



September 6, 2005

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\***

The annual Public Comments Hearing of the State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy is scheduled for Monday, September 12, 2005 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. It will be held in the Judiciary Training Center at 2009D Commerce Park Drive, Annapolis, MD.

Members of the public are invited to address the Commission with their concerns about sentencing issues in Maryland. While the public is able to discuss any topic regarding the Maryland sentencing guidelines or related issues, the Commission plans to moderate a discussion on the sentencing of drug offenders.

To accommodate all who wish to participate in the meeting, the Commission requests that each speaker limit his or her comments to five minutes. All who are interested in speaking at the public meeting should contact David Soulé, Executive Director of the Commission, at least three days prior to the meeting, at (301) 403-4165.



# THE STATE COMMISSION ON CRIMINAL SENTENCING POLICY

## Establishment and Charge of the State Commission

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The Maryland General Assembly created the State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy (SCCSP) in May 1999, under Chapter 648 of the Laws of Maryland. In July 1999, the SCCSP formally replaced its predecessor advisory commission, the Maryland Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy (MCCSP). The enabling legislation for the SCCSP set out six legislative goals for sentencing in Maryland, stating that:

1. Sentencing should be fair and proportional and that sentencing policies should reduce unwarranted disparity, including any racial disparity, in sentences for offenders who have committed similar offenses and have similar criminal histories;
2. Sentencing policies should aid citizen understanding of the time that an offender will actually be incarcerated, if any;
3. Sentencing guidelines are voluntary and that it is voluntary for the courts to sentence within the guidelines;
4. Prison capacity and prison usage should give priority to the incarceration of violent and career offenders;
5. Sentencing policies should preserve meaningful judicial discretion in the imposition of sentences and sufficient flexibility to permit individualized sentences; and
6. Sentencing judges in every jurisdiction in the State should be able to impose the most appropriate criminal penalties, including corrections options programs for appropriate offenders.

The SCCSP was designed and authorized with the purpose of fulfilling those legislative intentions.

## SCCSP Composition

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The SCCSP is composed of the 19 voting and 3 ex officio members listed on the next page. The Chairman, the Honorable Raymond G. Thieme, was appointed by the Governor in August 2003 to lead the State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy.

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## Current Members of the State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy

### ***Members Appointed by the Governor***

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**Chair**

Honorable Raymond G. Thieme

**State's Attorney**

Honorable Robert Riddle

**Criminal Defense Attorney**

Richard A. Finci, Esquire

**Victims' Advocacy Group**

Russell P. Butler, Esquire

**Law Enforcement**

Chief Gary W. McLhinney

**Criminal Justice or Corrections Policy Expert**

Charles F. Wellford, Ph.D.

**Local Detention Center**

Barry L. Stanton

**Public**

Janis Judson, Ph.D.

**Public**

James V. Anthenelli, Esquire

### ***Members Appointed by the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals of Maryland***

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**Appellate Courts**

Honorable Arrie W. Davis

**Circuit Court**

Honorable John C. Themelis

**District Court**

Honorable Timothy J. Doory

### ***Members Appointed by the President of the Senate***

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**Senator**

Honorable Delores G. Kelley

**Senator**

Honorable John A. Giannetti

### ***Members Appointed by the Speaker of the House***

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**Delegate**

Honorable Curtis S. Anderson

**Delegate**

Honorable Joseph F. Vallario, Jr.

### ***Ex-Officio Members***

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**Attorney General**

J. Joseph Curran, Jr.

**State Public Defender**

Nancy S. Forster, Esq.

**Secretary of Public Safety & Correctional Services**

Mary Ann Saar