

Juvenile Justice Initiative
Senate Bill 458 Arguments
Changes the Age of Juvenile Jurisdiction by One Year

Cook County Assumptions:

17 year olds are charged with more serious cases therefore they need a \$100 new court building and \$24 million annually to operate and expand the detention center.

Response

Caseload Issues:

- 61 percent of all 17 year olds arrested in Chicago are screened out and never referred to court.
- Nationally, of those screened in, only 19.6 percent are for person offenses (remainder are for property, drugs, and public order offenses).
- Even with kids charged with serious person offenses, only 11.7 percent get placed in the Department of Corrections or residential treatment facility. 36.6 percent are released without additional punishment (i.e. case dismissed).
- Nationally, 16 year olds are arrested and charged at higher numbers than 17 year olds.
- Since 1990's, the Cook County State's Attorneys Office has significantly decreased filings overall by at least 6,000 cases. When this caseload was up, they accommodated that level in the same facility as they now claim would not accommodate 2,679 17 year old cases.

Detention Issues:

- The estimated number of 600 17 year-olds currently in the county jail is not an accurate assessment of those that would be held in detention. This number INCLUDES those awaiting paying bonds. It also does not take in to account those eligible for detention alternative programs because of their lesser charges nor those that would not be held in detention as determined by a juvenile judge because of their lesser charges.

Department of Corrections Assumptions:

- Estimates 10-year cost estimate of \$146 million for operations and construction of a new facility to accommodate 17 year-olds.

Response

- Presumes the need for additional space and yet the DOC juvenile population has DECREASED over the past 5 years by 27% (a decrease of 596) while the juvenile budget has increased 10%.
- The DOC number includes all 17 year-olds in the system and does NOT take in to account those that would be eligible for alternatives to incarceration through Redeploy Illinois, intensive probation services, private placements, and other community-based alternatives.
- Presumes that annual cost of 17 year-olds is the same as that of older adult inmates, however, 17 year-olds require additional cost in adult because of educational programs that would not have to be split if moved to juvenile.

If you have any questions, please contact Betsy Clarke (cell: 847-894-4206), Mary Reynolds (cell: 847-894-4205) or Liz Kooy (cell: 773-316-7327) or at the Juvenile Justice Initiative office at 217-522-7970.