

MINUTES

SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR

Meeting Jointly

Tuesday, June 4, 2024

1:15 PM

**Wyndham Fort Smith City Center, Dallas/St. Louis/Hot Springs Ballrooms, 700 Rogers Avenue
Fort Smith, Arkansas**

Committee members present: Senators Missy Irvin, Chair; Justin Boyd, Bryan King, Fredrick J. Love, and Clint Penzo; Representatives Lee Johnson, Chair; Zack Gramlich, Kendra Moore, Bart Schulz, Jeff Wardlaw, and Jeremy Wooldridge

Other members present: Senators Breanne Davis, Jonathan Dismang, and Jim Petty; Representatives Howard M. Beaty, Jr., Stan Berry, Cindy Crawford, Jack Fortner, Denise Garner, Mike Holcomb, Lane Jean, Shad Pearce, David Ray, and Jay Richardson

Representative Johnson called the meeting to order.

Discussion of Overcrowding in County Jails in Regard to Arkansas State Hospital Patients and Department of Human Services (DHS) Court Ordered Detainees

Scott Bradley, Director, Arkansas Sheriff's Association; Hobie Runion, Sheriff, Sebastian County; Jay Cantrell, Sheriff, Washington County; Clayton Edward, President, Jail Administrators Association; Mark Whitmore, Chief Legal Counsel, Association of Arkansas Counties; and Glen Wheeler, Sheriff, Newton County; discussed overcrowding in county jails for detainees ordered to receive mental health evaluations or treatment at the Arkansas State Hospital. Janet Mann, Deputy Secretary for Programs and State Medicaid, DHS, and Paula Stone, Director, Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, DHS, discussed how the Arkansas State Hospital is working to alleviate issues surrounding the waiting list of detainees.

Update on the Status and Future of Crisis Stabilization Units

Hobie Runion, Sheriff, Sebastian County; Danny Baker, Chief of Police, Fort Smith; Rusti Holwick, Chief Executive, The Guidance Center; Janet Mann, Deputy Secretary for Programs and State Medicaid, DHS; and Paula Stone, Director, Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, DHS; discussed how Sebastian County has benefitted from health services provided by crisis stabilization units.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.