



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE BONDING SUBCOMMITTEE **MARCH 14, 2019**

Marc Pelka

*Under Secretary, Criminal Justice Policy and Planning
Office of Policy and Management*

Senator Moore, Representative Miller, Senator Witkos, Representatives Floren, and members of the Bonding Sub-Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Governor Lamont's capital budget request for the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection in FY2020. I am pleased to testify with LTC John S. Eckersley; Humayun Beg, Executive Director, of the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS); and Mark Tezaris, CJIS Program Manager.

The \$8.9 million in requested funds would finance the final design and implementation of CJIS. Judge Patrick L. Carroll, III and I co-chair the CJIS Governing Board. The Governing Board's focus is furthering the development of the Connecticut Information Sharing System (CISS). CISS is a key criminal justice system resource that is part of Governor Lamont's vision for using making e-government more efficient, transparent, and user-friendly.

Three categories help capture the impact of approving Governor's Lamont's capital budget request for the final design and implementation of CISS. First, on search development, it would deliver training to about 13,000 users to conduct CISS searches. Second, regarding connectivity to CISS, it would enable Record Management System (RMS) vendors in Connecticut to send CISS more than 90 percent of arrest information from police departments and state police barracks. Third, regarding electronic workflow deployment, it would increase the speed, quality, and quantity of arrest information in the criminal justice system and enable "near real time" access to information.

CISS helps advance data-driven decision-making in the criminal justice system by performing a Google-like function for credentialed justice system professionals. Users can enter a single, common portal and access 14 criminal-record source systems holding information on people, locations, events, and property. Accessing those source systems from a single portal enables users to tap into information across the criminal justice system: municipal police, the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Judicial Branch, the Department of Correction, the Board of Pardons and Paroles, and the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection.

CISS provides electronic information exchanges that can replace the manual reentry of information across numerous case management systems. Without a tool like CISS, a single line of data can need to be reentered manually dozens of times, from when the case is opened until it is closed. Relying on numerous enterers of data can impair the integrity of the information, such as something as simple as a misspelling in a data field. Because CISS syncs up information with source systems, it cleans the data routinely to help keep a case intact and accurate. Additionally, electronic information exchanges help reduce processing time from one end of the criminal justice system to the other. The manual reentry of information not only carries risks of error, but also it causes professionals to enter data, drawing time away from their critical roles protecting public safety.

CISS' electronic information exchanges reduce the reliance on material, such as handing off paper files. Without CISS, police officers can have to be pulled off patrol to transport paper copies of police reports to a courtroom, sometimes over a long distance. This leads to costly consumption of time doing work that could be transferred electronically with a digital upload of files and supporting information. With CISS, officers can digitally upload case information to the court and remain in their jurisdiction, focusing on pressing law enforcement matters.

Not only does CISS enable the sharing of data to improve criminal justice operations but also it enables the linking of data systems for analysis that can inform criminal justice reform. As one recent example, the Governor's Bill, An Act Concerning Fairness and Transparency in the Criminal Justice System (SB 880), would require the collection, analysis, and reporting of data related to prosecutorial decision-making. CISS would be one element of the effort to help expand data-driven prosecutorial decision-making and increase communities' trust in our criminal justice system.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. Together with LTC John S. Eckersley, Humayun Beg, and Mark Tezaris, I look forward to assisting with any questions.