



Oklahoma Justice Reform Task Force

Task Force Members' Comments

Director John Scully, Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs:

"As director of the Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and with the benefit of over 32 years of law enforcement experience, I recognize the need to consider alternative options for resolving drug abuse in Oklahoma. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the effort of the Governor's Task Force to seek reform in an area of such great need. As director, I look forward to continuing to seek remedies that work to reduce drug abuse and crime within our state as this continues to demand the attention of those familiar with the problem. Task force recommendations which will ensure prison space is available for violent offenders while enhancing community safety are important in securing a greater quality of life for our citizens."

Jan Peery, Oklahoma City YWCA, CEO:

"As a longtime advocate in the victims' community of Oklahoma, I support the move away from sentencing practices that are not based in evidence and toward those that will result in less crime and fewer victims. It is well known that Oklahoma has the highest incarceration rate for women in the country – more than double the national average. And many, if not most, incarcerated women have been victims of domestic or sexual violence. Our package of reforms includes priorities for the victims' community, including the creation of better correctional responses to domestic violence through supervision and intervention."

Mike Neal, Tulsa Regional Chamber of Commerce, President and CEO:

"In Tulsa, we recognize the need for change and have been trying to do things differently. We believe the state should too. The proposals generated by this task force would allow more nonviolent ex-offenders to support their families, contribute to the economy and help alleviate the workforce shortages our employers have felt for years. The result is a stronger state budget, safer cities and more vibrant communities."

Roy Williams, Greater Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, President and CEO:

"Oklahoma spends too much money without positive outcomes locking up low-level, nonviolent people. Our bloated prison population is costing our state millions, burdening tax-payers and failing to rehabilitate offenders and make them productive members of society who contribute to the economy. We know that 30 states have reduced both incarceration rates and crime rates in the last five years, and we believe Oklahoma can, too. The business community supports the governor's efforts and encourages the Legislature to seriously consider these recommendations. Doing nothing means taxpayers must spend billions more to incarcerate more people, or risk problematic federal intervention."

Commissioner Terri White, Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services:

"Treatment works, and these recommendations will work and make a lasting difference for Oklahoma! They are grounded in data and proven methods. Treatment saves lives and tax dollars. Implementing these recommendations will free up resources for treatment and other services, improve public safety, keep families together, and strengthen our communities."