



Senate Judiciary Committee
200 East Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203

February 15, 2019

Chairman Lee,

The Juvenile Parole Board is a type 1 Board housed at the Department of Human Services. The Juvenile Parole Board oversees parole decisions for all juveniles committed to the Division of Youth Services; see 19-2-1003 C.R.S. The Board is authorized to grant, deny, modify, suspend or revoke parole and sets conditions of parole for all DYS youth based on criteria defined in 12 CCR 2517-1, Section 28.100. Juvenile parole decisions are made following a review of the juvenile's casefile and a hearing before a partial or full Board. The Board is charged with determining whether the parole plan developed by DYS, the juvenile and the community providers establishes adequate transition services for the juveniles, addresses community and victim safety concerns, and complies with applicable statutes, regulations and policies.

The Juvenile Parole board, at our monthly meeting on February 13, 2019, discussed the proposed Senate Bill 19-108 substantially revising the Juvenile Justice System in Colorado. Our review of the proposed changes to C.R.S. 19-2-1002(II) led to concerns that the proposed language in the section would impair or even eliminate the discretion of the Juvenile Parole Board and would instead require that the newly created Length of Stay Matrix and Release Criteria would become the sole factor in determining whether a juvenile should be released from the Division of Youth Services. While the Board strongly encourages and supports the use of evidence-based practices throughout the juvenile system, the Juvenile Parole Board continues to believe that leaving the Board and its hearing process of reasonable informed discretion as to parole, is a better process in dealing with the individualized parole determinations of the juveniles that come before the Board.

As such, the Juvenile Parole Board would recommend that the language on page 62, in C.R.S. 19-2-1002 (II) mirror the language in subsection (I) of the statute and read:

(II) IN MAKING RELEASE AND DISCHARGE DECISIONS, THE BOARD OR HEARING PANEL SHALL USE TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE LENGTH OF STAY MATRIX AND RELEASE CRITERIA DEVELOPED PURSUANT TO SECTION 19-2-921 (3.3).

On behalf of the Colorado Juvenile Parole Board, thank you for your consideration as to this matter.

Sincerely,

Dr. Margaret Wright, Chair
Colorado Juvenile Parole Board

cc: Vice Chair Julie Gonzales
Senator Cooke
Senator Gardner
Senator Rodriguez

