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**Testimony of the Council for Court Excellence
Before the Committee on the Judiciary & Public Safety**

**Performance Oversight Hearing on the
Criminal Justice Coordinating Council**

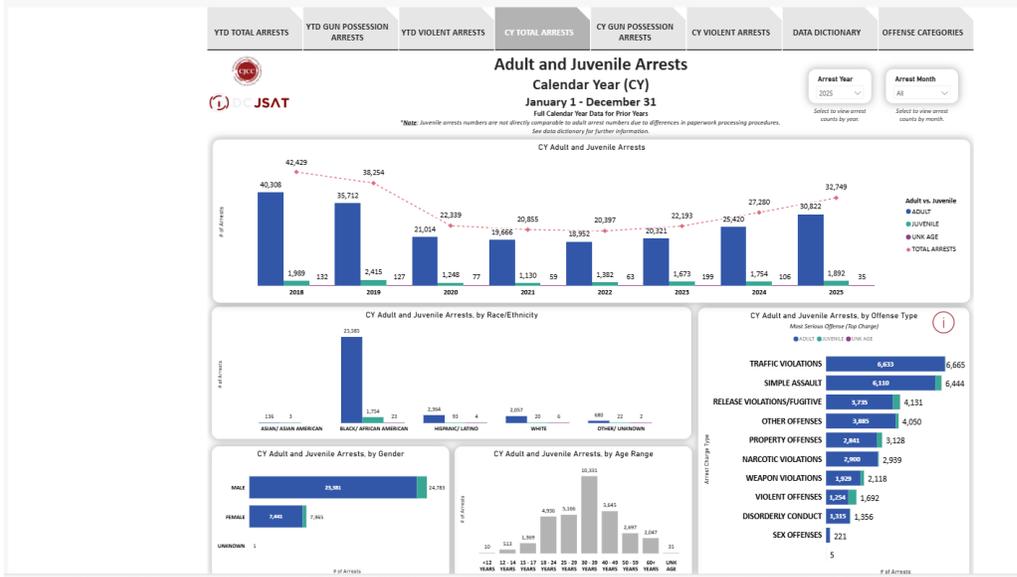
February 25, 2026

Thank you, Chairperson Pinto and members of the Committee, for the opportunity to present this testimony. My name is Tracy Velázquez and I am the Policy Director for the Council for Court Excellence (CCE). CCE is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization with the mission to enhance justice in the District of Columbia. For more than 40 years, CCE has worked to make D.C.'s unique legal systems more just, equitable, and accountable to the community through conducting research and policy analysis, convening diverse stakeholders, and creating educational resources for the public. Please note that in accordance with our policy, no judicial member of CCE participated in the formulation or approval of this testimony. This testimony does not reflect the specific views of, or endorsement by, any judicial member of CCE.

The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council - CJCC - serves a vital role in the District. It manages collaboration and data sharing among D.C. and federal agencies; hosts educational community events; produces timely reports; and creates innovative solutions to public safety and justice challenges. My testimony will briefly highlight some notable activities in each area over the past year and when appropriate, mention issues we've noted and questions we have.

Data Collection and Publication. The research and data analyses provided by CJCC enable CCE and others to better understand D.C.'s criminal legal system. We regularly use CJCC's Justice Statistical Analysis Tool (JSAT), which displays data regarding crime trends through monthly and quarterly reports on incarcerated populations, arrests, community supervision, and more. Over the past year, CJCC has increased the data available to the public.

However, as noted last year, JSAT does not allow aggregate data to be downloaded for deeper analysis. For example, the screenshot below shows the detail available on arrest data. If CCE wanted to do even a simple analysis – like the percentage of all arrests that adult arrests made up over time – we would need to hand-enter all these numbers into a spreadsheet, introducing the possibility of errors due mistyped statistics. We are not suggesting that CJCC provide raw data – just spreadsheets of the figures publicly presented. If the current data visualization software is incapable of this, we would ask that CJCC include links to excel spreadsheets, which is a common practice.



We also want to ensure that Council is aware of and discusses with CJCC the potential impacts of D.C. Courts’ change in their case management system on CJCC’s operations and capacity in the coming fiscal year. We understand that the changes may require meaningful additional work on behalf of partner agencies like CJCC, and may call for enhanced local one-time funding to support seamless data sharing in the coming years.

Educational Community Events. In the past year, CJCC has hosted several events on public safety and D.C.’s legal systems. I personally attended the presentation on “Effective Models for Reducing Youth Violence” in December, which brought in representatives from other cities’ programs to share their outcomes and experiences. Given the high caliber of this program, it was unfortunate that it wasn’t been better attended, both by the public and by agency leadership. The one DYRS staff member attending was not in a position to authorize any of the recommendations. We hope that Council will encourage their staff and agencies to take advantage of this excellent resource. CCE is committed to helping disseminate information on these events through our channels, and hope that this is welcomed by CJCC.

Safety and Justice Reports. With their privileged access to data, CJCC is uniquely able to produce reports that can shed light on the functioning of our legal systems. Even given its data challenges, CJCC’s report, *Pretrial Detention Before and After Secure DC* was able to show that, both before and after changes to pretrial detention policies, almost no one on pretrial community supervision was arrested for a violent offense and few were arrested at all.¹ And their report, *Reducing Juvenile Involvement in Violent Crimes: Perspectives From DC Youth, Families, And Community Members*, was a notable example of ensuring those most impacted by violence and the justice system can help craft responses and solutions.²

CCE was disappointed, however, that no report was released on a D.C. victimization survey that was mandated in the 2023 Crime Victimization Survey Amendment Act.³ CJCC stated that no action has been taken as there was a Fiscal Impact Statement indicating the cost would be about \$800,000 spread over three years.⁴ Given the conversations this year about accurate crime data, this victimization survey would enable us to have data from the victims of crime themselves, without ANY law enforcement filter. If modeled after the National Crime

Victimization Survey,⁵ D.C.’s would provide more detail on who in D.C. has been victimized, as well as data on crimes not reported to law enforcement; this could shed light on issues like trust in law enforcement and possible impacts of the federal government’s immigration enforcement efforts on willingness to contact the police.⁶ As it seems CJCC does have some discretion regarding how the agency’s general funds are spent, we hope that they will consider beginning this project absent earmarked funding, and we ask Council to consider including dedicated funds for this survey.

Additionally, in CJCC’s responses to pre-hearing questions, we noted that nine reports were produced that were not made public (see Table, below). While these reports may have been completed at the request of a CJCC member, we believe the information contained is of public interest, and should be released. If there is personally identifiable information (PII), of course we would expect that to be redacted. But understanding why anyone in the DC Jail is there for over five years, for example, is an important piece of data, particularly given that 5 years in jail costs the District over a half million dollars.⁷

FY 2025 Reports produced by CJCC that were not made public

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|---|---|
| DC Safe and GunStat/GVPA Comparison | To identify differences and similarities across DV offenders and Gunstat. |
| Reported Violent Crime and DC Homelessness Shelters | To identify types of crime that occur within close proximity to homeless shelters |
| Pathways Inclusion Criteria | To provide arrest histories for potential program candidates |
| ADW Gun and Homicide Gun Incidents | To provide geographical locations of homicides and ADW. |
| Juvenile Rearrests for ACE | To examine the rearrest of youth under ACE diversion during program and for a one year follow up. |
| Literature Review on Risk- Needs Responsivity and Juvenile Diversion | To examine the effect of risk-needs responsivity on juveniles. |
| Deep Dive on Youths with Violent Apprehensions | An analysis of youths with over 3 violent crime apprehensions to identify patterns, discuss the process of the system, and get details from partner agencies. |
| Juvenile Incident Location | To examine the locations of violent incidents with juvenile arrestees. |
| Examination of Long Stays at DOC | Deep dive analysis examined the case characteristics of the individuals who had been at DOC for 5 or more years. |

Multi-Agency Initiatives. Finally, we wanted to discuss two initiatives CJCC has begun in the past year: the Crossover Youth Practice Model project, and the Prearrest Diversion Taskforce.

Crossover Youth. I will only briefly touch on the Crossover Youth project, as CCE has discussed this in depth in our youth justice testimony. CCE wanted primarily to commend CJCC for identifying funding for and launching this initiative. While we have provided some feedback about gaps and opportunities for improvement, we are optimistic that this project will help District agencies implement the recommendations we made in the report CCE produced for ODCA, *A Broken Web: Improved Interagency Collaboration is Needed for D.C.’s Crossover Youth.*⁸

Prearrest Diversion Taskforce. In the 2020 report CCE produced on behalf of the D.C. Auditor entitled, *Everything is Scattered: The Intersection of Substance Use Disorders and Justice-Involvement in the District*,⁹ we recommended the District create a permanent prearrest diversion program. We appreciated that, as a step towards this goal, a prearrest diversion taskforce (Taskforce) was mandated in the Secure DC Omnibus Amendment Act of 2024 (Secure DC).¹⁰ This past June, CJCC began convening the Taskforce, which is comprised of District agencies and a few community stakeholders. CCE has been observing the monthly Taskforce meetings since they began in June 2025 and has seen significant progress made in less than a year.

One Taskforce activity we would like to highlight is the roundtable the Taskforce held on January 12, 2026 with individuals with lived experiences in D.C.'s criminal legal system. This roundtable raised important issues not previously discussed by the taskforce, such as a need to include youth in any PAD program. Additionally, many members of the roundtable noted their negative experiences with the police, saying they wanted PAD strategies to emphasize peer mentors or civilian crisis intervention teams rather than the police. They also recommended that D.C. police should receive additional intensive training on interactions with individuals with behavioral health concerns, with more field practicums and training that include or are led by peer mentors.

CCE would like to echo the roundtable's recommendations. We are concerned that the proposed program is not fully diverting people from legal system involvement if they are only being referred at the point of arrest. We urge the taskforce to recommend more police training, non-police diversion options, and the inclusion youth as a population for PAD. Many other jurisdictions have a juvenile prearrest diversion program including Colorado,¹¹ Nebraska,¹² and Minnesota.¹³ We hope that this committee will ask for more details about the plans for the Taskforce as part of this oversight hearing and will help sustain the focus and energy behind it the so that the end result is a strong, implementable PAD program for D.C. CCE stands ready as a community partner to provide input, share resources, and help implement the important work of the Taskforce, if needed. Thank you.

¹ DC Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, "An Analysis of Pretrial Detention Before and After Secure DC." June 2025.

<https://cjcc.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/cjcc/Public%20Report%20CJCC%20Pretrial%20Detention%20Report%20updated%206-23-2025.pdf>

² Opportunity Consulting, *Reducing Juvenile Involvement in Violent Crimes: Perspectives from DC Youth, Families and Community Members*, September 2025.

<https://cjcc.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/cjcc/CJCC%20Youth%20Focus%20Groups%20Report%2009262025.docx.pdf>

³ Code of the District of Columbia, §25-151, Crime Victimization Survey Amendment Act of 2023.

<https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/laws/25-151>

⁴ https://lms.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/52111/Other/B25-0051-FIS-Crime_Victimization_Survey.pdf?Id=176401

⁵ U.S. Department of Justice, Criminal Victimization, Office of Justice Programs, September 2025. chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/<https://bjs.ojp.gov/document/cv24.pdf>

⁶ Council of the District of Columbia, Committee on Public Works and Operations. "Roundtable Report on Potential Human Rights Violations due to Federal Government Intrusion, Jan. 8, 2026.

https://brianneknadeau.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/CIRCULATION-DRAFT_PWO-Roundtable-Report-on-Human-Rights-Violations.pdf

⁷ CCE analysis of data from D.C. Department of Corrections, "Facts and Figures," January 2026. Annual DOC expenses: approximately \$225 million; average daily population, CY2025: 2,011.

<https://doc.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/doc/publication/attachments/DC%20Department%20of%20Corrections%20Facts%20and%20Figures%20January%202026.pdf>

⁸ Council for Court Excellence and the Office of the D.C. Auditor, *A Broken Web: Improved Interagency Collaboration is Needed for D.C.'s Crossover Youth*, May 2024. https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/659c0df344c9c8325dd821ca/673caf1772f0ea16a294172a_Crossover.Youth.Report.5.28.24.Final.pdf

⁹ Council for Court Excellence and the Office of the D.C. Auditor, "Everything is Scattered... The Intersection of Substance Use Disorders and Incarcerations in the District," August 25, 2020, https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/659c0df344c9c8325dd821ca/6623305d29e837f992565ddc_SUD_Report_82520.pdf

¹⁰Code of the District of Columbia, § 22-4237. Prearrest Diversion Task Force. <https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/code/sections/22-4237>.

¹¹ Colorado District of Attorney Office, Juvenile Justice, 2022. <https://firstda.co/what-we-do/juvenile-justice/>

¹² Nebraska, Juvenile Programs and Interventions, 2025. <https://ncc.nebraska.gov/juvenile-programs-and-interventions>

¹³ Minnesota Statutes Counties, County Officers, Regional Authorities, § 388.24. Pretrial diversion programs for juveniles.