

CONFERENCE OF CHIEF JUSTICES CONFERENCE OF STATE COURT ADMINISTRATORS

Resolution 21

In Support of Federal Funding to Plan and Implement Programs Targeted at Juvenile and Adult Offenders with Mental Illness or Co-Occurring Mental Illness and Substance Abuse Disorders

WHEREAS, the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators recognize that the overrepresentation of people with mental illness in the criminal justice system is one of the most pressing problems facing law enforcement, courts and juvenile corrections; and

WHEREAS, a collaborative and coordinated effort among the courts, executive agencies, communities, and mental health and substance abuse providers will be required to effectively address the problems; and

WHEREAS, the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act (H.R. 2387 and S. 1194) seeks to address these problems by creating a system of planning and implementation grants for communities to improve coordination between criminal justice and mental health systems; and

WHEREAS, the legislation would establish a grant program to create or expand: (1) mental health courts or other court-based programs; (2) programs that offer specialized training for identifying the symptoms of mental illness; (3) programs that support cooperative efforts by criminal, juvenile justice and mental health agencies to promote public safety by offering mental health and substance abuse treatment services; and (4) programs that support intergovernmental cooperation between state and local governments with respect to mentally ill offenders;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators urge Congress to enact this or similar legislation that would provide resources to assist states in dealing with mentally ill adult and juvenile offenders.

Adopted as proposed by the CCJ/COSCA Problem-Solving Courts Committee at the Annual Meeting on July 29, 2004.