



DU PAGE COUNTY

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Joint Special Meeting of the Judicial and Public Safety and Legislative Committees

Final-revised Summary

Tuesday, April 23, 2024

11:30 AM

County Board Room

11:30 AM or Immediately Following County Board Meeting Special Call

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM by Chair Dawn DeSart.

2. ROLL CALL

Other Board members present: Member Cindy Cahill, Member Paula Garcia and Member Lynn LaPlante

Staff present: Conor McCarthy (Assistant State's Attorney), Sheryl Markay (Chief Policy and Program Officer), Jeff York (Chief Public Defender), Jason Blumenthal (Policy and Program Manager), Evan Shields (Public Information Officer) and Jenna Rossi (Policy Analyst).

Speakers: Jeff York (Chief Public Defender) and John "Chip" Humes (Lobbyist, Roger C. Marquardt & Co., Inc.)

Member Patty Gustin arrived at 2:02 PM due to attending another meeting.

PRESENT	Childress, Chaplin, DeSart, Evans, Galassi, Tornatore, and Yoo
ABSENT	Eckhoff, Krajewski, Ozog, Schwarze, and Zay
LATE	Gustin

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was offered.

4. CHAIRS' REMARKS - CHAIR DESART AND CHAIR EVANS

Chair DeSart thanked everyone for attending this meeting which will provide an opportunity to learn more about the proposed Amendment to Illinois Senate Bill 595. The intent of this proposed Amendment is to encourage the Illinois Supreme Court to establish a framework for a statewide Office of Public Defense Trial Support. Chair DeSart then informed the Committee of another opportunity to participate in a discussion on this proposed legislation by attending the ISACo Justice and Public Safety Committee meeting on Friday, April 26, 2024 at 10:00 AM. She encouraged anyone interested in joining this discussion to contact her or Sheryl Markay to obtain the Zoom details. At this time, Chair DeSart and Chair Evans invited Chief Public Defender Jeff York to begin his presentation.

5. DISCUSSION

5.A. [24-1264](#)

Senate Bill 595 - Statewide Public Defender

Chief Public Defender Jeff York thanked the Committee for inviting him to present today and went on to provide an update on this proposed legislation. He began by clarifying that he will be sharing only his thoughts and opinions and does not speak for all public defenders. Initially, Mr. York reviewed the law as it stands currently, reported on his existing headcount and summarized the responsibilities of his office. He then spoke of the resources available to his office and the differences in how other Public Defender's Offices operate throughout the state. Mr. York also showed a graph comparing his office's budget with those of the collar counties. He next commented on a report entitled "The Right to Counsel in Illinois", published by the Sixth Amendment Center in June of 2021, that provides an evaluation of public defender services throughout the State of Illinois. Since this report, the Supreme Court as well as other entities have become involved in determining the future process of public defending. Mr. York then commented on the impact a Statewide Public Defender system might have on his office and other offices throughout the state. This concluded his presentation. At this time, questions and comments were brought forward by Member Gustin, Member Chaplin, Member Garcia and Chair DeSart, to which Mr. York responded. The topics covered possible opt-in/opt-out options, the importance of support from the Chief Judge and the County Board and proposed funding. Mr. York ended by recognizing Chief Administrative Officer Nick Kottmeyer, Chief Policy and Program Officer Sheryl Markay, Policy and Program Manager Jason Blumenthal and Lobbyist Chip Humes for being available and supportive in helping him navigate this issue.

Chair DeSart then asked Chip Humes to come forward to offer his thoughts on this pending legislation. Chair DeSart, Chair Evans and Member Gustin asked questions, to which Mr. Humes responded. One question raised was whether it would be advisable for a member of the Committee to contact their state senator or representative to express their concerns about this issue. Mr. Humes was not opposed to this. However, Chair DeSart cautioned that any member wishing to do this must do so as an individual, not as an elected official.

In conclusion, Chair DeSart thanked both Mr. York and Mr. Humes for providing the Committee with information on this proposed legislation.

6. OLD BUSINESS

No old business was offered.

7. NEW BUSINESS

No new business was offered.

8. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Member Gustin moved, seconded by Member Yoo, to adjourn the meeting at 2:37 PM.