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Doug Shipman
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President Shipman:

Councilmember Hillis and I, as Co-Chairs of the Justice Policy Board (JPB), are pleased to present the Fulton County Jail Population Review from the JPB's Jail Population Review Committee (JPRC). As requested by the City Council on 17 August 2022 in Ordinance 22-O-1632, the Review, using established best practices, examines the population of the Fulton County Jail both longitudinally (*i.e.*, over time) and cross-sectionally (*i.e.*, snapshot in time), looking at variables such as length of jail stay, bond amount, and offense(s) charged.

Preparing the Review in the brief time allotted by the Ordinance meant diving deep into data but refraining from substantial policy analysis. And indeed, that was not our charter here: the Ordinance asked for analytics rather than synthesis. But synthesis ought to be what follows from this: what should the City and the County do about the longer stays in jail for the chronically unhoused? How can we address the acceleration in growth in the jail population? Is crime truly up that much or are we underinvested in diversionary resources? How do we balance expanding our non-custodial options with maintaining public safety?

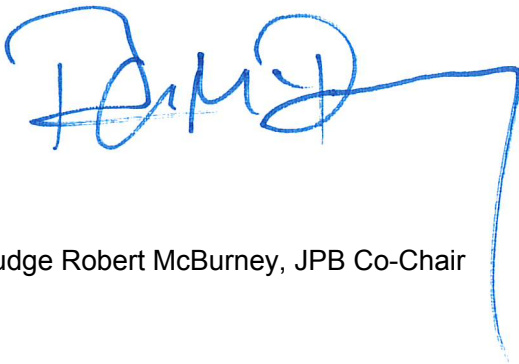
These important questions (and many others that arose during our review) yield the fundamental recommendation of the Review: empower the JPRC to continue its work so we can press towards policy recommendations that address ways to reduce jail population by increasing diversions and accelerating case flows -- all while maintaining a focus on positive public safety outcomes. Long-term jail population reviews have achieved just such results in other jurisdictions, and there is no reason to believe that, once we have standardized our data, we cannot do the same here.

Organizing the JPRC and preparing this report in the brief window we were allotted was an impressive collaborative effort that merits thanks to the many stakeholders, public and private, who made this work possible. Those thanks are largely set forth in the Review, but Councilmember Hillis and I would be remiss if we did not again credit Dr. William Sabol, Professor in Criminal Justice & Criminology in the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University, and his team for their leadership in data analysis; Rebecca Brown, Founder and Principal of Further The Work, for

bringing subject matter expertise to advise the work of the JPRC; and Stefanie Lopez-Howard, Director of the Statistical Analysis Center of the State of Georgia's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, who, as Chair of the JPRC, dedicated countless hours to herding cats, encouraging output, and ensuring progress. It took a village, and these were our village's strong and tireless leaders.

Please extend our thanks to the City Council for having called for a thoughtful, data-driven review of what is by far the largest population of pre-trial detainees in the State. We have started something important here, and we trust that you and your colleagues will continue your robust support for the Justice Policy Board's work.

Sincerely,



Judge Robert McBurney, JPB Co-Chair



Councilmember Dustin Hillis, JPB Co-Chair