

CCJJ COMMISSION MINUTES – PENDING APPROVAL

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| Committee | Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice |
| Date | Tuesday, January 20th, 2026 |
| Time | 12 PM – 2 PM |
| Location | Hybrid Zoom Virtual meeting – CCJJ Large Conference |
| Members Present | <p><u>In-Person Attendance</u>: Michael Dreschel (for Ron Gordon), Jared Garcia, Commissioner Beau Mason, Stewart Young, Sheriff Chad Jensen, Blake Hills, Pam Vickrey, Ryan Robinson, Mark Moffat, Tom Ross, April Graham</p> <p><u>Virtual Attendance</u>: Eric Tadehara (for Tracy Gruber), Chief Sol Oberg, Richard Mauro, Amanda Bollinger, Judge Ryan Peters</p> |
| Staff & Visitors | <p><u>Staff</u>: Danica Bodley, Elizabeth Klc, Dan Strong, Dan Strong, Elizabeth Klc, Dr. Michele Leslie, Tiffany Nguyen (virtual), Van Nguyen, Adrienne Buhler (virtual), Matthew Barraza (virtual), Bud Powell (virtual), John Draney (virtual), Erica Wood (virtual), Richard Ziebarth (virtual), Chyleen Richey (virtual), Mei Xue (virtual), Kara Hetrick (virtual)</p> <p><u>Visitors</u>: Brett Robinson, Steve Burton, Carl Hollan, Erin Jemison, Albert Cramer (virtual), Felix Espinoza (virtual), Tyler Kotter (virtual), Brittany Karzen</p> |
| Agenda Item | Welcome and Approval of Meeting Minutes – Sheriff Chad Jensen, Commission Chair |
| Notes | <p>Sheriff Chad Jensen brings the commission meeting into session.</p> <p>The commission reviewed the previous meeting minutes from January 12th, 2026.</p> <p>Motion: Commissioner Beau Mason motions for the commission to approve the minutes as presented. Mark Moffat seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.</p> |
| Agenda Item | 2026 Legislative Session Bill Review and Vote |
| Notes | <p>The Commission reviewed several bills, resulting in formal positions of Support, Support in Concept (SIC), or Hold.</p> <p><u>House Bill 138 Child Homicide Abuse Amendments Sub 01</u></p> <p><i>This bill establishes that a minor's suicide can be considered a "direct proximate result" of child abuse, allowing for homicide charges. It adopts language from a Nebraska Supreme Court case to ensure prosecutors can prove causation.</i></p> <p>Commission members expressed that existing abuse could possibly allow for that proximate cause but this would clarify that prosecutors can use this as a tool. Stewart Young also discussed that this would be for a child under 18 and suggested that there may be a need to tweak language about proximate cause versus but for cause.</p> <p>Others pointed out that you would still need to prove the child suicide was a direct or proximate result of the abuse.</p> <p>Motion: Ryan Robinson motions for the commission to <u>support</u> House Bill 138. Stewart Young seconds the motion. The motion passed.</p> <p>Support(s): Twelve (12) Supports; Jared Garcia, Eric Tadehara (for Tracy Gruber), Commissioner Beau Mason, Stewart Young, Sheriff Chad Jensen, Blake Hills, Pam Vickrey, Chief Sol Oberg, Richard Mauro, Ryan Robinson, Tom Ross, April Graham</p> |

Opposition(s): One (1) Opposition; Mark Moffat

Senate Bill 18 Criminal Offense Modifications (Human Trafficking)

Motion: Mark Moffat motions for the commission to support Senate Bill 18. Tom Ross seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Michael Dreschel (for Ron Gordon) has joined the meeting

Senate Bill 72 Obscene Animal Abuse Material Amendments

This conduct is prohibited at these same levels under current law in the obscenity ("pornographic materials" statute, except that the definition is expanded to include animal crushing. This breaks animal abuse out into its own offense in order to better highlight it for enforcement. The sponsor originally wished to penalize possession of these images, but he scaled it back to distributing images.

The Commission suggested an "intent to celebrate or promote" element to protect those who share such videos out of horror or for reporting purposes.

Motion: Tom Ross motions for the commission to support in concept for Senate Bill 72 for further discussion and action. Sheriff Chad Jensen seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Amanda Bollinger has joined the meeting

House Bill 237 Stalking Amendments

Motion: Sheriff Chad Jensen motions for the commission to support House Bill 237. Commissioner Beau Mason seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Senate Bill 134 Appellate Court Amendments

Increases the number of Utah Supreme Court justices to 7 (currently 5) and increases the number of Utah Court of Appeals judges to 9 (currently 7).

The court reported that their fiscal notes have been submitted, but have not been made publicly available. Michael Drechsel (for Ron Gordon) expressed that the Courts recognize the ability of the Legislature to determine the number of judges at both the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals and the additional Court of Appeal judges are needed. However, the ultimate need of the Courts is for District Court judges and a juvenile court judge (described in SB57 from Senator Weiler). Defense Attorneys expressed deep concern on any underlying message against Courts and highlighted that ongoing need is the priority of trial court judges.

Motion: Stewart Young motions for the commission to support in concept for Senate Bill 134. Sheriff Chad Jensen seconds the motion. The motion passed.

Support(s): Fourteen (14) Supports; Jared Garcia, Eric Tadehara (for Tracy Gruber), Commissioner Beau Mason, Stewart Young, Sheriff Chad Jensen, Blake Hills, Pam Vickrey, Chief Sol Oberg, Richard Mauro, Ryan Robinson, Tom Ross, April Graham, Amanda Bollinger, Michael Dreschel (for Ron Gordon)

Abstention(s): One (1) Abstention; Pam Vickrey

Senate Bill 57 Judicial Officer Amendments

Increases the number of judges for the district court, the juvenile court, and the Court of Appeals

Commission members noted a disconnect between the proposed appellate expansion and the actual needs of the system. Michael Dreschel highlighted that trial courts—specifically the Fifth and Sixth Districts—are operating at 122% of a full-time judicial workload. While appellate courts need resources (having remained at seven judges since 1987), the Commission emphasized that trial court needs are more critical for public speed-of-resolution.

Motion: Stewart Young motions for the commission to support in concept for Senate Bill 57. Sheriff Chad Jensen seconds the motion. The motion passed.

Support(s): Fourteen (14) Supports; Jared Garcia, Eric Tadehara (for Tracy Gruber), Commissioner Beau Mason, Stewart Young, Sheriff Chad Jensen, Blake Hills, Pam Vickrey, Chief Sol Oberg, Richard Mauro, Ryan Robinson, Tom Ross, April Graham, Amanda Bollinger, Michael Dreschel (for Ron Gordon)

Abstention(s): One (1) Abstention; Pam Vickrey

House Bill 274 Sentencing Commission Amendments

Removes all defense attorneys from the Sentencing Commission, adds 4 prosecutors and 2 sheriffs

HB 274 proposes a radical change to the Sentencing Commission by removing all defense attorneys and adding four prosecutors and two sheriffs. The bill is purportedly a response to a Grand County case where a defendant received probation for a sex offense involving minor victims, consistent with current sentencing guidelines. The legislature, led by Speaker Schultz, reportedly views the guidelines as insufficiently punitive.

Defense representatives, including Steve Burton and Mark Moffat, argued that removing their voice would destroy the "adversarial balance" that ensures fair and impartial policy. Michael Dreschel warned that shifting guidelines toward mandatory incarceration without defense input could result in massive, un-calculated costs for the Department of Corrections that would bypass traditional fiscal note reviews.

The Commission placed a "Hold" on the bill to facilitate direct dialogue with the Speaker of the House, emphasizing the danger of "shutting down one side of the conversation."

Motion: Sheriff Chad Jensen motions for the commission to place a hold on House Bill 274 for further discussion and action. Mark Moffat seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

House Bill 23 Service Animal Amendments

Enhances injuring, harassing, or endangering a service animal to 3F. Does not change mens rea of intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing substantial injury.

Discussion of the group is that this being against service animals is a third-degree felony while bodily injury to a person is a first degree misdemeanor. The group wants to have a conversation with the sponsor on the comparison, particularly the “chasing or harassing of a service animal” in line 73.

Motion: Ryan Robinson motions for the commission to place a hold on House Bill 23 for further discussion and action. Mark Moffat seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

House Bill 48 Criminal and Juvenile Justice Changes

Amends adult recidivism standard metric to include arrests; defines juvenile recidivism, school based referrals/offense similar to Rep. Peck's bill; removes the prohibition on placing a minor in an adult correctional facility as an alternative to detention; Allows district court to commit to UDC rather than secure care if

(a) the minor is convicted of aggravated murder under Section 76-5-202;

(b) the minor was 17 years old at the time that the aggravated murder occurred; and

(c) the minor is 18 years old or older at the time of sentencing;

and allows prosecution to file a motion with the BOPP regarding the provisional housing of a minor in a secure care facility for offense outlined above.

Motion: Sheriff Chad Jensen motions for the commission to place a hold on House Bill 48 for further discussion and action. April Graham seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

House Bill 72 Criminal Use of Cryptocurrency Amendments

The bill requires local LEAs to report cryptocurrency investigation data to CCJJ (Line 268)

HB 72 focuses on the "criminal use" of cryptocurrency, primarily targeting unregulated cryptocurrency ATMs. Commissioners noted that crypto ATMs are frequently used to scam elderly victims. The bill requires warning signs at ATMs and mandates that local law enforcement agencies report cryptocurrency investigation data to the CCJJ. The bill requires law enforcement and prosecutors to have certified digital asset specialists. The Commission expressed concern regarding the burden on small rural offices and suggested a "hand-off" process to the Attorney General's office for specialized investigations.

Motion: Sheriff Chad Jensen motions for the commission to support in concept for House Bill 72 for further discussion and action. Stewart Young seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

House Bill 103 Underage Marriage Amendments

Motion: Tom Ross motions for the commission to support House Bill 103. Commissioner Beau Mason seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

House Bill 110 Board of Pardons and Parole Amendments

Requires the board, if considering whether to parole an offender who has previously been paroled and had the offender's parole terminated due to a new criminal offense, to consider the facts and circumstances of the new criminal offense in determining whether the offender should be paroled

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| | <p><i>again; prohibits the board, when determining whether parole should be granted or terminated for an offender, from considering prison capacity, bed availability, or institutional population levels; prohibits the board from paroling an offender who has not completed any ordered treatment or programming while incarcerated; allows the board to only consider a pardon for an offender who has committed an offense that requires the offender to register on the Sex, Kidnap, and Child Abuse Offender Registry; prohibits the board from re-paroling an offender who has been charged with committing a violent felony during the offender's previous parole; prohibits an offender from taking possession of a written statement, or a copy of the written statement, from a victim of the offender's offense that is written to the board; adds to the requirements for the board to meet before the board may parole an offender before the offender's minimum term of imprisonment has been met; and provides that an offender is required to have an adequate opportunity to view and examine a victim's written statement to the board in a location determined by the board but requires the board to ensure that the offender cannot reproduce the victim's statement in any manner.</i></p> <p>Motion: Blake Hills motions for the commission to place a <u>hold</u> on House Bill 110 for further discussion and action. Mark Moffat seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.</p> |
| Agenda Item | Other Business |
| Notes | No other business was addressed. |
| Agenda Item | Public Comment |
| Notes | Albert Cramer (virtual chat comment): "HB 110 takes too much flexibility from the BOP" |
| Agenda Item | Adjourn |
| Notes | <p>Motion: Tom Ross motions for the commission to adjourn. Ryan Robinson seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>The commission adjourns.</p> <p>The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 26th, 2026 from Noon-2 PM. Location: <u>Anchor Location:</u> CCJJ Offices Zoom link: meet.google.com/vin-mowx-gkx</p> |
| DISCLAIMER | Please note that these meeting minutes have been primarily generated or assisted by an artificial intelligence (AI) tool. These notes have been edited by staff to ensure accuracy and completeness. |