



SENATOR
JIM ARNOLD
116TH INDIANA GENERAL ASSEMBLY ★ SENATE DISTRICT 8

NEWS RELEASE

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Arnold announces summer study for alternative sentencing recommendations

INDIANAPOLIS— State Senator Jim Arnold (D-LaPorte) announced today that a legislative study committee will review the state's alternative sentencing programs under the Department of Correction, community corrections and parole and probation matters. Arnold says the Criminal Law and Sentencing Policy Study Committee has been assigned with the review of these topics under a resolution approved Wednesday by Indiana General Assembly's Legislative Council.

The study was prompted this year by the enactment of [Senate Enrolled Act 81](#), which Arnold authored. The committee is expected to make findings and recommendations on these and a number of other topics for the 2011 legislative session.

"There is a growing problem in Indiana concerning the number of people we have incarcerated," said Arnold. "My hope is that this study will recommend programs that take the financial burden off the taxpayers while effectively rehabilitating criminals."

According to the "Prison Count 2010" report released in March by the Pew Center on the States, despite the first decline in nearly 40 years in state prison populations nationwide, Indiana's prison population increased more than any other state at 5.3% from 2008 to 2009. Indiana was one of 23 states where the prison population increased. According to an earlier study, the state dedicates more spending to prison facilities than to post-release and reintegration programs. Indiana invests only two cents on parole and probation for every one dollar it spends on incarceration. Arnold said that there are other ways to rehabilitate criminals that are less expensive to the state and would cut down on the number of repeat offenders that return to prison due to the lack of support upon release.

Arnold said that he is also looking forward to hearing the committee's recommendations for "sexting," or the sending of sexually suggestive or explicit cell phone and internet messages by minors. The study committee will review how school corporation's policies could address this topic.

"We need to make certain that the laws and penalties appropriately address this problem and the young people involved," said Arnold.

The General Assembly annually convenes interim study committees and permanent commissions to conduct in-depth research and analysis of issues affecting the state. Recommendations from these committees are often the basis for future legislation. More information about committee topics, schedules and agendas is available online at www.in.gov/legislative/interim.

For more information on Senator Arnold, his legislative agenda or other State Senate business call 1-800-382-9467 or visit www.senatedemocrats.in.gov.

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NOTE: The report on state prison populations was incorrectly attributed to the Pew Research Center for the States in the original version of this news release distributed June 4. The report "Prison Count 2010" was published by the Pew Center on the States, a division of The Pew Charitable Trusts.