

SENTENCING PRACTICES



Alaska State Legislature

House of Representatives

Committee on Judiciary

Pouch V
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Official Business

To: Charlie Parr, Chairman, and Members of the House
Judiciary Committee

From: Margaret W. Berck, Staff

Date: September 13, 1979

Subject: Sentencing Practice

The 1979 legislature established an Advisory Committee on Minority Judicial Sentencing Practices. This committee is responsible for receiving and reviewing reports concerning sentencing, correction, probation and parole practices and procedures regarding the treatment of minorities. In addition, the committee is required to hold public hearings and meetings on this issue and report its findings and recommendations to the legislature not later than February 1, 1980.

Mr. Burt Campbell has been elected the Chairman of this committee. According to Mr. Campbell, the committee is reviewing the master plan on corrections and several older reports on corrections. Furthermore, Mr. Campbell stated that additional studies in this area are being conducted by various agencies. A study on misdemeanor sentencing between 1976 and 1979 is being done through the Judicial Council. Almost all the raw data necessary for this study has been collected. Preliminary findings indicate that disparities in these sentences are at least as great as those found for felonies in the plea bargaining study. Additional ongoing studies include: expanding the felony review contained

in the plea bargaining study to include additional years and geographical locales and a review of presentencing practices and procedures. Furthermore, the Criminal Justice Planning Agency is conducting a study regarding minority treatment in the entire criminal justice system as opposed to merely the sentencing area.

Recently the committee met with prisoners at Eagle River and Ridgeview. The committee intends to tour the Bethel jail facility within the next several weeks. The committee's next meeting in Anchorage is scheduled for September 29, 1979. At that time the committee intends to meet with representatives of the Alaska Bar Association, District Attorney's Office, and Public Defender Agency. Thereafter, the committee intends to meet every two weeks.