

**MINUTES
of the
FIRST MEETING
of the
COURTS, CORRECTIONS AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

**June 17, 2011
Room 307, State Capitol
Santa Fe**

The first meeting of the Courts, Corrections and Justice Committee was called to order by Representative Al Park, co-chair, on June 17, 2011 at 10:05 a.m. in Room 307 of the State Capitol, Santa Fe.

Present

Rep. Al Park, Co-Chair
Sen. Peter Wirth, Co-Chair
Sen. Rod Adair
Rep. Joseph Cervantes
Rep. Gail Chasey
Rep. Zachary J. Cook
Rep. David L. Doyle
Sen. Mary Jane M. Garcia
Rep. Nate Gentry
Sen. Clinton D. Harden, Jr.
Sen. Linda M. Lopez
Rep. Antonio "Moe" Maestas
Rep. William "Bill" R. Rehm

Absent

Sen. Richard C. Martinez
Sen. John C. Ryan
Rep. Mimi Stewart

Advisory Members

Rep. Eliseo Lee Alcon
Rep. Thomas A. Anderson
Rep. Dennis J. Kintigh
Rep. W. Ken Martinez
Sen. Cisco McSorley
Rep. Bill B. O'Neill
Sen. Sander Rue
Rep. Sheryl Williams Stapleton
Rep. Richard D. Vigil

Rep. Cathrynn N. Brown
Rep. Brian F. Egolf, Jr.
Sen. Carroll H. Leavell
Sen. William H. Payne
Sen. John Pinto
Sen. Michael S. Sanchez
Sen. David Ulibarri

Staff

Maha Khoury, Staff Attorney, Legislative Council Service (LCS)
Alise Rudio, Staff Attorney, LCS
Leslie Porter, Research Assistant, LCS

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Friday, June 17

Welcome and Introductions

Representative Park welcomed committee members and guests and requested that committee members and staff introduce themselves to the audience.

Interim Committee Protocols

Raúl E. Burciaga, director, LCS, briefed the committee on interim committee protocols and voting. He discussed the cuts in the interim budget and said that the New Mexico Legislative Council requested that interim committees have the same number of meetings as during the 2010 interim.

Work Plan and Meeting Schedule for the 2011 Interim

Committee members discussed issues and possible topics for the committee and voiced their concerns and preferences on topics to be addressed during the interim.

Update on the Status of the Judiciary

Charles W. Daniels, chief justice, New Mexico Supreme Court, and Arthur W. Pepin, director, Administrative Office of the Courts, provided background on the current status of the court system and advances currently being made. They emphasized that the courts are struggling financially and that some are not able to stay open for typical business hours five days a week due to a lack of staffing. They noted that this is a disservice to the people of New Mexico.

Regarding progress made within the court system, Chief Justice Daniels discussed the Safe Surrender Program, in which nonviolent offenders who have warrants issued for their arrest are able to go to a court and pay the fees and have their warrants dismissed without the threat of arrest. He noted that there is an increase of revenue in and positive feedback about this program. He thanked the committee for its support of the new judgeship requested last year for the Eighth Judicial District. He discussed the progress of the three automation projects: the Odyssey electronic case management system; the electronic filing system; and the electronic filing of traffic citations by police officers. He explained that the Odyssey case management system has saved and will continue to save money due to fewer personnel needed. The electronic filing system allows lawyers to file necessary documents 24 hours a day electronically; and the electronic filing interface allows police officers to file traffic citations electronically in their vehicles rather than physically take the citation to a courthouse.

At the committee's request, Chief Justice Daniels and Mr. Pepin listed court-related legislation that was vetoed by the governor.

Members of the committee expressed their concerns, discussed the vetoed bills and offered suggestions. Members also discussed other issues, such as overcrowding in prisons, pretrial detention and felons' voting rights.

Public Comment

Senator Wirth invited members of the audience to comment and to suggest other topics for consideration.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, the first meeting of the Courts, Corrections and Justice Committee adjourned at 12:45 p.m.