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James T. Plousis, Chairman
Budget Testimony FY18
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The New Jersey State Parole Board is committed to promoting public safety and fostering the successful rehabilitation of offenders by implementing policies that result in effective parole case management for the 15,722 offenders, including 5,797 sex offenders under supervision. With responsible parole decision making and the successful and sustainable reintegration of offenders into society by utilizing evidence based practices, the State Parole Board continues to seek improvement in the lives of our offenders, their families, their communities, as well as decrease recidivism. These accomplishments would not be possible without the dedication and hard work of the men and women of this agency who perform their duties and responsibilities efficiently and effectively. In addition to the personnel of the State Parole Board, partnerships continue with numerous local, state and federal law enforcement as well as other government agencies and community based organizations.

The State Parole Board Division of Parole was recently reaccredited through the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police. This law enforcement accreditation recognizes compliance with 105 "best practices" standards and results in greater accountability within the agency, reduced risk and liability exposure, stronger defense against civil lawsuits, increased community advocacy, and more confidence in the agency's ability to operate efficiently and respond to community needs.

The State Parole Board Veteran Offender Reentry Initiative continues to assist veteran offenders who have served our country with dignity but have fallen on hard times to access various programs and services to which they are entitled. Our partnership with the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs has resulted in an increase in veteran offenders successfully placed at the Veterans Haven South and Veterans Haven North programs. We have continued to support the Gloucester County Prosecutor's Office with their veterans' initiative, which assists eligible, recently arrested veterans to access the appropriate services and treatment programs in a concerted effort to divert them from the criminal justice system and prevent future recidivism.

The State Parole Board is working on the second year of a three-year federal grant. The State Parole Board received a grant for \$932,805 from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to fund a Second Chance Act (SCA) Demonstration and Implementation program in Union County. The grant award supports the implementation of the Parole Reentry Program in Union County designed to serve medium to high risk parolees returning to the county by providing services to support their reentry. The State Parole Board partnered with Union County Department of Human Services to provide case management and to contract with housing and mental health

providers. The State Parole Board is also collaborating with Union County College to provide education and employment services through assessment and case management prioritizing clients based on needs. The grant program will end in September 2018.

As part of last year's testimony, I spoke about grant funding administered through the Division of Criminal Justice in 2014 and 2015. Working collaboratively with the New Jersey State Police, this funding was utilized to automate the real-time population of the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Supervised Release File with data for the greater than 15,000 offenders currently under supervision within the State Parole Board's case management system.

Since the implementation of this project, any law enforcement contact within the United States with any parolee under State Parole Board supervision resulting in an NCIC inquiry returns to the inquiring law enforcement officer the supervision status of the parolee, as well as, other identifying details. Simultaneously, an automatic real-time alert is sent to the Division of Parole supervising parole officer regarding the law enforcement inquiry.

In October 2016, for the third time, this project has earned a national award. The State Parole Board's Supervised Release File Project received a 2016 "Dig IT" award for "Discovery and Innovation in Government" from Government Computer News (GCN). The project was previously awarded a 2016 Technology Solutions Award by the national Public Technology Institute and the 2016 GMIS "G2" Award in the category "Government-to-Government."

The State Parole Board has submitted a federal grant application through the United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Program for funding of a BJA Smart Supervision Reducing Prison Population, Saving Money and Creating Safer Communities, 2017. This grant will allow the State Parole Board to work together with the University Behavioral Health Care organization and Rutgers Bloustein School Center for Survey Research to enhance supervision for youthful parolees returning to Newark. Substance abuse contributes to increased rates of recidivism. Mental health plays a role as well. This grant will attempt to address these two issues.

In closing, the State Parole Board will continue to collaborate with partnering law enforcement and state agencies, as well as to maximize technologies in its implementation of evidence based best practices in the field of community supervision. These innovative efforts further promote public safety and seek to improve the quality of community based programs to provide every available opportunity for successful offender reintegration.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I welcome any questions at this time.