



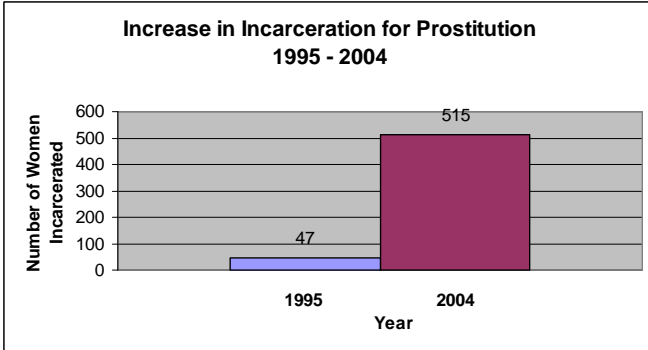
CHICAGO COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

SB 75 (Rep. Molaro) FIRST OFFENDER PROBATION (PROSTITUTION)

Passed the Senate on March 22, 2007 with a vote of 42-13, (sponsored by Sen. Collins).

SB 75 will reduce recidivism by allowing judges to offer probation with rehabilitation for first time felony prostitution offenders. This sentencing option will only be available one time. Upon successful completion of 24 months of probation and its terms, the case will be dismissed and the offender will avoid a criminal record.

WHY THIS LEGISLATION IS NEEDED IN ILLINOIS:

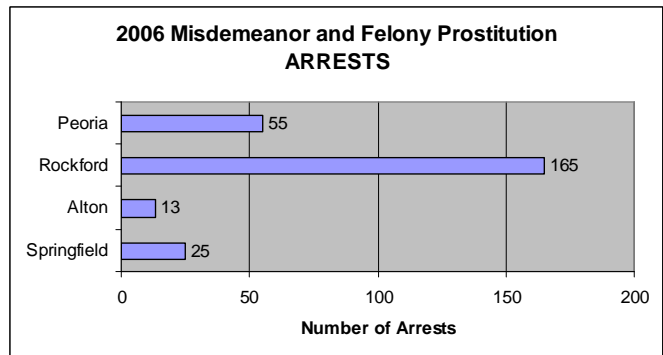


- Prostitution ranks 3rd for female arrests in Cook County and can be upgraded to a felony charge after the first misdemeanor conviction.
- 917 women were arrested for Felony Prostitution in Chicago in 2005. Of those 392 were convicted. 95 percent of women in Illinois Prisons for Felony Prostitution are arrested in Chicago.
- In Illinois between 30 and 50 percent of women released from prison return within three years. Community based sentencing options report much lower recidivism rates.

In Chicago, 16,000-25,000 women are involved in prostitution over the course of a year, many of whom have been coerced into the lifestyle. 6,500 youth are prostituted in Illinois every year. Of women in prostitution:

- 62% entered prostitution before the age of 18
- 86% are victims of some form of domestic violence
- 75% are victims of sexual assault
- 66% are victims of incest
- 50% experience homelessness

The vast majority of persons in prostitution suffer from long-term physical and emotional pain, often resulting in mental illness, physical disabilities and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). It is the inability to access services for these issues, coupled with poverty, continued abuse and a lengthening criminal record that keeps women in prostitution.



HOW WILL THIS WORK?

Upon sentencing a judge will decide whether the offender is eligible for this sentencing option and define services which can include: housing assistance, trauma and substance abuse counseling and job training. No one with a prior felony prostitution conviction will be eligible, and it is only available once. **This option currently exists for first time, low level felony drug offenders.**

The First Offender Probation Act LETS JUDGES DECIDE WHETHER TREATMENT OR INCARCERATION WILL REDUCE RECIDIVISM

SUPPORTERS

- City of Chicago
- Chicago Legal Advocacy for Incarcerated Mothers
- Chicago Foundation for Women
- Cook County Commission on Women's Issues
- Illinois Consortium on Drug Policy at Roosevelt University
- League of Women Voters of Illinois
- Project IRENE
- YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago
- Protestants for the Common Good
- Midwest Harm Reduction Institute
- TASC (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities)