

Grant C and Juvenile Justice Reform

Improving Public Safety and Youth Outcomes, While Lowering General Revenue Spending

The Community Corrections Diversion Program (known as Grant C), was among the most successful juvenile justice reform measures adopted by the Legislature and signed by the Governor in 2009.

Supported by groups such as the Texas Public Policy Foundation, Texas Appleseed, Disability Rights Texas, and other research and advocacy organizations, Grant C incentivized counties to use less-expensive and more effective local programs, rather than sending youth to costly Texas Youth Commission (TYC) facilities. This strategy has been shown to reduce recidivism and save general revenue funds.

The Legislature's commitment to this reform reflects well-established research that community-based treatment produces better results at a lower cost.

The Legislature's visionary leadership is already yielding superior results:

- In FY 2010, of the close to 4,000 youth served through Grant C programs, only 58 were subsequently committed TYC.
- In the 143 counties that opted to participate in the Grant C program, commitments to TYC were reduced by 32 percent as opposed to a 10 percent reduction in counties that opted not to participate.
- Cost per day for Grant C programs was \$140 or less, compared to close to \$359 for TYC youth, with youth served through Grant C served at an annual cost of \$51,100 as opposed to more than \$120,000 for a youth committed to TYC.
- Grant C funding allowed counties to create mental health treatment programming for youth in counties that needed those valuable resources.

All of Texas' 165 juvenile probation departments are eligible to participate in the program. Funding is based on the county's average number of commitments to TYC.

The Reform of the Juvenile Justice System being considered this session gives the state an opportunity to continue improving public safety and youth outcomes, while reducing overall state spending. This will be done by reducing funding for expensive, ineffective, remote TYC facilities, and funding lower-cost and more effective programs run by counties.

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¹ <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/BillLookup/History.aspx?LegSess=80R&Bill=SB103>; <http://www.legis.state.tx.us/BillLookup/Text.aspx?LegSess=81R&Bill=HB3689>

² http://www.lbb.state.tx.us/PubSafety_CrimJustice/3_Reports/Uniform_Cost_Report_0111.pdf

³ FTI Consulting, Economic Impact of Restructuring the Texas Juvenile Justice System, on file with Texas Appleseed.