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Message from Chairman John Eaves

Dear Smart Justice Partner:

I would like to thank you for the time and energy you have put into serving as part of the Smart Justice Advisory Council. I appreciate that so many of our citizens have given of themselves to help address what I believe to be among the most serious issues facing our community, ways we can make our communities safer and end the vicious cycle of criminal recidivism.

These issues have left us with a jail filled with inmates who have been in the system multiple times, concerns about our public safety and the erosion in the public’s faith in government’s ability to get problems addressed. None of this has to be the case.

After this panel releases its recommendations, the attempt to address these issues does not end. I encourage all of our partners to continue this discussion over the coming months and years. Only through continued work can we achieve criminal justice reform. The approaches to these challenges must be innovative and aggressive to prevent the results we have seen over the last several years. I believe this group of stakeholders is eminently capable of contributing valuable recommendations to this process.

Once again, thank you for all of your hard work. I am confident that this is a momentous first step in making Fulton County a much safer community for our neighbors and residents.

Sincerely,

John H. Eaves, PhD
Chairman, Fulton County Board of Commissioners
BACKGROUND

“As Georgia lawmakers desperately search for ways to slash spending, they are not debating an option taken by other states: cutting the prison population...Georgia operates the fifth-largest prison system in the nation, at a cost of $1 billion a year. The job of overseeing 60,000 inmates and 150,000 felons on probation consumes 1 of every 17 state dollars.

Georgia prisoners are serving longer sentences due to tough-on-crime laws adopted in the 1990s. Those laws ban early release through parole for many offenders. A wave of convictions related to illegal methamphetamine also pushed up prison admissions in recent years.

“The state’s prison population has jumped by more than a quarter in the past decade and officials expect the number of state inmates to continue to creep upward. Georgia has resorted to measures other than reducing the prison population to keep corrections spending under control.” (Georgia prison population, costs on rise | April 7, 2010)

Fulton County faces similar challenges in capacity, budgeting and public safety. Nearly forty percent (39.37%) of the County’s total budget goes to the Justice System, including Courts, Sheriff, Marshall, Medical Examiner. As the needs (and the population) of Fulton County residents increase, local leaders have expressed a desire to reprioritize spending while maintaining safe and vibrant neighborhoods and streets.

**FACT:** A 2004 research brief titled “Reentry In Georgia” found that Fulton County received 12% of the inmates released from prison in CY2002, while no other Georgia county received more than 7%.
CHALLENGE
Fulton County Chairman John Eaves convened the Smart Justice Advisory Council to address a number of challenges facing Georgia’s largest county. The Smart Justice Advisory Council was designed to solicit the best ideas from criminal justice professionals and local leaders. Those ideas will help alleviate a number of challenges facing the county, including delivering public safety services to a growing population with limited financial resources, particularly fewer federal and state dollars to support key programs.

VISION
Create the safest neighborhoods in the region by partnering with intergovernmental leaders and community stakeholders to implement effective justice policies that reduce crime, recidivism and costs and provide a path forward for all the county’s citizens.

SMART JUSTICE = COORDINATED + COLLABORATED + TRANSPARENT

MISSION
To identify and address the causes of high rates of incarceration and recidivism in Fulton County through a coordinated effort to implement practical and sustainable evidence-based solutions, which will include alternatives to incarceration and a continuum of care for those entering the justice system and those returning to society.

BIG IDEAS & POLICY PROPOSALS
Over the course of the last year, the Smart Justice Advisory Council has met and facilitated discussions about creative and cost-effective ways to address these challenges. SJAC members have also listened to feedback from the community through a wide-ranging series of Crime & Safety Summits, held across Fulton County. The most feasible and impactful ideas from those discussions, along with supporting evidence, expert testimony, regional and national examples are included in the following report.
PUBLIC INPUT
2014 Crime & Safety Summits
SMART JUSTICE = INCREASING + IMPROVING + ENCOURAGING PUBLIC SAFETY

Thursday, March 6, 2014
Southwest Atlanta Crime & Safety Summit
Cascade United Methodist Church
3144 Cascade Rd SW

Wednesday, March 26, 2014
Crime & Safety Facebook Chat
www.Facebook.com/JohnHEaves

Wednesday, April 2, 2014
Southeast Atlanta Crime & Safety Summit
Atlanta Metropolitan State College
1630 Metropolitan Parkway

Tuesday, April 22, 2014
Midtown Atlanta Crime & Safety Summit
Saint Mark United Methodist Church
781 Peachtree St NE

Thursday, August 21, 2014
Sandy Springs Crime & Safety Summit
Riverwood International Charter School
5900 Raider Dr NW
BIG IDEAS + POLICY PROPOSALS

(1) Create a PUBLIC SAFETY CLEARINGHOUSE for various stakeholders

Through convening leaders from the legislative and judicial branches of government, across law enforcement and the prison system, one challenge that immediately became clear was a lack of coordination and universal standards, information and resource sharing. One suggestion that was met with universal approval was establishing a clearinghouse of resources for members of this diverse community that would allow for easy identification and effective programming.

Broader than just criminal justice, this would be an exhaustive and index of resources for anyone dealing with criminal justice and public safety issues. The online database could be modeled on M.U.S.C.L.E in Ohio, and provide information about service and treatment providers to those involved in the system, defense attorneys, prosecutors, judges and the community at-large.

From the Ohio Rehabilitation and Corrections website:

“M.U.S.C.L.E. is a centralized guide for department staff, offenders, families, and community partners that provides assistance in locating community resources and information to foster strong, safe communities.”

The Reentry Resource Guide is a collection of county by county fact sheets that provides vital information to assist offenders' reentry into society. Areas include social services, human services, local, county, state, and federal agencies, and other service agencies such as libraries, substance abuse programs, mental health counseling, veterans services commissions, educational opportunities, faith-based agencies, food, clothing, and job training and placement. ([http://www.drc.state.oh.us/web/reentry_resource.htm](http://www.drc.state.oh.us/web/reentry_resource.htm))”
(2) Pursue **SOCIAL IMPACT BONDS** in Fulton County

A concept born out of the UK in 2010, Social Impact Bonds (SIBs) are a financing mechanism designed to support the efforts of government agencies providing social services. In essence, they help transfer some of the risk in crime prevention or homelessness assistance, among many other social services, to private investors.

They are just now beginning to gain recognition in the United States with the City of New York and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts bringing recent SIB deals to the market.

In August 2012, Goldman Sachs Bank’s Urban Investment Group (UIG) announced the first social impact bond (SIB) in the United States, a $9.6 million loan it would make to support the delivery of therapeutic services to 16- to 18-year-olds incarcerated on Rikers Island.

Chairman Eaves personally visited the Rikers Social Impact Program, and his office continues to interview program leaders to determine feasibility in Fulton County.

The loan will be repaid based on the actual and projected cost savings realized by the New York City Department of Correction as a result of the expected decrease in recidivism. This unique public-private partnership between the City of New York, MDRC, the Osborne Association, Bloomberg Philanthropies, and Goldman Sachs leverages high-quality nonprofit capacity, private-sector capital, and philanthropic support to address a pressing community challenge.

In addition to the social and financial returns associated with this transaction, UIG also seized the opportunity for Goldman Sachs to make a significant contribution to the development of a new financial instrument with the potential to transform the way service providers, local government, and financial institutions collaborate to address pressing social issues with evidence-based interventions. SIBs could also potentially fund programs and services including job training, education, employment, housing, substance abuse treatment, pre-arrest or pretrial intervention programs.
What are Social Impact Bonds?

- A Social Impact Bond is an investment vehicle designed to encourage private funding for promising social programs
  - Taps into new funding opportunities
  - Private investors fund a program’s delivery and operations
- Public sector commits to paying the contractor only if improved social outcomes are achieved
  - Taxpayers only pay for interventions that work
- Third-party evaluation confirms that outcomes have been achieved before investors can be paid
- Concept is relatively new and New York City will be the first in the nation to implement this innovative financing model

**HOW SOCIAL IMPACT BOND FINANCING WORKS**
(3) Establish PRE-ARREST DIVERSIONARY PROGRAMS in Fulton County

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) defines pre-arrest diversion as those programs that “divert individuals with serious mental illness (and often co-occurring substance use disorders) from jail and provide linkages to community-based treatment and support services.” These programs allow specially trained officers to use their discretion to determine the appropriateness of arrest when a person is exhibiting symptoms of substance abuse, mental disorder or any other issue warranting community-based treatment and support. Municipalities save money because individuals referred to these programs avoid arrest, incarceration and the potential for probation violations resulting from prior charges.

The major objectives of pre-arrest and pre-trial diversion programs are:

- To prevent future criminal activity among certain offenders by diverting them from traditional processing into community supervision and services.
- To save prosecutive and judicial resources for concentration on more serious cases.
- To provide, where appropriate, a vehicle for restitution to communities and victims of crime.

We looked at pre-arrest diversion programs across the country, including:

- Seattle’s Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) – Launched in 2011, LEAD is the first known pre-bookling diversion program for people arrested on narcotics and prostitution charges in the United States. A product of a multi-year collaboration involving a wide range of organizations, LEAD addresses low-level drug and prostitution crimes by allowing law enforcement officers to redirect low-level offenders to community-based services, instead of jail and prosecution.
**Memphis Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)** - Law enforcement-based crisis intervention training for assisting those with a mental illness, and improves the safety of patrol officers, consumers, family members, and citizens within the community. Officers are given the discretion to determine whether instead of arrest a community-based service is a more appropriate option.

**Birmingham Community Services Officer Program** - Police department-based program staffed with in-house social workers to provide crisis intervention assistance to police officers in mental health emergencies and follow-up with the individual as needed.

**Knoxville Early Diversion Program** – The city is working to enhance existing behavioral health, substance abuse, and co-occurring services by allowing law enforcement officers to identify individuals who are appropriate for pre-arrest diversion and make a referral to a community-based treatment or service program at initial police contact.

(4) **Offer RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAMS to offenders**

Georgia has been solely committed to a punitive approach. We propose transitioning into an accountability model – particularly as the funding for anti-recidivism programs remains constant or drops, while the population grows.

Offer provisions for restorative justice and prisoner reentry, in which an offender confronts the damage they have done and attempts to rectify the situation with the people they have harmed. Continue to target individuals who have demonstrated a commitment to crime, acknowledging that 5-10% population is committing more than half the crimes.
Next Steps

Acknowledging that ‘Smart Justice’ an ongoing effort that requires the continued commitment of various stakeholders, the SJAC proposes introducing a resolution to formalize a SMART JUSTICE COORDINATING COMMITTEE similar to other Boards and Committees adopted by the Board of Commissioners.

Similar committees exist in Louisville, Miami and Pittsburgh, and these organizations can apply for federal funding so that they may be appropriately resourced and staffed. Such a Committee could adequately address the following issues:

- Producing accurate data, crime statistics, data sharing and analysis
- Using technology to fight and mitigate impacts of crime
- Encouraging coordination/communication among agencies and elected officials
- Focusing efforts on strategic issues and a collective agenda
- Formally partner with stakeholders such as schools
- Coordinating visits to successful facilities to learn best practices
PARTNERS + CONTRIBUTORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIRST NAME</th>
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<td>Dr. Gary</td>
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<td>Dominic</td>
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<td>Wendell</td>
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<td>Kate</td>
<td>Boccia, Mother, Community Activist</td>
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<td>Braxton</td>
<td>Cotton, Governor’s Office, State Board of Pardons and Paroles</td>
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<td>Vernon</td>
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<td>Koebrich, U.S. Attorney</td>
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<td>Tina</td>
<td>Robinson, Clerk of Superior Court</td>
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<td>Gail</td>
<td>Tusan, Chief Judge, Superior Court</td>
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<td>Steve</td>
<td>Smith, Atlanta Public Schools</td>
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<td>Linda</td>
<td>Smith, Atlanta Public Schools</td>
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<td>John</td>
<td>Eaves, Chairman, Fulton County Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dikembe</td>
<td>Mutombo, Former NBA Athlete and Activist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rob</td>
<td>Anderson, Fulton County Public Schools</td>
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</tbody>
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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

*Georgia prison population, costs on rise*
Atlanta Journal-Constitution | April 7, 2010

*Bringing Social Impact Bonds to New York City*
PowerPoint Presentation | From the Office of New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg

*Using Administrative Data to Prioritize Jail Reentry Services*
VERA Institute of Justice Fact Sheet | October 2012

*Prisoner Reentry in Atlanta: understanding the Challenges of Transition from Prison to Community*
By Michael J. Rich, Michael Leo Owens, Moshe Haspel, Sam Marie Engle | 2008
Emory University
http://oucp.emory.edu/PrisonerReentryAtlanta.pdf

*THE NYC ABLE Project for Incarcerated Youth*
Fact Sheet | August 2012
From the Office of New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg

*The Social Impact Bond (SIB) Evaluation Plan*
By Jim Parsons and Qing Wei | March 2013
VERA Institute of Justice
http://www.mdrc.org/project/social-impact-bond-project-rikers-island#featured_content

*Reentry in Georgia*
By Nancy G. La Vigne and Cynthia A. Mamalian | November 2004
http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/411170_Prisoner_Reentry_GA.pdf