019 ♦ Noon – 2pm
Capitol Judicial Center – 2nd Floor Conference Room
1 Court Street, Augusta

MEETING TRANSCRIPT

Introduction of the Chief Justice by Ned Chester

The children of Maine have had no stronger advocate than Chief Justice Saufley over the last 20 years and you all know her. You know her for the judge she is. You know her for the wonderful human being she is. How generous with her time. Generous with her thoughts and always putting the children first. So thank you Chief Justice, thank you for being here.

Welcome by Chief Justice Leigh Saufley

Thank you Ned. I've been trying to for years to get Ned to say the lovely and talented Chief Justice. And he never does it.

I am so excited, and I will give you some history in minute. But to see, and look around this table, and all the talent and commitment that is at this table, is unbelievable we can accomplish anything so all we need to do is focus on priorities and we can get this done.

Before I give you just a little bit of context about how we got here and where I hope we're going I would very much appreciate it if we could go around the table and have each give you give us your name and very briefly why you are here.

1. Kim Smith, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Labor (designee)
2. Margaret Micolichek, Restorative Justice Project, Belfast. Currently working in Long Creek.
3. Atlee Riley, Attorney at Disability Rights Maine
4. Ned Chester, Chair of JJAG and defense attorney focused on juvenile defense.
5. State Senator Susan Deschambault, Biddeford, Chair of the Criminal justice and Public Safety Committee.
6. Lindsey Tweed, President Maine Council of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (convening organization of the Coalition for the Advancement of Child and Adolescent Mental Health)
7. Michael Sauschuck, Commissioner of Public safety
8. Malory Shaughnessy, Deputy Director Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services
9. Greg Bowers, Executive Director, Day One
10. State Representative Patrick Corey, Windham, Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee
11. Jeff McCabe, Maine State Employees Association - represents workers at Long Creek
12. Jill Allen, Regional Director of NFI North, President of Child and Family Provider Network
13. Caroline Hova, Family Division Manager at Administrative Office of the Courts (designee)
14. Christine Thibeault, Juvenile Prosecutor Cumberland County, JJAG

15. Tessa Mosher, Director of Victim Services, Department of Corrections
16. Tessy Seward, sitting in for Margot Fine, Co-Directors of Maine Inside Out
17. Julia Sleeper, Co-founder, Tree Street Youth, Lewiston
18. Sarah Gagne Holmes, Deputy Commissioner of DHHS (designee)
19. Allison Beyea, Executive Director, ACLU of Maine
20. State Representative Charlotte Warren, Hallowell, House Chair Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee
21. State Representative Victoria Morales, South Portland, Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee, state and local government attorney.
22. Colin O'Neill, Associate Commissioner, Department of Corrections
23. Randy Liberty, Commissioner of Corrections
24. Jill Ward, Maine Center for Juvenile Policy and Law associated with the Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic at the University of Maine School of Law.
25. Representative Michael Brennan, Portland, Education and Cultural Affairs Committee Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee.
26. Rodney Mondor, Dean of Students at USM, parent voice.
27. State Representative Rachel Talbot Ross, Judiciary and Health and Human Services Committees, committed to ending incarceration and reinvest money in way our values dictate.

Absent: Commissioner of Education (or designee); Sen. Marianne Moore (R- Calais); State Rep. David Haggan (Hampden); Mary Bonauto, GLAD; Zack Gregoire (Biddeford), formerly system-involved youth

Chief Justice Leigh Saufley:

What an incredible group of people to solve the problem that we all know is out there and I think we all have a really good idea of the kinds of things we can do to get to the next level of improvement. I am here because I have been asked to open the meeting. I believe it is because I am the oldest person in the room and I remember things that some of you all don't remember.

But before I talk about those things. I want put this for a moment in governmental context because it is critically important for all in this room and members of the public who see the launch of this work to understand that in Maine we all come together to solve problems.

We may have different perspectives, different histories, different ages, but we all come together to try to make the world a better place. It doesn't always happen this way in other areas. We have, I've lost count, of how many legislators we have at the table in the middle of what I would call the busy season. We have a governor who has just recreated the children's cabinet and announced 2 priorities: early child care and doing the work that needs to be done for our youth.

With the governor paying attention, with the legislature at the table, I have committed the judicial branch to doing whatever is necessary that is fair and impartial to make this work. That is government at its best. And I feel that whenever one of these task forces start a great sense of optimism. The reality in Maine is that that optimism has been born out. So, let me to drag

you backward in to the way back machine. 10 points for anyone remembers who invented the way back machine.

Almost 10 years ago an earlier a Juvenile Justice task force was formed to address serious problems we had with regard to the government's response to the challenges of our youth. That task force was also had a triumvirate leading, the lead by executive branch through Karen Baldacci, the University of Maine school of law through professor Chris Northrup, and I had the honor of representing the judicial branch at the table. As you know this time we have placed all of the pressure on Commissioner Liberty, Representative Brennan and Jill Ward. So ten years from now these will be these are the people who got us moving.

So let's talk about what was going on 10 years ago other than that my knees were better. We were 10 years ago really seriously concerned with the number of our children who were incarcerated, the number of kids who were leaving school, some of them were expelled. Remember zero tolerance, remember some of those days. Some very bad things were happening in very good schools, with people of very good will not understanding what was happening to our youth as a result of some of those policies.

So the task force worked over the course of a year and they worked very hard. And there were with 10 recommendations. The reality was there were about 3 buckets into which the recommendations fell. The first bucket was to look at the proven benefits of education, and to keep kids in school. In bucket number one we looked to improve the graduation rates to 90% and then to 95% by 2020. We looked to reducing drop-out rates, to addressing those draconian zero tolerance rules which had the exact opposite effect that we were all hoping for. We wanted to reduce expulsions and create much more effective truancy responses. And we looked at early education and at creating diverse pathways for kids in high schools.

The second bucket was to reduce reliance on commitment and incarceration of youth and the bench mark we set was to reduce detention rates by 50% within 5 years.

The third was the need to create a meaningful continuum of care and resources for our youth in our communities. We published the call to action in May 2010 and everyone went to work. Its 10 years later, we have hit 2 of those benchmarks with a vengeance. The graduation rate of Maine students in this last year was 93%. And while we still have some work to be done in creating more pathways for youth and preparing them for the workplace, that improvement to the graduation rate is a serious improvement.

Second the detention rates, now I'm trying to remember, Colin referred to it as secured confinement. And that's from years of looking in the dictionary for words to that explain when we send our kids to jail. And yet I think we ought to call it what it is. And yet, over that 10 year period, we have reduced the number of our kids that we are sending to jail from the point where was something like over 300 kids a day, which was horrific. We are now at approximately 50 kids and only 8 of whom are girls, and that number is dropping all the time. That is an extraordinary story of success.

However, just before we get to my however, so let me just say the graduation rates are up. The number of kids sending to jail is way down. We should take a moment and congratulate

everyone who had any part in those successes because they are real and meaningful and they have made a difference in the world.

[Round of applause]

Now the however, we have a long way to go for our youth. We all know that. Every one of us in some different way in our lives understand that we are still not providing our youth what they need when they need it. So going back to one of the key recommendations from the report and it is why I believe we are here today. The recommendation was for a much more extensive set of community based treatment and placement options, to the extent possible, home like placement options for youth. And that has not been accomplished.

As the judges in this state will tell you the need for a greater range of youth services has gone unmet for too long. Only a robust continuum of community based programs can ensure that Maine's youth will receive individualized treatment that is appropriate to that child's needs. Determining how to provide that continuum is going to require data, updated analysis of the treatment and placements types that work, and a focus on outcomes so that we are using scarce Maine dollars to their very best value for our youth.

I just want to repeat working together we have accomplished a lot, but there is a lot more to be done. I will shortly turn it over to Jill to get down to the hard work. But I want to leave you with several things to consider along the way.

First, Do no harm. That means a lot in this area. Be very careful that well intended solutions don't actually hurt kids and families.

Second, we have an opportunity in Maine to really get on top of the problem of disproportionate minority involvement in law enforcement now. As the numbers are increasing and we are all focusing on this we need to be very very careful that we are watching for that.

Third, please pay attention to the LGBTQ community. We are beginning to see data that tells us that some of these kids are at the highest risk at every setting. And I ask you to keep an eye on that as we are moving forward.

You know my constant mantra. I have two of them. You manage what you measure and you are about to measure some very important aspects of what we're doing. If you've got a problem get a plan. Dithering and wining has never actually solved a problem. Now, I hear my mother when I say this. But we have a problem; we have seen that planning has actually worked in the past. Let's focus on this problem for the continuum of care in the communities and we will have success as we have had in the past. And finally thank you, thank you all for caring.

Jill Ward:

I'm going to sit because we want to make this an initial conversation; we want to get to know each other and we want to understand what brought us to the table. You all were sent the agenda to have a little bit of dialogue about your vision, and what you'd like to see the taskforce do, and quite frankly what questions you think need to be explored that have not been explored to date so that we are making the most informed decisions as a group. So we're going to get to that.

But, we thought it would be useful before we do that, to have the Commissioner or Assistant Commissioner give an update of where things are. We heard some statistics from the chief justice, but where the state of things lay with the department and then we are going to hear from Representative Brennan who is one of the people that got us started with the legislation that he introduced. And then we will dive right into a conversation.

Commissioner Randall Liberty:

I want to thank Representative Brennan he's the catalyst for this, for this to happen. And his vision has made this come to play, so thank you. I want to take a minute and have some folks in the crowd introduce themselves, we have some key stakeholders back there in the room

Stakeholders in the room:

Brennan Coup?, Probation officer

Mike Freysinger, Maine Youth Court, juvenile diversion program

Susan Sharon, Maine Public Radio [recording]

Megan Sway, Policy Counsel, ACLU

Anna Black, DOC Director of Strategic Initiatives

Marianne McCue, volunteer at Long Creek, head of the Friends of Long Creek

Emmy Brown, volunteer at Long Creek

Rita Furlow, Senior Policy Analyst, Maine Children's Alliance

Josh Clukey, Maine Youth Justice and Portland Outright

Osgood, Executive Director, Portland Outright, representing the Maine Youth Justice campaign

Jay Pennell, Juvenile Justice Specialist, JJAG

Commissioner Liberty:

We're here because we believe in diversion, we believe in community based treatment, we believe in all of that. We believe in smartly reinvesting our money where it's the most effective and most impactful in the community.

I've had the privilege of being in law enforcement and corrections for 37 years, so I've been on the street for long time on the road, I've done SRO work in the schools I was a sheriff and Warden in the deep end, where we don't want kids to lie, and now I'm serving as Commissioner. So, I've seen every angle of this over the last 4 decades. And I want to do what we can to make a difference. We have a great opportunity to do that. We have the will of the Governor, the Chief Justice and the Criminal Justice Committee. We can do this, and it can be something we look back on and be proud of.

Currently at Long Creek we have 50 kids. So when the Chief Justice said we had 300 ten years ago, significant work on the part many people in this room. Now of those 50 today, 33 committed and 21 detained. If you go there now you will see it's a nearly empty building. It was built original for 220 adults and there are only 50 kids there so there is a lot of space and a lot of room. The folks there are doing a great job. And I would invite all of you, while we are doing this committee work, it would be very helpful to spend some time there. We can give you a tour. Contact my office and we can bring you down there it's a great field trip. You'll have opportunity to speak to the children and staff. Totally transparent, come spend some time. Great point of reference from there.

One of the bills people are talking about and we will be having a public hearing on, is to have adult females brought to long creek we have 130 empty beds and we feel as if we can program the women better from there and we will have a discussion about that. There are people all over the place that have opinions and positions on that bill and I look forward to talking with you all about that at the public hearing and the work session. Colin any comments?

Colin O'Neill:

On the juvenile side of the house we are in the process of opening up towards the middle or end of June a staff safe house just off grounds of Long Creek. It is our commitment to look at youth at Long Creek that don't need to be in secure confinement and giving them a more normative, community-based experience. It's a huge leap to go from Long Creek to the community. So the staff have done a great job getting that ready and we are excited. That is going to add to less kids in secured confinement. In the immediate future, even this summer, we are still plugging along in reducing those numbers.

Jill: Thank you both very much. Representative Brennan,

Representative Michael Brennan:

I want to make one note. I want to thank the legislators for being here because as already mentioned everyone is very busy and we have a busy month coming up. In 1993, I was MSW student at the University of New England, and Colin and I were classmates. He was the better student and that's why he's the deputy commissioner now, and I wasn't so that's why I'm at the legislature.

I worked at Day One at the Maine Youth Center and at that point we had 250 kids between committed and hold for court. And unfortunately at that time we were using physical restraint isolation and other methods that we now recognized were fairly primitive and something we don't want to go back to. In 2000, I chaired the speakers' advisory committee on educational programming at the Maine Youth Center. And unfortunately there were two schools in the state that did not achieve school approval one was Maine Youth Center and Baxter School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing so we spent a whole summer how we can improve the educational programming at Maine Youth Center, now I'm pleased to say that it has improved substantially.

But as we sit here today, I believe that we have a historic moment, when we have 50 youth committed and hold for court. Now, we can develop a community based program to support and to work with and provide appropriate treatment and care for those 50 youth in a setting that is not a jail or incarceration. So I'm very excited having this group here and to have this discussion and my hope is by January, February next year we will have a very clear plan for the legislature that they will immediately endorse and that we will be able to move forward.

I also want to thank Commissioner Liberty. When I put the bill in January/ February, thinking it would go through the normal legislative process, which would mean this group would not have met till September or maybe October. But Commissioner Liberty stepped forward and said let's go forward with this now, the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee said we have the funding for this to staff the group and have expertise from national experiences across the country and so

we said let's go ahead and get started. So that's why we're here and have this opportunity now, and we have not had to wait to go through the legislative process. That gives us more time to work and be a little more thoughtful, but also put together something that in the end that will be endorsed by other stakeholders that will be a part of this discussion.

Jill Ward:

I'm going to talk just a few minutes about the process and give you a little bit of information; the Chief Justice stole a little bit of my thunder because I was going to harken back to the 2010 task force report and that third recommendation about developing a continuum of community based alternatives that never really was realized and we've regressed in a lot of ways so we want to revisit that. So this is not a redo, these groups feel like the same old same old sometimes but really want to pick up from those learnings and build on other learnings we've had since 2010. We've had the JJAG funded audit of long creek that came with the recommendation that was to do this very task force. The work we've done with my colleagues at USM on Place Matters, also the summit we had in November 2017 also came up with the need to have a central decision making body, to pull all the info together, to get best practices, get all voices at table who are impacted by the system and get them to contribute to what that would look like. So Representative Brennan's bill, the work of the JJAG, a lot of the work all of you, has kind of brought us to this point where we can to focus in and realize the third recommendation and really take the next step.

We are right in the middle of reform that is happening nationally, we are not the only state that is grappling with these issues. Juvenile incarceration is down, juvenile crime is down. There were no super predators, there were just a lot of troubled kids and families and communities that needed support. So if we can do this, if we can get the number down to zero, if we can meet the needs of these families, we will be at the cutting edge of what is happening. I'm really proud of us for coming together to do what needs to be done for our kids. So next step and before we go around, I'll revisit what the idea was that the chairs and I had talked about.

We are going to have a national consulting group really staffing the work. The consultant will be helping us with the group to collect the right information, to ask the right questions, through a variety of tools. We are going to have public forums, we are going to have a survey tool, we are going to have interviews. There are going to be a bunch of different methods. So I'd be interested in after this meeting getting everyone's insight on how are we going to create a feedback loop so that this task force is really engaged with the consulting group. I really see us as the collective that knows what is happening on the ground and to be able to steer the work. We have received those proposals, four of them, and will be reviewing them next Friday. The idea is to have them on board by the June meeting.

I really want you to think about your role and think about that young person and just authentically talk about, in 3 minutes, your perspective on what you want to see the task force do, questions you have, or your vision of the system you want to see at the end. Pick one of those questions and this information will be some of the preliminary information that will contribute to whoever we have to help structure how we will be most helpful for the process.

Zack could not be here today who is the youth representative. He in I have been in dialogue and he is going to share his answers to these questions with us. He will be a really important voice for this process. That is going to be reflected in the information from today even though he is not here.

Those of you who know me know I love when everybody works together. You all get to know that if you don't know me already. I often think there is more opportunity for agreement than we all think there is and we just have to trust and let go a little bit and come together at the table and focus on the goal that's in the center. Which isn't anybody's job or anybody's reputation, it is the outcomes for these kids. And when we do that we get to some really good places, has been my experience.

So, I'm coming with the hope that we really can have a system that looks at all kids the same way and responds to their needs in a "what does this kid need" way and how do we get it for them collectively. And it might mean their family and it might mean more than just them. Trying to think about the needs and the outcomes in that way is my hope for this task force.

Randy Mondor

First of all as a parent who has gone through this I want to commend many of the people here for their agencies and of course the justice system who has been instrumental in helping my son, who was a challenge to the system. So there is a lot that that's there and I think my son has tried them all. For me I guess as we look at the reform, I sometimes think we see the wound and we want to fix it but we don't look for where it is or how it got there. And I particularly think for my son, it was for me... and I'm in higher education, but having a kid you don't have a manual... it was the pre- stuff, when he was k-6 there were times where I would think that something is not right and the medical professionals would say it's in your head he's a boy, or the teachers would say oh it's just a boy, their adolescent, he's just moody.

I would get this all the time and was made to feel I was overreacting so by the end he was so depressed. By the time we figured it out it was too late and in high school he was self-medicating. As we look at that, it's easy to look at this, but as we start to go down, peel the onion a bit and try to get there beforehand to try and cut that down because there are a lot of kids who just didn't know and there is a lot of parents who just didn't know what to do.

Particularly, looking at our school in Portland, our PTA did nothing but fundraise, and I would say when are we going to teach parents how to be parents. And they would say, we don't have time for that you know, we got to raise money for books! And so I think there is a lot of missed opportunities to get people more connected and to help. I think that is what I want to see as we look at reform.

Kim Smith (DOL designee)

My hope for the task force is similar to the things you both said the whole family approach to supporting the youth. It's the youth needs and that the family is with them so everyone is moving forward. From the dept of labor perspective, we know that a solid job is one of the most important things keeping people out of the system and so we are happy to be part of this and do what we can do to support those families. For a recommendation, whatever we put in place should be scalable. We've had a good economy for a long period of time, so whatever we

have should be able to expand on when the economy begins to turn because that's when we tend to see higher rates of offenses.

Margaret Micolich

I ditto a lot that's already been said. But really looking at the continuum of care and early intervention and that we do follow the young people that we encounter whether that's in the courts entering a diversion and when they leave long creek I really putting something in place to following hem including their mentors if that's what's needed. I feel we just drop them when they leave and sending them back to the place that brought them into long creek. And the other piece is that I also with restorative justice project, have worked with court diversion program, in Midcoast area, and we currently have a DA that's really interested in bringing restorative justice into the process and doing the victim offender piece. A colleague of mine was in the court yesterday and closed 9 cases with 9 juveniles, and of 9 only one had a biological parent present. The rest were in some other kind of care. So was that care sufficient? Where are they living? And what else do they really need? That whole family component too approach. And I agree it's a holistic when we are looking at these young people we need to look at them for everything that is part of their life and what's going on for them so we can support them.

My other hope is that when we do hit the end of this task force and work we've done is that we continue to have communication so that we can know where we are in that process. It takes that continued check in and that interaction to know we are on track and carrying out those directives forward, and then bringing in as new stuff arises, so that we are constantly moving forward.

I also do work in schools and changing the mindset of those schools on suspensions as the tool to change behavior is so frustrating. How do we bring those educators along to say that actually, suspensions and expulsions shouldn't even be an option. And figuring out how to work with them [the kids] in schools, and keep them in contact, for the most part, with what can be a supportive environment. Big vision is I think we can do it. I think we've done well since 2010. I'm in Long Creek and I think there is a good climate down there too.

Atlee Riley

I agree with everything that has been said. My vision for the system is simple, and one where we just take title to our kids. I've just experienced, through eyes of my clients, kids being passed around and people just feeling/saying that its someone else's job. I don't know how you do that but I think there just needs to be just an understand that kids aren't failing, we are failing them. Any time you look back far enough you see the pre-school expulsions; you see the unmet mental health needs. It doesn't take me long moving back through one of those files to see a lot of roads not taken. So I think that's my vision for our current system is that we stop passing kids around program to program, department to department, and that we own it.

Ned Chester

2 outcomes are really principles we should operate under: First, these are our children, if families can take care of them that's great, if not they are our children we have a responsibility to take charge and make sure they get what they need. I would suggest as a model, the first purpose of the juvenile code: to secure for each juvenile subject to these provisions such care

and guidance, preferable in the child's own home, such care and guidance as will best serve the child's welfare and the interests of society.

I think Christine said the same thing, healthy kids make or a healthy community. I think it's all right there, it creates an affirmative obligation, not to suggest plans or services, but to secure for every juvenile those services that are necessary, preferably in their own home, that's where we want them, but if that's not working we have an obligation to do what we need to do. And finally, to best serve the interests of the community and the child, I think it is a high standard so I think it is all right there.

My second principle would be to adopt the Ross Creedence standard: all children including those who break the law will do well if they can and if they are not doing well it's because we have not given them the skills to do well or we've not created an environment in which they can use these skills.

And I like this because it really crystalizes what I've seen over the last 35 years. One of the questions I ask each of my clients this question, if I were all powerful and could do anything to give you anything in the world. And these are kids in trouble with the law. The overwhelming requests are I wish I could find a house that was big enough so that all my family could be there, I wish my grandma hadn't died, I wish my parents got along, I want a good job when I grow up, I want to be able to have a good family.

Those are our values. They want what we want. By and large, that's where these kids are, they just can't execute. They don't have the skills. They would do well if they could. And frankly I think the same is true of their parents and caregivers. I think people are really out there struggling to do their very best.

My third goal is more concrete. I'm delighted that the Children's Cabinet is back I think getting people at highest levels to say these are issues are not DOC, dept of education, dept of labor, but issues we all need to take a piece of. I want that brought down to the very local level. When we have a child in trouble whether its problems at school, or problems in the juvenile justice system we need to bring those people to the table we need a team that includes whoever it is. Those people all need to be at the table.

A child who is expelled from school solves the schools problem but it doesn't resolve what we need in the community and the same if a therapist says well he didn't show up three times so I'm discharging him, that solves their billing problem but it doesn't help the kids that we're responsible for. And that teen needs to meet regularly, develop plans, hold each other accountable for what they promised to do.

And we need to fund these teens with flexible funds so that if all we got is residential and that is not enough, we need to find out what else needs to be done. If this family needs something specific that we think will work, we need flexible money that is not MaineCare money, that is available to fill those rolls and gaps so that we can have individualized plans and individualized solutions for each of these families.

Senator Susan Deschambault

I take notes too, and I've listened to everybody. The first thing is one of the goals is to close Long Creek, so that's decriminalizing why we put kids in there. I'm co-chair with Rep Warren of Criminal Justice Committee, she is a strong advocate of closing and decriminalizing and not getting kids locking up. I'm very much old school, we are very much yin and yang.

So the last time I dealt with this issue, was 1974 in the juvenile code. I worked with juveniles who came from all over there were over 150 young girls at Stevens School and over 250 at boys training center. Kids were sent there for being incorrigible, defined you failed at 3 foster homes. Truancy, run away, danger of falling into vice and immorality and lewd behavior. The other thing I wanted to say is you know, someone made reference to 10 years ago there was a task force, and maybe I don't know this, I don't know if people were talking 10 years ago about student homelessness, couch surfing, what are we seeing now, you know things change rapidly. I know in Biddeford we've had many discussions with superintendent who's very concerned there are over 80 high students who are homeless.

Now I go to my next point, I'm very involved with city government. I'm very lucky to have a 35 year old son who is on the school committee and we talk about the same issues. There is no one here that represents a municipality and the municipalities always say don't send the kids back, and schools are the same way. What the juveniles are experiencing right now is so much better than what they were experiencing in the 70s/80s/90s, when the community did not welcome them back.

Oh! This one is to the Commissioner of Corrections, because I told him this, let's not forget the children of women who are incarcerated today more than 200 women. When I told you about my career, after working with the juveniles for 4 years I said I'm going to work with the adults. I thought that was easier. I did a lot of studies and work on women, how many children they had, how many under the age of 18 with who are they living with, what kind of communication have they had. Corrections can start joining in on that.

You can talk about the kids you don't know, but you know the kids of the women who you are incarcerating. I'm talking women, but here are 1800 men also and they are parents also. I know the horror stories, some of them as young as 6th grade because their parent is in jail. As I told you, I'm glad someone mentioned not expelling or suspending students. This is where I'm very proud my son stopped [the school] from expelling a student. So I guess 35 is young to be on a school board because he said the average age is 62. So you know so those are the kinds of things I wanted to throw out there. I'll admit I'm very much of the old school. Forgive me, I've heard this we've done it, it works a little.

The best part I like, and thank you Representative Brennan, and what the bill says, we are going to look at the use of incarceration, we are going to seek input from juvenile justice stakeholders. We are going to plan to close Long Creek by 2022. But this one is good too, so after you close Long Creek, you're going to develop recommendations for reinvestment of the corrections funds that we're already spending putting them inside and putting them in community based programs aren't we? And that's where Criminal Justice Committee comes in. So if we were convinced, and we pass it then we go to appropriations. That is taking the money we were already spending, which is 14 million, but for one child it's \$350,000 each, so my ears are burning so anyways thank you for listening.

Dr. Lindsey Tweed

Today I'm representing the Maine Council of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. DOC in a recent survey in a documented that almost all have behavioral health diagnoses. MCAP strongly congratulations DOC for decriminalizing behavioral health disorders. Youth incarceration, as Chief Justice Saufley mentioned in our state has decreased over 90% in 20 years and we look forward to working together on continued progress.

Unfortunately during the time DOC was making this progress, there's been no concurrent increase in our capacity child mental health system of care to safely treat youth with mental health issues and aggression. A rose is a rose by any other name and when we decriminalize the rose the rose will still be with us. Since youth law breaking behavior is substantially a public health problem we want to apply the principles of the public health pyramid in which we truly to maximize the effect of early intervention.

At the foundation we want to improve on the social determinatives of health such as decreasing child and family poverty, and increasing parental substance abuse disorder treatment. And we want to have the best home based treatment programs possible, and we want to maximize restorative justice capacity. But even after all that some youth will need treatment in secure programs.

As DOC is decreasing incarceration there has been 0 increase in capacity in our psychiatric hospitals or in state residential treatment programs to service youth within corrections. That is why we have 55 youth in out of state residential treatment. That is why we have youth piling up emergency dept for extended stays. All youth with extended stays in emergency departments are there for aggression. EDs are in fact the new detention facilities. When parents, educators or residential program personnel get concerned about public safety they look for locked facility with a security guard that can't say no. These days that facility is the ED where youth are often kept for one or more weeks, with no due process, and also to follow the Chief Justice, there is no accurate count of that. We have no idea. Everybody knows it's a lot, but we cannot manage that.

Coordination between DOC and DHHS will be crucial. Doc and DHHS leadership needs to work closely together on the treatment of youth with b h problems under its direction. As a DHHS employee since 2006-2015 it's my belief that that has not in the past happened. It's been my impression that the lack of engagement has come from DHHS and the DHHS has not I want to say, though now that Deputy Commissioner Gagne Holmes has just got to work, we want to say our coalition has been very impressed with how DHHs has taken up the PCG, public consulting group, report on child behave health.

And heretofore, DHHS has not acknowledged its responsibility to care for and treat youth with behavioral health diagnoses and aggression. In most states the division of juvenile services is in the same department as other child serving agencies. Having the department of juvenile services outside of DHHS is a set up for cost and responsibility shifting. If we are going to maintain our current structure we must develop sturdy process for DOC and DHHS to do joint strategic planning.

Child psychiatrists are devoted to keeping youth in their homes and community and out of institutions. Because after all secure treatment programs are institutions even outside of prison. But when public safety becomes a concern, some youth will need treatment in secure facility. Let's work together to make our total institutionalization rate, that would be incarceration plus secure mental health treatment, amount the very lowest in the land.

But let's not pretend we can get it to 0. If we pretend we can we can do so, we will continue to detain youth in Emergency departments in this state for weeks at a time. So I do think that if the juvenile justice community and the task force come together we can do better.

Representative Rachel Talbot Ross

I'm going to take a slightly different pathway here because we've heard great suggestions and ideas. I'm going to talk about the fact that we need to be able to tackle the elephant in the room. We need to be able to tackle systemic racism. I'm not just talking about DMC numbers. But one system touches the other, we cannot just focus on the 50 youth or the women who are incarcerated and understand that the totality of how we need to address what we are talking about.

If you look around the room, the governor's staff, if you look at who on the Children's Cabinet, if you look at who's on the climate change cabinet, if you look at who's on the substance use cabinet, if you look at who's in the pipeline for who is going to be in those rolls, there is no one that looks like me. We have to be able to name this. We are looking at a problem or problems and we don't have the language to think about them or to look at them or approach them or frame them in an intersectional way. We lack the courage to do so. We lack the political will to do so and if we are really going to reform, it means we might have to invest in communities that you all aren't familiar with. We must put investment in those communities to help deliver services. Because we have good policies we have good law. The implementation and practice looks different than them.

So we've got to be able to have the courage I think to lead this state in being able to talk about criminal justice and justice reform in ways that do not continually isolate communities further, disparities, and relegate decision making to one or two gate keepers for those communities. We've got to have some courage. We already know what we know. We've got report after report after report. I hope this is not a process for redundancy. I'm really concerned with the work that people are currently doing around juvenile justice reform and does that just get placed on hold for this process to take place.

We can debate some steps right now in this legislative session. Does that get put on hold while we pontificate for the next couple months, when we could take and make some real change? I just am, I guess frustrated with the lack of ability to really take on what is at the heart of this, which is racism. To be able to go to the root of where the problem is, and to see branches from there, for us to have the courage to go to that root.

I want to applaud particularly the leadership in the Criminal Justice Committee. That committee is doing more work than any other committee in the state legislature quite frankly. And the leadership of that committee is extraordinary. Just unprecedented. I hope we can support the work they are currently doing and lead with courage.

Commissioner Mike Sauschuck

It's incredibly important for me to be here on the public safety side of things. I can say that when I have conversations about the adult system as it is, at this point in my career I look back 20 years before that, so how do we get here? We got here when aces and trauma happened when people were kids. People who are in our charge, which has been mentioned repeatedly already on this side of the room and I know will follow today. This is an opportunity for us to get and work with that group, people that are the most vulnerable in our communities.

When I look at these issues I think of more and more of comprehensive wraparound style approaches. Because Ned mentioned it, but if someone doesn't have a roof over their head, doesn't have food in their bellies, how are they going to school? How are they acting? how are they interacting with their families? And how that starts a lot of other things in their worlds. And that's the comprehensive style approach that I want to look at.

I will tell you that street cops are incredibly frustrated by the system as it currently exists or doesn't exist lack of system as it currently exists. And they do that because they legitimately want to walk into these houses and be helpful, and they want to help save lives, and they want to be part of the solution. What it currently amounts to is kind of a black hole without any options, and you get that call on the radio and you know you are going to go and stand in the living room and say what are we going to do?

I do believe that more and more every day in this country and this state that we have law enforcement at all levels that want to divert people, youth, adults, people suffering from mental health issues. Want to divert people out of the system, out of ERs, out of jails out of shelters. We want to put people back on a path to health and wellness, the long term solution. But yet, they still stand around and say where are we diverting them to? What system, what program currently exist for us to do that? And we are lacking at all levels in that conversation.

And there are street cops that mean well, and I own this fact, that we have taken people to jail that don't belong in jail. And we take them to jail because we believe they are going to die overnight from a suicide attempt, or accidental overdose and that is a terrible option for us to utilize. But we do it consciously at times because you look at that and go what else are we going to do? And we do that in a collaborative approach at times with doctors and defense attorneys and DA's. What can we do, we have a group of community providers half this size sitting around talking about one particular instance, what can we do?

What we are going to do is if we get a chance to arrest someone for a quality of life issue, they are going to jail so that we don't pick them up in a ditch tomorrow or under a bridge or jumping off a bridge or any of those situations. And those are terrible situations for anyone to be in, for families to be in, for providers to be in, and or law enforcement that want to do the right things to be in. so that's the reality that cops on street are find themselves in every day.

It's not 100% of them, I know I get it. But, it is the majority of cops that I work with every day. When I talk to chiefs and sheriffs those are the conversations that people want to have. They want to be a part of the solution. And that's why we are here . This is clearly another situation

where you pay now or you pay later and you take care of your kids on the front end, so that they can have a long healthy life on the back end. And that is the key for me.

Malory Shaughnessy

I also sat on the 10 years past task force. What I really want to see this task force achieve is that last piece, and I like the way the Chief Justice stated that, community based continuum system of care that's going to provide the needs for these youth and their families so that we don't end up with them heading toward incarceration. We did well with some of the pieces from the earlier task force, but that is a huge undone, uncompleted task. So that to me is one of the biggest things.

I think the Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services is community based safety net providers of behavioral health care across state and some here and others not here that I want to bring a voice forward at the table as well. But I see all the time that they are trying to meet needs in their communities, they are trying to respond to things. You know we've got more than 500 kids on waitlist for home and community treatment.

We have not invested quite frankly in that system and we are still not investing in that system. Our budget does not have investments in that system. That is coming forth right now. And that is a great concern for me for as we look to how do we address these issues and how do we move this forward. We have examples of truly evidenced based services that directly impact these youth that are at risk. Multi-systemic therapy, family functional therapy, that in part the DOC has sometimes granted and provided funding to try and keep those providers afloat doing those services. And again we have not invested in it. We don't have anyone doing it now in Aroostook and Washington counties. Mercy mental health had to stop, they just continued to lose funding doing this service.

We are at risk of losing those services in York and Cumberland County. Those are the kind of mental health services that cost more, but the return on the investment is huge and researched. And I know that it works, but we are not investing in that and I think we have to have a serious conversation about that.

We pay for these youth when we have to, when they're brought into the ED we have to, when they're brought into jail, and picked up on the street, are taken from their homes. We have to because they are already in our system or incarcerated. But we are not investing in them. We're going to get much better results if we do and I think that's what the real key is.

My vision of a reform system is that youth and families are getting the help that they need in their home communities and we cannot not talk about the adults when we talk about the juvenile justice system because we know that often there's interactions there that are leaving these kids to the situation that they're in. So supporting those adults has to be something we talk about and address.

I think somebody mentioned the DOC and DHHS really and public safety really need, it's got to be that combined look. I think we have to really talk about investing in the system.

Greg Bowers

So many common themes we're hearing and going to continue to hear. First what I hope the task force achieve, 1) an actionable plan. But more importantly one that recognizes and values the long term return on investment that we're going to have to make. That's so hard to do in an environment that is responding to crisis. And it seems with the opioid crisis and all the other problems we're facing, it seems that's where our attention and our money goes.

To be honest I don't think we are going to get ahead of this unless we make upstream investments and it may take a long time to see the benefits, but that's the only way our hands around this to change trends.

Day One is unique in that it has a real focus on this population and it sees kids in a lot of different settings. Offices, schools, Long Creek, residential setting. And I polled my clinical leadership in the fields to say what would your vision be and I got overwhelmed by how complicated their world is and all the challenges and how fractured things are. So it seems like that our workers do such a good job treating an episode of care or crises but yet don't know what happens after the fact. So it really points to a disconnected fragmented system.

When I think about a vision, I try to really simplify it and not be so overwhelmed. And I wrote an integrated system of care and support that provides youth and family pathways to achieve long term stability and success.

We feel like you have to look at the long game. That you have to invest for the future. So not only how are we funding services in our residential programs or outpatient program, but how to do make sure the after care programs are funding. How do you make sure the families are getting the care that they need? And those investments are the kinds that are going to change these trends.

Representative Patrick Corey

I have a very lean resume when it comes to juvenile justice, I don't even have kids. I'm a big blank slate. What I am is a big supporter of the Dept of Corrections and the criminal justice system in general. I have a great amount of empathy that the people have to do. I have had numerous people in front of our committee hurt and traumatized talking about people that actually have to do this work with youth and everything. I very much want to focus on personally on making their jobs easier and better and better when they go home and deal with what they do all day. I'll eventually ask some dumb questions. So I promise to really challenge myself with this and really plan on looking at all of you as experts on this and thank you for letting me participate.

Jeff McCabe

So as it relates to our involvement, I just want to thank the Commissioner and Representative Brennan for their interest in having the workers voice as part of this. And also to thank the Commissioner very publicly for continuing to try to work with us as he begins his process of looking at the entire system and hear the voices of the workers. I also look to the deputy commissioner today because DHHS being such a vital aspect of this entire discussion.

I think for us at MSEA as an org the reform aspect of this is rather exciting we have a social justice mission its one aspect that we believe in. At times it can be challenging for our

members, as transitions often are, but I think having open communications to have folks have clear plans laid out for them, is vitally important. I think the work our folks do with juvenile population is vital.

We represent about 13,000 public sector workers who have really been struggling for last 10 years. You see that through recruitment and retention challenges, and people cannot really carryout the jobs that they feel are vital. Besides those 13,000 individuals including with retirees. And I do work directly for Senator Deschambault as a retiree member, so I don't forget that. But also our allies and brothers and sisters in law enforcement, and if I ever have a question about what is happening in our juvenile justice system, I pick up the phone and call probation officers whether it's a question about how these bills will affect those folks. And a lot of the work I do branches well beyond MSEA, but for us it really about laying out a clear transition.

One of the most troubling experiences in my time working on legislative issues was the layoff at long creek when teachers were laid off, and it really seemed to not have any viable plan there. Just the ripple effect that that had on the population. But I look around the room, we've had supporters, we've had tough conversations about job transitions. This is not about job preservation as much as it is about figuring out what the future look likes and having that dialogue. So thank you for the invitation.

Jill Allen

I'm here representing so many people so I'm not going to take up too much time because I'll send some comments collectively. I've been working in this system and with Colin and his group for 28 years now and I've been with NFI North and I work closely with Ned and Dr. Tweed. I think a couple points that are worth noting today.

In 1997 NFI north was awarded the bid to open the 3 secure treatment programs in Maine and that was in an effort to get kids out of Long Creek or bring youth back from out of state and do a really intensive treatment program. And it was shortly after the opening the rates got cut and things just very quickly fell apart. We couldn't keep staff because our rates were paying our staff \$9 an hour. You weren't going to pay those guys \$9/hr to work with those youth. So that said we came to the table many times to talk about wraparound services someone mentioned, we went to Colorado to learn how Colorado was doing wraparound. NFI is doing wraparound right now in New Hampshire, it is a critical service for us.

We believe collectively that there is no child in the state of Maine that wants to be in the youth center that wants to be in residential treatment, they want to be at home with their families, and if they can't be with a family, then they want to be with someone family like. And we want that same thing for them. All of us that do residential treatment want them home. If there with us we want to get them home just as quickly as we can.

So I think an effort to work collaboratively with this system of care, we have to come up with a really strong plan with how to do early intervention, how to get our system to be simpler, and less confusing for parents and providers. Right now we have to do ITRT we have to do Keepro tells us you only get 45 days, they say you only get 45 days because you aren't doing family treatment, but the family doesn't have transportation to come to family treatment, so we try to

come to the homes. We just need a better system to really support our families and come up with a system that is less complicated to really do the work.

Then the last thing, I'm here really talking about foster care. We have foster care providers at our table. NFI runs Bridge Crossing that serves 5 to 12 year olds. We currently have 5 little kids in our care for the last almost 2 years because there is no foster care for them. We've got to strengthen the foster care placements. We have to.

We have to figure out, it is key, to figure out mobile crisis in this state. If we could get mobile crisis to go to the family's home and stop them going to the emergency rooms we could do such a better job keeping children in their homes. And then supporting their families who are just desperate or support. So mobile crisis just has to improve.

Lastly, we've been, as a provider group, we have had multiple meetings with the University of Maine system. We have got to develop a professional track for folks who want to work with youth. People come out UMaine or USM and they might have a degree in psychology or a degree in communications, but they don't really know how to work with youth and families. And UMaine has been great about bringing us to the table and asking how can we help you develop this track?

But there really should be a youth care worker/family specialty in our psychology departments on how to work with these families, and then we can professionalize the career path and then get them to work in the homes and then strengthen that in home treatment. I think we have 500 families on waitlist for in home care right now. We need people to go into the home to help these families.

Caroline Hova (Judiciary/Courts designee)

I'll be brief because I'm representing the courts and chief justice certainly very clearly laid out the courts hopes and dreams. The one thing that I will reiterate is the courts firm belief in the need to take a holistic approach to change. It is important to invest in a community based continuum of care so our young people never make it to court, and never see the inside of a court room. And then when they do come to court, certainly what I think what the court would like to see, is the judicial officers having a robust menu of options, so to speak, that really allows them to tailor a solution of the needs of the people and parties in front of them.

Christine Thibeault

So I'm going to echo everything that has been said but also take a different approach a little bit. By the way before I went to law school I was a mobile crisis person in Skowhegan so I've worked with kids in that capacity 25 years or more ago. So I'm going to lay a challenge I'm going to give you a measurable outcome that I think will be a measure of success of this group.

There were 4 kids out of Cumberland County that were committed in last year out of all the kids we saw in the juvenile court. Two of them argued to be committed over my objection. Let me say that again 2 out of 4 that were committed out of Cumberland County argued to go to long creek to be committed, and these are kids who had been detained so they knew what they were asking for.

They asked to be committed. One of those individuals had been at a program, she refused to go back. Another had been accepted at a residential program and refused to go. What is wrong here folks, when the kids that we are trying to serve are choosing what we don't want them to choose? So, that should be a reflection of the problems that we face. So one measure of success, I don't have to argue against a kid that wants to be committed.

By the way yesterday, an attorney came to me, would you please expedite this case on the docket, my client wants to be committed. I said I promise to expedite it, but I will not promise that I will agree to commitment. The attorney said, my client really wants to be committed. It's still happening folks. So for all we say about Long Creek, there are still youth out there that see it as the best option for them.

Second measure of success is: I don't have to argue with a director of Spring Harbor Hospital about whether the kid is going to Long Creek because he or she has assaulted a staff there, or is getting released to the shelter downtown Portland with no services.

So if we can get to a point where I don't have to argue with kids who don't want to be committed and I don't have to lose my temper with a director at a hospital because they are going to release a kid with mental health issues to the streets if I don't ask DOC to detain them, we will have made some success.

Tessa Mosher

In my role as victim advocate have worked with crime victims of all ages, crime certainly doesn't discriminate against who is being victimized. In my experience of over 20 years, I still really have tried to come up with some points that I want to get across for the victims voice. So in saying that I think I have had at least 4 drafts of just a few points, and I don't want to be like Ned, because you know Ned can talk forever.

I made my wish list and I know we're all going to have so much time to talk with one another and learn from one another, which I'm really excited about. But my wish list includes no more victims. So think about that for a minute right? No more victims. Wouldn't that be awesome? But when I say no more victims, I don't just mean victims of crime, I mean some of the youth that we are working with are also victims themselves. Whether it be reported, unreported and maybe, just maybe they're doing these things to get attention to get away from the situation that they might be in while they are being victimized at home or whatever situation they're in.

So I really think that we should invest in our youth. And I think we are all at this table saying the same thing. But I don't think we should put a dollar amount on it when we are talking about what we can do and how we can be an awesome perfect system for our kids.

I would like to have a fair system that also includes the victim's voice. I would like us to think about victim safety and community and public safety as well as the juvenile themselves. Safety while we are going through this process.

And I can tell you from talking to victims over the years that not all victims want to have a part of this process they don't want to be involved and being a voice for themselves, and some just

want the juvenile to get help. They just want to know that we as a system are doing what we can to try and reduce the chances that this young juvenile will commit another crime.

And there are other victims that are just angry, justifiable so, because of the horrific harm that has been caused to them because of what was caused to them because of what was committed as a crime to them. And I hear over and over again that victims don't want the juvenile and adults to get what they refer to as just a slap on the hand. I would ask that through this process that we keep victims in mind because they are the ones that have been harmed throughout this process. And I will do my best to be a voice for victims during this process and do my best to answer any questions anyone has.

Tessy Seward

I'm representing the Maine Inside Out at the table, my colleague Margot will join in the future. Our work at Maine Inside Out has spanned several administrations at Long Creek and the past 5 years we really expanded that work in the community of kids that have been released and doing their best to make a life for themselves in the community.

That's an incredibly vulnerable place to be and there are a lot of challenges stacked against them. Some of the same challenges they faced before they were placed in the system. Those challenges are certainly still there and now they also have the layered exacerbated impact of their years of incarceration and that impact is traumatic. It's complex for sure. But one of the aspects of it is that it's traumatic.

I want to talk about, in this space, from the perspective of youth development the needs of young people are related to their brain development, their need for belonging, and status and agency. The need to feel powerful and heard and to feel they have some sense of ability to impact their own lives and direct their own choices. Any of you who may have raised children probably can identify with the fact that that is something very difficult for adolescents is to be subject to dominance and control. The reality is that our culture and the prison model really is characterized by dominance and control. And that is a thing that we have to grapple with on so many levels.

About 6 years ago Maine Inside Out held a public symposium and the title was the culture of punishment from parenting to prisons. We held discussion groups and performances of a youth created play in contexts ranging from a private school with parents of elementary aged children, to a faith community talking about faith based concepts of punishment, to the high school in Portland. Then we also held a big public event in which the advocates against capital punishment spoke.

The point was that the concept of punishment is deeply imbedded in our culture and we know and need to lift up and echo Representative Talbot Ross's reminder to us that culture of dominance and control is deeply linked to our country's history of genocide and slavery. Until we are willing to really unpack that culture, we are continuing to respond to violence with something violent and it is not getting us where we need to be.

We cannot solve violence with violent response and we need to look at ourselves culturally as a community and we need to identify and root out the violence. We cannot expect children to

reflect a higher level of moral development and capacity that is present in the adults and the policies and the laws the government makes.

So that's a lot I know. I think that Maine Inside Out's hope for task force and for a vision of justice to come, is that it is participatory, that it is equitable, and that it is really creative with its vision by listening to the people who have experience in incarceration, listening to these people whose lives we are talking about here today. Asking them what they needed and really submitting ourselves to be responsive.

Julia Sleeper

My list got longer as I was listening to everybody. Echoing the same reflective leadership and the representation is critical to be addressed and naming explicitly. Racial justice lenses, the needs of our LGBTQ youth which I know has been stated, there is unique needs here. The responses need to be looked at but also the representation around the table of the decision makers needs to be named and reflected. And who's power in all sense, in not just words but institutionally, structures that are empowering whoever it is to make these decisions about what will impact the future of our youth.

Beyond that, related to institutional instruction and growth is also related to the schools. I love the celebration around the growth of graduation rates and I think they're valid in that regard but there are certain communities, mine in particular, that do not reflect that even remotely or even close to that. And are often times the same communities which a lot of the students are coming out of that we are talking about here. I think that is a really critical piece to look at and address. And not just potentially be well we did relatively good there let's move on [the graduation rate statewide].

There are unique pathways we are piloting a bunch right now. Lewiston in particular has a lot of opportunity to be creative because of the collaborative network of supporters and the complexity of our youth that were working with. And just to touch on the training and the work force development aspect these things. Not just of the workers directly involved, but also the educators in general of who work every day with students who are coming with significant needs.

Thinking really critically about the way, training is no longer the right term, you can train all day, people understand the concepts of these things: aces and trauma. What we're hearing more from teachers and people working with very vulnerable youth, and I can just say it because I'm not in any of these systems, is what do I do with my big feelings and my big needs and where do I go from here and no one taught me that. So I think that is a significant piece.

Where do the parents go when they don't know what else to do? What does this child do when long creek is the best option? And I would argue, to echo that, it is because its consistent. You know exactly what you are getting every single day right wrong or different, but it's true. Because every 18 months I'm the next carrot to go back home or who's gonna take me next. Kids will say this explicitly.

Circling back to the reflection around the table of the voices of those being represented. But ultimately we are talking about youth, they already have 50,000 ideas to solve this, if we would

listen and really let them use our institutional power as grown-ups and adults and as representation to then carryout their vision. Because they are not afraid to name the realities. I want to be a support in all of those areas. We have a lot of ideas, but it's because a lot of ideas come from our students.

Jill: Just to make sure we can get through everyone, if everyone could indulge us for another 5 to 10 minutes that would be really appreciated. In know everyone is on really tight schedules, if you have to go. But I wanted to acknowledge it and not to stifle the remaining reflections.

Sarah Gagne Holmes (DHHS designee)

I'm really happy to be here. I have duly noted some of the comments about collaboration, and I think that the DHHS is very committed to collaboration. The Commissioner chairs the Children's Cabinet and I would also say that on the cabinet is DOL, DOE, DOC, safety. And I don't see DOE around the table, and I hope that they will be here.

Jill: I feel I need to say, now that it's been mentioned a couple times, that Commissioner Makin is on the task force and Sen. Marianne Moore is on the task force. Mary Bonato with GLAD is also on task force in addition to Zack and Representative Hagen is also on task force. So there are 5 missing members, but that were included in the release. But we will make sure that you all have contact information so you can have some of these dialogues off line from this.

Sarah:

I figured that they were invited but I just wanted to make sure they were here, because I think that having the departments that are around the table is really important. They are all at the children's cabinet, we are focused in the cabinet on early education and older youth, which I'm delighted and I think the work here will also influence the Children's Cabinet second prong of older youth. I am staffing that for the commissioner, so I will be able to bring that back to that body.

But the DHHS can't do it alone, we know that. We want best outcomes for all the people we serve and that is children, youth, families, older adults in Maine. We want to be able to contribute in a positive way and we know we need to align and partner with different departments. And we are set to do that.

Allison Beyea

In terms of what I hope the task force achieves, because I'm sitting next to Deputy Commissioner, I would love to see that we come from here with a commitment from state government to actually making these reforms, as well as us as stakeholders, but an actual commitment to push those levers forward which is without that commitment is challenging. And that the commitment has been well stated. That we will reinvest in communities, health care , education and give kids what they need and we can end juvenile incarceration. That would be what I hope the task force achieves.

My vision, I think the ACLU is clear, that kids should be treated in their communities not in prison. That is just never going to be the right choice for them. I want to echo what our Deputy Commissioner just said, I've work on and off in juvenile justice for a long time, and even though, its delightful that the commissioner of education is coming, I thought the senators point was

really important about that there is not a lot of municipal representation, and schools play an enormous role.

I like Atlee, have looked at file after file and early on you could see this in the early school files and the schools that were in the task force of 2010. So, I think it would be great to make sure the schools are part of this reform. Just like kids shouldn't be treated in prison, we also think schools should be reinvesting in social workers and mental health and not SROs and police officers. So our vision puts services back in the community.

What I'd also say is things have to be measured. We have to take a look at what we are doing and if it's not working we should do something else. So anything we do should be measured.

Then, I would last echo what Representative Talbot Ross said. I think what we know across the nation is that, as many of us well intentioned people try to make reforms, what happens is we reform systems for white people. And that's what we do. We continue to find people of color; those disparities are huge. Incarceration rates are falling but just for white people and that's true in education and that's true in healthcare. Maybe only second to that is how our disabled kids are treated and what we see in those disparities. So, we should always be keeping that center and talking about that, and that elephant in the room, regardless of how uncomfortable it makes us because our good intentions don't always have good outcomes.

Representative Charlotte Warren

For the first question, what do you hope the task force achieves and addresses? Definitely I want us always to keep our eye focused on the inherent racism in our corrections system. All it takes is to go to Long Creek and to walk around and you can see we aren't, we by what we look like, are not representing those kids. It doesn't mean that our intent, but it is the impact. And that is true every time we pass a new law for a new crime on passing a school bus, it doesn't mean our intent is to lock up more black and brown people, but it is true that that is the impact. I want us to remember that.

I'll tell you from my personal experience, there by the grace of god go I. I spent a little time over in the old court system because I grew up here. I was not a good kid. I listened to one ACDC song every day on the way to the legislature so it reminds me of why I'm there and the kids that I want to be a voice for. I moved out at 16 and I've been on my own ever since then. There by the grace of god go I. The color of my skin has definitely helped me to A) not be incarcerated or B) live in a trailer in Pittston with six children, that's also something that could have happened.

I want us to keep the frame of, we need to stop using shame and punishment, it doesn't work to change behavior, it works to hide behavior, we need to figure that one. Whether that is children or women or men we need to get away from our reliance on shame in our community. And I want us to remember that in this group and I want us to remember the power that we each have individually to not shame ourselves and to not shame other people. We get to live by example and we get to sort of set an example for children.

Maya Angelou once asked, do your eyes light up every time a child walks in the room? We should be figuring out a way to connect to children not to disconnect them. So what is my vision for a reformed system? No incarcerated kid, EVER. I know that's a really liberal thing to

say, and I proudly say it. No incarcerated kid ever. I want to know when you asked what our questions and suggests were, I'd love to know of successful states, what has worked?

I want us to be invested in the long game. I really agree with what Greg said, that in order for us to get, to really make progress years down the road we have to remember that every mom that is incarcerated right now, every dad that is incarcerated right now, we are just almost ensuring the amount, the level of trauma they have. And the fact that we are going to repeat this system. So those are things I want us to keep focused on.

Victoria Morales

I am so proud to serve on the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee with my two chairs.

I just want to echo that what Christine Thibeault said about life experience before professional life. I too was a youth worker and focusing on young people on the streets of South Boston and kind of what Jill Allen was saying, I couldn't really figure out how to make a profession out of that, but I would have loved it. And it really has driven a lot of the work that I've done on the pro bono side with the Maine Youth Court, who's here with Mike Freysinger, and I'm so proud of them. But I agree with that and I would love to talk to you more about that option.

I just want to put out some data, Representative Talbot Ross has put forth and I think it has passed, a bill around housing for people to stay in their homes. Dr. Tweed talked about social determinatives of health and I think that is something I would like for us to keep talking about because when we look at the young people incarcerated now, and involved in the system now, we know that about 88% are disabled, qualified for special ed. Almost 100% are insecure in housing and likely food insecure. So when we think about pathways to incarceration, we kind of all know what they are.

Just a couple of facts, 40% of our households are in poverty in Maine. That means they are making under \$25,000 for a family of four. I was doing the number in my research in housing supports along Rachel's bill and along my bill which didn't pass, but 80-100,000 households are above that poverty level, but still housing insecure. So that is up to \$50,000 for family of 4 and this is the entire state.

185,000 households are at the brink or at the poverty level. We have 14,000 families that are receiving subsidies for housing, and 17, 000 on the waitlist for subsidies for housing. I don't know about you but I wouldn't put my name on the list if there were 17,000 on the list in front of me. and we know that 1 in 3 high school students have 3 or more aces.

So in terms of my visions, and I've been working and talking about with everyone at the table. I would like to see our system, treat every kid the same, they are the same child. The 11 who sexually assaults a 3 year old is the same 11 year old who is being sexually assaulted in their home. And it shouldn't be siloed into one of them goes to asylum or incarceration, and one of them goes to treatment in the home. They are the same children and we've all been saying that.

I've been looking at whether there is, and we'd like to research that more, what kind of system can we have that takes care of all of our kids so departments aren't battling for funding and

money to support these kids? 10 states including Maine have their adult dept of corrections oversees their juvenile corrections. 18 states there's a separate juvenile correction system, and 11 states administer juvenile corrections through a family and child welfare agency. And 12 states oversee juvenile corrections over a broader human services agency. I think there are models out here for us to look at and to galvanize our support around.

Lots of folks have already said a lot of things. But I want to touch base about the department of education I'm really glad they're invited and they're going to be at the table. They are such an important piece to this because they see it every day. They are struggling so much with behavioral health and they don't know what to do. Trainings are important, but resources like Julia was saying, but some trainings are important too. I think there are some guidance counselors and social workers in our schools that don't know about aces that don't know what's available and how they can help, so I'd like to see more folks at the table to guide us on that.

I don't want to toot my own horn at all, but LD 1010 which I worked so hard on with Commissioner Makin, it's really about moving upstream. The governor just signed it today, it doesn't have any money attached to it, but it looks at model school policies. And talk about zero tolerance, there still is zero tolerance in almost every single school disciplinary policy in our state. And so what this bill does, the department of education will create a model of disciplinary policy focusing on positive interventions, restorative practices focusing on connecting young people to their schools as opposed to suspending and expelling and specifically reducing the disproportionate impact on students of color, disabled students, LGBT students, gender related, and economic issues. Reducing the disproportionate impact on those young people's experience with the disciplinary actions. So I want to leave it with one quote that actually Jeff said and I stole from him, but I think it's so beautiful. I think it says it all: "A young person who isn't embraced by the community will it burn it down to feel its warmth."

Jill:

I will give just two logistical points and then I will let either of my two co-chairs here have a last word. We are looking at the next meeting being June 25th in this room at 9 or 10 AM.

We will provide you with a more structured agenda and in the interim you may be hearing for either myself or Jay or somebody until we've got staff with a list of resources that we want to start pulling together to make sure we are speaking from the same materials you've heard about. There's the behavioral health study, there are a couple of studies that have come out of Muskie, there is the DOC work, there are a whole bunch of pieces, there's DRMs report on the use of seclusion and restraint in schools. So things that hit all the points, we are going to try to do a little bit of work before we're fully staffed up.

And please email me with any of your comments or written response from today. We'll have a transcript. But really we are going to compile this for the consultant to work with to make sure they are hearing this and setting up some of the work structures within the task force to make sure youth voices are at the table, municipalities, schools. We've heard a lot of people raise up some concerns about making sure certain constituencies are at the table and we are committed to doing that. Representative Brennan, Commissioner?

Representative Brennan:

Just for people to think ahead, as Jill just mentioned, at the next meeting we might have Colin and Commissioner talk more about the demographics of the youth that are currently at Long Creek, what the numbers look like, and terms of who's in the system at this particular point. And maybe do a very short summary of the most recent research that has been done by JJAG by Muskie and by others so that we kind of have the most recent data and some of the analysis done.

Then we anticipate by the meeting in July, to have the consultant on board that will allow us to frame this in a way of looking at national models that have worked, where we stand now here in Maine, and then developing the pathway forward. That is very generally the idea of our thinking of moving forward and if any one has any input thoughts, ideas about what to do that would be helpful. Thank you all for coming. I think we have a very exciting time coming.

Representative Talbot Ross:

I would like to make a suggestion for next meeting. There have been a number of juvenile justice bills that have been submitted this legislative session, it would be nice to have a matrix of each one and what their current status is so that we don't lose site that there is a lot of work happening by a lot of people and we need to honor that work and try to call that forward as well.

Representative Brennan:

And to that point Rachel, and I think everyone has said this, and I'll say this before Sarah leaves The interesting thing is that we should be looking at bills in education that we just looked at about restraint and seclusion. There are bills in DHHS that have to do with the homelessness child welfare issues, maybe what we can do is look at how to weave together all the bills and different bills. Because the whole idea of this is that we have all these systems that are interacting with each other or were going to figure out a way where they interact with each other as much as possible.

Jill

So this is where I'll tell you I already have something like that in the works so I will share it back out with task force. That has, by Committee, all the youth related and even family and just touches on all this stuff, it think it needs to be expanded a little more. But I will make sure its shared.

Thank you everyone.