



State of Minnesota
Minnesota Department of Corrections

January 12, 2005

Honorable James R. Nobles
Legislative Auditor
Room 140
658 Cedar Street
Saint Paul, MN 55155-1603

Dear Mr. Nobles:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Legislative Auditor's final draft of the program evaluation on *Community Supervision of Sex Offenders*.

In our judgment, the Report represents a valuable compilation of data and information on a subject of critical importance. Moreover, the Report is organized and presented in such a way as to introduce new readers to a very complicated set of policy questions. As both a "survey" of the current challenges, and as a "road-map" to future reform, the Report is a very useful document.

For the purpose of the Department of Corrections' response to this Report, just a few points deserve special emphasis.

As a survey of our current challenges:

- The Report correctly notes that "sex offenders," as a group, include an incredibly broad set of pathologies and criminal offense histories. (*See*, Report at 25 to 30)
- The Report also makes clear that not all sex offenders represent the same level or type of risk to the larger community, and not all sex offenders present the very same level of risk throughout their supervision. (*See*, Report at 44 to 51)
- The Report confirms that despite rising caseloads, Minnesota's Corrections agencies at the state and county level supervise very difficult populations of dangerous offenders with energy and seriousness. (*See*, Report at 31 to 54)
- The Report verifies that effective assessments are critical if the resources that are available are to be applied proportionally to meet the risks presented by individual offenders. (*See*, Report at 61 to 65)

As a road map for future reforms:

- The Report correctly states that developing a single and uniform set of standards for supervision, treatment, assessment and performance should be a priority for our state. (*See*, Report at 51 to 60)
- The Report accurately outlines the need to develop technical and professional standards, to perform an ongoing review of Minnesota's supervision practices, and to conduct an independent comparison of our state's performance with those of other states. (*See*, Report at 90 to 93).
- The Report corroborates our view that the pace of improvements and innovation in sex offender supervision practice is bounded only by the availability of resources. (*See*, Report at 100 to 103). The Department of Corrections has already undertaken a number of pioneering improvements to sex offender supervision practice, and is eager to do even more, if additional resources are available.

In summary, the Department of Corrections shares your commitment to excellence in the supervision of sex offenders, and regards this Report as a vital tool for educating others on these important issues.

We look forward to working with your office, the Minnesota Legislature and other stakeholders in developing a set of sex offender supervision practices that will lead the nation in their efficacy and value.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joan Fabian".

Joan Fabian
Commissioner of Corrections