



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Middlesex Sheriff's Office

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Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian address Governor's Council in Public Policy Forum

BOSTON – Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian addressed members of the Governor's Council Wed., July 1 at the State House.

Appearing at the invitation of Councillor Marilyn Petitto Devaney, Sheriff Koutoujian spoke during an hour-long Public Policy Forum.

“I want to thank Councillor Devaney and the members of the Governor's Council for the opportunity to meet with them and discuss the work we are doing on a daily basis,” said Sheriff Koutoujian. “I greatly appreciate every chance I get to speak about the work we are doing at the Middlesex Sheriff's Office and the crucial role corrections officers and our non-uniform staff play in keeping the public safe.”

During the meeting, Sheriff Koutoujian spoke with Councillors about addiction treatment programming at the Middlesex House of Correction and the number of men – both sentenced and pretrial – currently in custody with documented histories of mental illness. The Sheriff told Councillors that more than 80 percent of those in the custody of the Middlesex Sheriff's Office self-identify with an addiction issue and medical staff are on pace to initiate more than 2,000 medical detoxifications this year. Additionally, 49 percent of individuals newly committed to the Middlesex House of Correction and Jail in June reported a history of mental illness.

Sheriff Koutoujian also discussed with the Governor's Council a recently released study of the pretrial population at the Middlesex House of Correction and Jail conducted by the National Institute of Corrections (NIC). That study found the average length of stay for individuals awaiting trial had increased by nearly 24 percent between 2008-2013, while the average daily population increased by 30 percent during the same timeframe. In its report, the NIC provided several recommendations including implementing a validated risk assessment tool at arraignment to determine high and low risk defendants, as well as improving data collection to better measure outcomes and identify criminal justice trends.

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