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Dear Committee Members,

I write to you in support of the Marshall County Drug Court Program. This program has proven to be a valuable tool to intervene with criminal offenders who are charged with substance abuse related charges and to offer a positive alternative to incarceration. Our statistics show that the drug court program remains extremely successful in diverting criminal offenders from the "revolving door" syndrome of returning to incarceration due to addiction. Not only is recidivism being reduced but lives are being changed for the better.

As Marshall County Attorney I see the benefits of this program first hand. First and foremost is the benefit to the members of the community. Our drug court is panel based and therefore dependent upon community volunteers who donate their time to make it successful. These community panel members come from a variety of backgrounds and work in concert to support and monitor a participant while maintaining a balance of authority, supervision and encouragement. This model also benefits the offenders in that it puts them in the position of being accountable to members of the community who genuinely want to see them succeed rather than wrapping them up in the traditional corrections system where they have previously failed.

In addition to benefiting the community, the Drug Court program benefits the criminal justice system as a whole. As a prosecutor, the program gives us an additional sentencing option to present to the offender that addresses the real issue behind the crime rather than simply incarcerating the offender and allowing them to return to the same lifestyle upon release. Government and consequently the tax payers are saving money as it costs significantly less to treat an individual than it does to incarcerate the same individual.

Continuation of the Drug Court program in Marshall County is absolutely essential to break the cycle of criminal justice involvement by the many individuals in this state who have fallen victim to substance abuse addiction. I strongly support this valuable and successful program.

Sincerely,


Jennifer Miller

Marshall County Attorney