

MONTGOMERY COUNTY SHERIFF

345 W. Second Street, Dayton, Ohio 45422-2427 • www.mcohiosheriff.org • (937) 225-HELP (4357)

Sheriff Rob Streck



February 25, 2019

The Ohio Supreme Court
65 South Front Street – 6th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215-3431
Attention: Tasha Ruth

Dear Ms. Ruth,

Thank you for the invite to speak before the Task Force on the Ohio Bail System. I am unable to attend the meeting February 27, 2019, but please accept this notification regarding comments and concerns expressed in considering potential reform.

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office recognizes that the bail/bond system was not intended to be punishment for individuals suspected of a crime, but designed to provide incentive for follow through with court proceedings. We understand that a Failure to Appear study conducted specifically in our county identified that a significant number of individuals do fail to follow through with court proceedings, resulting in increased cost for housing offenders until their case(s) can be disposed of. We do believe that if a validated risk tool were made available to assist court personnel with a more accurate assessment of risk for recidivism and failure to appear, this statistic may be reduced, specifically with our misdemeanor population. Unfortunately, I do not have personal experience with use of evidence-based alternatives to pretrial detention, nor can I offer feedback regarding various risk assessment tools used by pretrial for evaluation of this population. It is my understanding that the Arnold Public Safety Assessment has been most useful for purposes of identifying offender needs and assisting court personnel where it has been piloted. While we also strongly support and trust the judicial discretion provided to us by our local Judges, we believe that an evidence-based tool to support pretrial recommendation could only further assist them identify the risk and needs of an offender and support collaborative partnerships with social service agencies dedicated to serving our criminal justice population.



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The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office actively participates in the Buckeye State Sheriff Association. As BSSA Executive Director, Bob Cornwell, previously identified in the Cleveland Metro on February 17, 2017, "The Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association and the County Commissioners Association of Ohio support bail reforms that would reduce the number of nonviolent, low-risk defendants in jail". It is my understanding that Sheriff Larry Sims of Warren County has reached out to multiple sheriffs across the state for opinions and concerns in this matter and there is consensus that eliminating bond schedules could keep people in custody longer and may require municipal courts to increase the number of arraignments dates/times to accommodate need, resulting in increased resources and cost to both the courts and the jail. I would respectfully ask that this information be clarified for our law enforcement arena and/or alternatives be considered for supporting the needs of not only municipal courts, but Mayor's Courts as well. The Montgomery County Jail serves 1 Common Pleas, 7 Municipal, 3 Mayor's Courts and 1 Federal Court locally. Because of the operating schedule associated with Mayor's Courts in our county, individuals are often unable to be seen for initial hearing by court officials for a period of up to one week.

Ultimately, Jail administration for the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office is committed to standardizing any processes that assists with inmate booking, data sharing and collaboration needed to assist our office of pretrial services. It is intent of the Sheriff's office to support what is in the best interest of our low-level, non-violent offenders with greatest consideration to public safety.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to share this information. I will be in attendance for the Summit in April 2019, as a participant with our county's Pretrial Justice Council.

Sincerely,

Teresa Russell
Jail Treatment Coordinator



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