



Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Indiana Launches Review of its Juvenile Justice System to Improve Youth Outcomes

Indianapolis, IN – Today, the Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana, along with leaders from Indiana’s legislative, executive and judicial branches, launched a comprehensive, data-driven review of the state’s juvenile justice system. The bipartisan Juvenile Justice Reform Task Force, an initiative of the Commission and co-chaired by Rep. Wendy McNamara and Sen. Michael Crider, will analyze the youth justice system landscape and identify areas for reform.

The goal of the task force is to identify a set of policy changes that would improve the lives of justice-involved children and teenagers in Indiana. This effort builds upon an initial [assessment](#) that focused on Indiana’s data collection capabilities and identified priorities for improvement.

“We are committed to proactively improving our system, through research and evidence, to advance positive change for Indiana’s youth,” said Loretta Rush, Chief Justice of Indiana.

The review will be conducted as part of the Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center’s national [Improving Outcomes for Youth](#) (IOYouth) initiative, a data-driven approach that helps jurisdictions align their policies and practices with research on what works to reduce recidivism, maintain public safety, and improve youth outcomes, like future education and employment. The task force will be composed of leaders from the state’s education, child and family services, and corrections departments; local juvenile justice officials; judiciary members; attorneys; and law enforcement representatives; among others.

The CSG Justice Center, a national nonpartisan nonprofit that develops research-driven strategies to improve public safety and strengthen communities, will guide the task force in analyzing current data with a goal of developing recommendations that will be translated into legislation next session.

“This initiative is critical to strengthening and improving Indiana’s juvenile justice system. Through the work of this task force, our goal is to advance positive changes for our state’s troubled youth, reduce recidivism rates and ultimately improve public safety,” said Rep. Wendy McNamara.

“This task force represents a profound opportunity for juvenile justice reform. Through bipartisan collaboration and studying the best available research and data, we can begin to build a better system that provides youth with the critical services and support they require for success, while ensuring our state’s resources are being used efficiently and effectively,” said Sen. Michael Crider.

“Working together, we can improve youth outcomes and accountability, which will ultimately protect public safety by reducing the number of children coming into contact with the justice system in the first place,” said Julie Whitman, Executive Director of the Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana.