

12/24/10
I agree and
recommend
MK \$2000



MEMORANDUM

TO: Bob Kiss, Mayor

FROM: Karen Vastine, Community Justice Center Coordinator

DATE: December 10, 2010

RE: Legislative Advocacy for CJC

Last year, thanks to support from the City Council and you, the Network for Community Justice Centers was able to retain Zatz and Renfrew to lobby on their behalf during the 2010 Legislative Session. Each of the Community Justice Centers contributed to this effort financially which would have paid for legislative monitoring and not much more. It was the \$2400 from the City of Burlington that allowed for the contract with Zatz and Renfrew to be expanded to include legislative advocacy and lobbying. Given the financial climate and the broad sweeping programmatic changes proposed in Challenges for Change, never was it more important that cost-saving programs like the Community Justice Centers have a constant presence at the statehouse.

The contribution from the City of Burlington towards this contract was money well spent. For what it brought into the City alone more than paid for itself by an order of magnitude of 45 times. For the Network of the Community Justice Centers, the lobbying efforts allowed them to re-start important programming like offender reentry, and placed the Community Justice Centers on the map for important discussions about alternative justice and supports for victims and offenders in our respective communities.

Here is a list of the contributions :

FY2011 Budget: The Justice Centers' base grant, 'Safer Communities' from the Department of Corrections, was level funded in a session when important programs were being cut.

Challenges for Change:

- H286 – proposed that Court Diversion and Community Justice Centers be merged across the state. Zatz and Renfrew successfully lobbied for both programs to be funded and given the opportunity to consider this option on their own and report back to the legislature during the 2011 session.
- S.692 – This bill proposed significant cuts to the Department of Corrections Budget. Funding invested in community-based solutions to both prevent people from entering the criminal justice system and support for the reentry of incarcerated individuals was the only new cost considered.

The CJC is located at the Center for Community and Neighborhoods which is a division of the Community and Economic Development Office of the City of Burlington

Through the advocacy of Zatz and Renfrew **\$650,000** was allocated for restorative justice programs for Offender Reentry and Prevention work.

- Of that amount, nearly **\$110,000** came to the City of Burlington to support the Rapid Arraignment pilot program to prevent people from entering the criminal justice system and for offender reentry services.

Capital Bill H. 790

Thanks to the strong presence of the CJs in the State House, CJs were included in a task force was formed to consider the best ways to provide correctional services within the correctional system and the community. The composition of the task force includes one representative of the department of corrections, two representatives of municipal governments, one member of the judiciary, one prosecutor, one representative of law enforcement, and one representative of the community justice centers.

If the City of Burlington is willing again to support the legislative advocacy efforts of the Network of Community Justice Centers, of which the City of Burlington is the biggest beneficiary, this would allow for the Network to once again retain Zatz and Renfrew in what is expected to be an even more challenging fiscal year than last. This year, the twelve community justice centers are all contributing \$500. With \$2000 from the City of Burlington, this would enable Zatz and Renfrew to be retained once again.

Thank you for your on-going support of the Community Justice Center and the work that we are doing to support the positive resolution of conflict in our community, of victims, and of positive restoration of harm caused by offenders.

The CJC is located at the Center for Community and Neighborhoods which is a division of the Community and Economic Development Office of the City of Burlington

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