

Governor's Crime Commission
Department of Public Safety
State of North Carolina
1201 Front St.
Raleigh, NC 27609

Governor's Gang Task Force Final Report

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Dedication

In remembrance of Douglas Yearwood, former Director of the Criminal Justice Analysis Center of the Governor's Crime Commission.



In 1997, as Director of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Analysis Center (NCCJAC) of the Governor's Crime Commission (GCC), Doug Yearwood recognized the importance of criminal gangs as an emerging criminal justice issue in the state. This was not seen as a pressing or popular issue by many. He fought tirelessly to find a way for his research team to gain approval to investigate the presence of gangs in the state along with the level of law enforcement training, knowledge, and agency willingness to recognize gangs as an issue.

In 1999, after two years of research and analysis of existing information in the field of gang research, the first GCC report on the systemic nature of gangs in North Carolina was published. This was followed by multiple publications on gangs in schools and in communities, the nature of Hispanic gangs in North Carolina, and others. These initial studies and publications helped to provide the evidence that criminal gangs were more than an inconvenient presence and had risen to being a problem for many jurisdictions. Doug and his support for these studies was instrumental in indicating a need for a unified statewide definition of a gang, allowing law enforcement agencies to recognize it was better to acknowledge gangs and confront them in an informed manner. He championed GCC's efforts to provide grant funding for law enforcement to begin gang units and the efforts of the emerging Gang Investigators Association statewide training efforts.

By 2004, it was apparent in a five-year follow-up to the original statewide gang study that law enforcement had come a long way in acknowledging and confronting criminal gangs in their jurisdictions. Today, GCC studies indicate that almost every jurisdiction in North Carolina has experienced some level of criminal gang activities. Many communities have used the GCC reports on gang activities to show the need for gang prevention, reduction and suppression efforts in their communities. These studies were also important in GCC seeing the value in supporting NC GangNET, a statewide law enforcement gang intelligence database that allows officers to share information on suspected gang members and their activities. The efforts of Doug Yearwood placed the NCCJAC of the GCC as the acknowledged leader in understanding the nature and scope of criminal gangs, be they juvenile, youth, adult, Hispanic, hate groups, motorcycle, or other demographic groups that fall under the codified definition of criminal gangs in North Carolina.

Governor's Gang Task Force Members

Member	Position
Captain Mark P. Bridgeman	Governor's Gang Task Force Chair; Captain, Fayetteville Police Department; President of the North Carolina Gang Investigator's Association
The Reverend K. Frances Cook	Governor's Gang Task Force Vice Chair; Director, Gang of One, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department
Secretary Linda Hayes	Chair, Prevention Subcommittee; Secretary, Division of Juvenile Justice, Department of Public Safety, Raleigh
Ms. Michelle H. Guarino	Chair, Intervention Subcommittee; Crisis Unit Supervisor, Chapel Hill Police
The Honorable Samuel Scott Page	Chair, Suppression Subcommittee; Sheriff, Rockingham County
Ms. Stormy Ellis	Chair, Re-Entry Subcommittee; Staff Attorney at North Carolina Innocence Inquiry Commission, Raleigh
Mr. Michael J. Arnold/Ms. Meghan Brown	Policy Director, Office of the Governor/Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor, Raleigh
Mr. Mark S. Baker	Director, TE Connectivity, North Carolina
Dr. Beth E. Bjerregaard	Professor, University of North Carolina, Charlotte
Mrs. Margaret D. Bradsher	School Board Member, Roxboro
The Honorable Steve Bunn	Sheriff, Bladen County
The Honorable Elaine M. Bushfan	Judge, Superior Court, Durham
The Honorable Roy A. Cooper III/ Designee: Jennifer Epperson	Attorney General/Legislative and Policy Counsel, Department of Justice, Raleigh
The Honorable Benjamin R. David	District Attorney, New Hanover County
The Honorable Minnie Forte-Brown	School Board Member, Durham
Dr. Kenneth W. Gattis	Senior Research and Evaluation Coordinator, Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh
Mr. David W. Guice	Director of Community Corrections, Raleigh
The Honorable Donnie Hoover	Judge, North Carolina District Court, Mecklenburg County
The Honorable Susan W. Kluttz	Mayor Pro Tem, Salisbury
Chief Deputy Secretary Jennie Lancaster	Chief Deputy Secretary, Division of Adult Correction, Department of Public Safety, Raleigh
Chief Jose L. Lopez, Sr./Designee: Assistant Chief Larry Smith	Police Chief, Durham Police Department
Mr. Gregory S. McLeod	Director, State Bureau of Investigation, Raleigh
Solomon Quick	Gang Reduction Specialist, Winston-Salem Police Department

Senator Josh Stein	North Carolina Senate, Raleigh
Mr. Walter Kurt Telford	High School Principal, Clemmons
The Honorable Scott Thomas	Chair, Governor's Crime Commission, Raleigh
Secretary Reuben Young	Secretary, Department of Public Safety, Raleigh

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Introduction

Established in October 2010 through Executive Order No. 69 (see Appendix A), the purpose of the Governor's Gang Task Force is to enhance anti-gang law enforcement efforts and develop gang prevention policies in North Carolina.

Twenty-seven (27) Task Force members were appointed by the Governor. Membership included leadership positions within state agencies, leaders in law enforcement, the community, legislators, and other key figures involved in gang prevention, intervention, suppression, and re-entry work throughout the state.

The purpose of the Governor's Gang Task Force was to develop a comprehensive plan to ensure a well-coordinated, statewide enforcement program, investigate and identify emerging gang issues, and recommend legislative and executive actions necessary to implement a coordinated plan.

Reports from the North Carolina Criminal Justice Analysis Center reveal that there has been gang activity in North Carolina communities since well before the initial research in 1997. The most recent data reveals that 59 of 100 North Carolina counties report a combined 963 gangs and 10,105 gang members across the state. These gang members are predominately male, Black and Hispanic, and between 16-25 years of age (NCCJAC, 2012)¹.

The Governor's Gang Task Force convened on November 10, 2011 at the Governor's Crime Commission office in Raleigh for its inaugural meeting. The Task Force met 6 times over the course of one year. During these meetings, Task Force members heard presentations from the National Gang Center, Governor's Crime Commission, Division of Juvenile Justice, former gang members, law enforcement, and gang prevention specialists so that they might fully understand the issues and potential enhancements to enforcement and prevention.

Work was primarily accomplished through subcommittees of the Task Force. These subcommittees, led by Task Force members but also included interested community members, met several times during the year to generate recommendations for action items. Those action items, contained within this report, were presented to the full Task Force for approval at the December 13, 2012 meeting. This report categorizes the recommendations into five components: (1) general; (2) prevention; (3) intervention; (4) suppression; and (5) re-entry.

¹ Hayes, R. A., Lafond, B., & Mehta, S. Governor's Crime Commission, Department of Public Safety, Criminal Justice Analysis Center. (2012). *Gangs in North Carolina: An analysis of GangNET data*. Retrieved from website: http://www.ncgccd.org/pdfs/pubs/gang_crime/2012GangReport.pdf.

Need for a Comprehensive Plan

The increased growth and acknowledgement of gangs in North Carolina demands a comprehensive approach designed to reduce gang membership and crime. Over the past decade, individual counties have begun to identify gangs and gang members that reside and operate within their jurisdiction and have implemented a variety of responses to the presence of gangs. Those counties which have been able to utilize best practices in gang reduction and sustain a comprehensive approach to reducing gangs have seen the greatest successes.

A comprehensive, best practice approach, however, does not mean a “one size fits all” approach. Cultural and economic differences, geographic location, and infrastructure play roles in the effectiveness and feasibility of programming. Taking these factors into account is requisite in the development of a comprehensive plan which can provide a common framework for implementation and evaluation. Components of a comprehensive plan include prevention, intervention, suppression, and re-entry and address all stages of gang involvement, from the at-risk to the hardcore.

The Governor’s Gang Task Force strongly urges the state-wide utilization of the Comprehensive Gang Model in response to the growing presence of gangs in North Carolina.

The Comprehensive Gang Model

The Comprehensive Gang Model is the outcome of national research (Spergel, 1995)² and includes the components of (1) Primary Prevention; (2) Secondary Prevention; (3) Intervention; (4) Suppression and (5) Re-entry.

Primary Prevention

This approach targets the entire population in high-crime and high risk communities. Primary Prevention focuses on those living in high crime, high risk areas and includes programs that address risk and protective factors by providing the following:

- After-School Programs, Summer Camps
- Prenatal, Infancy, and Family Health Support
- Parenting, Financial, English as a Second Language (ESL), and Spanish as a Second Language (SSL) classes
- Citizenship Training
- Job Training

Secondary Prevention

Identifies children and youth at higher risk and provides services to prevent delinquency and gang involvement. The window of opportunity for greatest impact is children ages 7-14 by providing the following:

- School-Based, Community-Based, and Faith-Based Programs
- Mentoring/Tutoring, Athletic, and Drama and Arts Programs
- Conversation Spanish Classes for Service Providers
- Educational/GED and Vocational Services

Intervention

Targets active gang members and close associates, requires aggressive outreach, ongoing recruitment and careful planning and coordination, requires multi-disciplinary team for assessment, intervention planning, and case management.

- Truancy and Drop-out Teams
- GED and Vocational Services

² Spergel, I. A. (1995). *The Youth Gang Problem: A Community Approach*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Alternative Activities
- Job Training and Placement
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
- Emergency Room Intervention and Victim Services

Suppression

Targets active gang leaders for aggressive suppression, involves law enforcement, probation, and prosecution; removes dangerous and influential gang members from the community by effective use of intelligence, targeting, and vertical prosecution.

- GangNet – a statewide gang database for law enforcement
- Geo-Mapping and Tracking
- Legislation – Federal, State
- Ordinances – City
- Injunctions – Court
- Gang member “Call In”

Re-entry

Provides ex-offenders who are ex-gang members with support services for a successful return to the community

- Pre-release contact and post-release plan
- GED and Vocational Services
- Job Training & Placement
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
- Housing

To most effectively combat gangs, a state-wide comprehensive approach that flexes with county-specific culture and context is essential. The holistic approach of the best practice Comprehensive Gang Model is recommended by the Governor’s Gang Task Force. The Task Force has elected to utilize four of the five components (primary and secondary prevention are combined) and have outline recommendations for Prevention, Intervention, Suppression, and Re-entry in the following section.

Governor's Gang Task Force establishment and work

The Governor's Crime Commission hired two full-time staff members to assist with Gang Task Force activities in the fall of 2010. The staffers worked systematically toward accomplishing the objectives of the Task Force, beginning with a comprehensive literature review of gang-related works and research and a comprehensive review of existing gang programming within the state. The staffers scheduled site visits to gang programs in North Carolina that reported notable results and which were highly recognized across the state in order to gather additional programmatic information and interview key staff regarding operations and effectiveness of programs. Sites visited included the Project Safe Neighborhoods program through the Fayetteville Police Department in Cumberland County, the G.R.E.A.T. program implemented through Robeson County Sheriff's Office in Robeson County, and the Greenville Police Department prevention/intervention/re-entry initiatives and gang task force efforts in Pitt County. In addition, the Gang Task Force staffers participated in training opportunities both at the local and national level.

Subsequently, appointments to the Governor's Gang Task Force were finalized and a Chair and Vice Chair were chosen to direct objectives and provide direction. The appointed Chair was Captain Mark P. Bridgeman and the Vice Chair was K. Frances Cook, and under their direction the Task Force members worked to develop a comprehensive plan to ensure a coordinated statewide enforcement program, investigate and identify emerging gang issues, and recommend legislative and executive actions necessary for implementation of this plan. Staff coordinated with the Chair and Vice Chair to organize meetings and prepare all necessary documentation in order to facilitate a smooth transition of the Task Force from concept to advisory body.

The inaugural meeting for the Task Force took place at the Governor's Crime Commission office on Thursday, November 10, 2011. Subsequent meetings were held bi-monthly. These meetings focused on opportunities for advancement of gang reduction through the work of the subcommittees and presentations of numerous individuals associated with gang reduction throughout the state. These subsequent meetings also formed the basis for the following recommendations as subcommittees began to discuss and articulate the need and means for potential gang reduction strategies.

The following sections detail the recommendations that were formalized during the time of the Governor's Gang Task Force. The recommendations were done following extensive consideration regarding the potential effect for the state, as well as the potential barriers and negative effects for the main stakeholders of the recommendations: individuals prone to gang membership, current gang members, and individual citizens statewide. The recommendations are categorized by the four subcommittee areas and general recommendations (affecting all areas), which reflect the best practices in each area. Implementation of any recommendations should and will be followed by extensive evaluation to determine prolonged feasibility and potential future benefit (or cost) to the state and individual citizens. The reduction areas are now elaborated in this specific order: General, Prevention, Intervention, Suppression, and Re-Entry.

Recommendations and Implementation Steps

North Carolina is fortunate to have a number of government agencies, law enforcement agencies, and non-profit community organizations that provide prevention and intervention opportunities for gang-involved youth and their families. They also provide suppression and re-entry opportunities for those gang members who break the law, are convicted and incarcerated, and then return to the community. These groups use a variety of strategies to produce law abiding citizens and create safe communities. Despite their tremendous efforts, work outside their respective agencies is sometimes inconsistent and uncoordinated. No single entity exists that has a comprehensive view of resources and needs in a particular community. Similarly, no single entity is charged with ensuring a continuum of opportunities and action within the components of gang prevention, intervention, suppression, and re-entry. Our current system is lacking in the necessary integration of services, a continuum ranging from prevention and intervention to suppression and re-entry, which is the most effective means of reducing criminal gang activity and growth.

The recommendations below have been prioritized by the Task Force members as a stepping off point for North Carolina in reducing gang activity. By no means is this an inclusive list of solutions; rather, it represents North Carolina's first efforts at an integrated approach.

General Recommendations and Implementation Steps

Recommendation 1: Implement a comprehensive gang reduction plan on the county level that utilizes the four components of the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model: prevention, intervention, suppression, and re-entry.

The OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model is a multifaceted, multilayered, interdisciplinary approach to a community's gang problem which seeks to reduce or eliminate the problem.

- Multifaceted – Prevention, Intervention, Suppression, and Re-entry
- Multilayered – Decision-makers, line-staff
- Multidisciplinary – Includes justice system agencies, schools, service providers, employers, faith community, government leaders, community representatives

This approach is research based, data-driven, and outcome focused and includes integrated components of prevention, intervention, suppression and re-entry.

Implementation steps:

- The Gang Prevention Committee, which will be convened by the Governor's Crime Commission to carry out the approved recommendations of the Task Force, will coordinate training opportunities at the county level on the Comprehensive Gang Model.

- Encourage collaboration among regional and/or county agencies for the development of a comprehensive gang plan.
- This collaboration could be a component of an existing body that meets regularly to address crime as appropriate in each community. It may include, but not be limited to: law enforcement, community outreach organizations, schools, social service agencies, employment services, probation/parole, courts, city/county leadership, faith-based organizations, park and recreation, business, area mental health, and community leaders.

Recommendation 2: Create a web portal of effective programs and resources throughout the state that includes a link to the National Gang Center website and the local United Way 211 System.

The web portal proposed above will be a resource for those in the community, such as mental health providers, school officials, parents, and other citizens. This system will provide a variety of prevention, intervention, suppression, and re-entry resources for the community.

The web portal will provide contact information and web-based links to effective state programs which may be a model for communities just beginning to work in the area of gang prevention. The National Gang Center will provide communities with information about best practice programs, and the United Way 211 System allowing communities to identify existing local resources including all components of a comprehensive gang model.

Implementation steps:

- Draft a proposed web portal for North Carolina.
- Receive proposals from appropriate in-house offices or outside agencies for creation and management of the site and select one agency to create and manage the portal.

Recommendation 3: Evaluate and expand the North Carolina Street Gang Suppression Act in order to deter the continued growth of gangs and subsequent criminal activity by utilizing the most effective tools within prevention, intervention, suppression, and re-entry components of a comprehensive gang plan.

The North Carolina Street Gang Suppression Act, passed by the General Assembly in July 2008, went into effect on December 1, 2008. It was designed to give law enforcement and prosecutors a new set of ground rules for tackling the state's growing gang problem, including a state-wide definition of a street gang. Since 2008, recognition and validation of gangs has increased. It is time to determine how effective the new gang law has been and if positive enhancements can be made to support law enforcement, officers of the courts, and prevention efforts.

Implementation steps:

- Meet with government agencies, law enforcement, officers of the courts, and non-profits to assess the current state of gangs, recruitment and criminal activity, use and strength of the current legislation, and comprehensive approach to gang reduction.
- Determine if and what enhancements to the current legislation are necessary; for example, assistance for post-conviction information on gangs.
- Ensure that there is a component of the North Carolina Street Gang Suppression Act that provides incentives when a defendant cooperates with a government investigation in the prosecution of someone else. "Cooperating" can result in a lower sentence. In the federal judicial system if a defendant cooperates pre or post sentencing, the prosecutor can file a motion for a downward departure of sentencing which must amount to "substantial assistance."

Prevention Sub-Committee Recommendations and Implementation

Recommendation 1: Provide gang recognition and awareness trainings to people who work with youth and facilitate gang resistance workshops for youth with a focus on youth most affected by gangs.

Implementation steps:

- Create best-practices gang training for those who work with youth based on the national gang model.

Recommendation 2: Implement a series of community dialogues and/or forums with community members regarding gang recognition and awareness with an emphasis upon communities most affected by gangs.

Implementation steps:

- Perform gang assessments in all counties and regions.

Recommendation 3: Work with local community members by partnering with local agencies in order to assist community members with identifying the gaps as well as opportunities in program services and activities for youth and/or families in areas most impacted by gangs.

Possible service opportunities may include the use of media outlets, technology, out of school time programs, financial literacy program, parenting programs, cable television education programs, afterschool programs, drama, theater arts, summer programs, athletics, middle school programs, early childhood education classes such as pre-natal care programs.

Implementation steps:

- Identify funding for program services and activities for youth and their families in areas most impacted by gangs.

Intervention Sub-Committee Recommendations and Implementation

Recommendation 1: Implement a comprehensive intervention program at the neighborhood and/or community level that emphasizes involvement of at risk and/or gang involved individuals and their families. This program should focus on individualized needs and/or interests including academic, mental health, therapeutic, vocational, artistic and recreational options.

Implementation steps:

- Identify a Community Resource Coordinator (CRC) at the county or regional level, if needed, to engage in placement of individuals within effective intervention programs. The CRC will engage in a holistic approach to intervention advocating for social, natural and financial support for their designated community.
- Identify an existing lead agency in each of the three North Carolina districts, Eastern, Piedmont, and Western, that will coordinate with the Gang Prevention Committee to provide programming, technical and educational support, and advocacy in their district.
- Establish a strategic planning and evaluation process for intervention programming in order to ensure effective programming, measurable outcomes, proper evaluation of outcomes, and altering programming or program admission criteria as needed.

Recommendation 2: Identify and implement cultural sensitivity training for service providers and policy makers that are involved in specific programs and appropriate to the populations served.

Implementation steps:

- Implement cultural sensitivity training, appropriate to the populations served, to government employees to include but not limited to city/county officials, teachers, board of education members, policy makers and those involved with youth and family programming.
- Support evidence-based cultural sensitivity/anti-violence/character building curriculums currently successful in middle and high school venues and after school programming.
- Implement these curriculums in those areas that currently do not have this type of programming or the programming is deemed unsuccessful.
- Support a mandate that each middle school implement an evidence-based cultural sensitivity/character building program.

Recommendation 3: Implement and support alternatives to high school education that will focus on technical skills and support and enhance current effective employment programs.

Implementation steps:

- Research the effectiveness of alternatives to traditional high school settings.
- Investigate funding opportunities for jurisdictions wishing to implement an alternative high school learning environment.
- Encourage local communities to provide tax incentives to employers that host students as a part of an apprenticeship or internship.
- Explore alternatives to measuring student performance and success.

Suppression Sub-Committee Recommendations and Implementation

Recommendation 1: The addition of a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney (SAUSA)³ in each prosecutorial district in which it is needed for the purpose of handling gang-related violent crime cases from infancy to resolution and to serve as liaisons to the U.S. Attorney’s office for the purpose of federal prosecution.

Implementation steps:

- Identify prosecutorial districts at risk of gang problems through GangNet, community corrections data, etc.
- Notify these districts of opportunities for grant funding for SAUSAs.

Recommendation 2: Expand the N.C. State Bureau of Investigation Field Liaison Officer Program (FLO) to include gang training and retention of gang-trained field liaison officers and agents.

Implementation steps:

- Research and identify best-practices gang training opportunities for field liaison officers.
 - The focus of the training will include gangs, guns, and drug intelligence gathering and prosecution.
 - Training should also focus on correctional intelligence from the county and state level.
- Identify sources of funding for these additional training needs.

Recommendation 3: Provide training and structure on the “call-in system⁴” (the High Point Model), which will support the development of intervention, awareness, and intelligence training techniques; this is an ideal model for small communities.

³ The purpose of this program is to establish dually sworn Special Prosecutors in prosecutorial districts to prosecute felony cases involving violent offenses, firearms violations and drug offenses. All Special Prosecutors are dually sworn as Assistant District Attorneys (ADA) at the state level and Special Assistant United States Attorneys (SAUSA) at the federal level.

⁴ A “call in” or “notification” involves both law enforcement and community leaders in an effort to target a relatively small group of gang members and giving them an ultimatum: a promise to help them get out of the gang life and crime or to lock them and their associates up for their crime(s).

1). the first phase is investigation. An area is selected, targeted, and individuals investigated. All violent offenders are arrested and removed from the street.

2). the second phase is the notification. All non-violent offenders are “called in” to a common location and given the option of being arrested or ceasing their criminality. This phase includes law enforcement and non-law enforcement partners (congregations, advocacy groups, community elders, etc.).

The focus of the training will include gang prevention, intervention, and re-entry models utilizing resources that are available in the local community. Training should include specific modules for the adult and juvenile populations. Training should be provided to the North Carolina Division of Community Corrections and Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils.

Implementation steps:

- Identify facilitators to provide training on the “call-in system” enhancing current training to include gangs and other groups that are harmful to North Carolina.

3). the third phase is case management; the provision of holistic supports for those offenders who wish to stop their criminal lifestyle.

Re-Entry Sub-Committee Recommendations and Implementation

Recommendation 1: Promote the sustainability and increase the reach of programs currently being developed under the StreetSafe program.

The StreetSafe Task Force made several recommendations for re-entry programs that are in development. By working with the current programs, we can avoid unnecessary duplication and focus on broadening the reach to include gang members re-entering society after incarceration.

Implementation Steps:

- Work with the current Re-entry Council to ensure the gang validated and gang affiliated population of re-entrants' needs are taken into consideration.
- Within a certain time prior to an inmate's release in order to facilitate access to a re-entry service center, investigate transporting him/her to a facility near the resource center where the inmate will be released.
- Establish incentives for local businesses and governmental agencies and industry for structuring and funding programs for training and hiring former gang members and affiliates upon re-entry.
- Establish incentives for housing programs that work with gang validated and affiliated reentrants.
- Explore working with the court systems and local judges to create a waiver program for discretionary fines and fees for felons who are working with local re-entry programs to resolve pending criminal cases. This will help the judicial system to clear up older cases and assist re-entrants to earn a clean slate.

Recommendation 2: Encourage the North Carolina General Assembly to consider raising the maximum age of juvenile jurisdiction to 17 years old. This is contingent upon funding to adequately resource all entities involved in facilitating this change in the system.

North Carolina is one of only two states that continue to view 16 and 17 year old offenders as adults.

Empirical research suggests that the vast majority of youth involved in criminal activities (90-95%) stop engaging in these activities by the age of 18 (Moffitt, 1993; Burfeind & Bartusch, 2011)⁵. The average age of gang members is 17-18 years old with a typical age range of 12-24

⁵ Moffitt, T. E. (1993). Adolescence-Limited and Life-Course Persistent Antisocial Behavior: A Developmental Taxonomy. *Psychological Review*, 100, 674-701. More recently, see Burfeind, J.W. and Bartusch, D.J. (2011). *Juvenile Delinquency: An Integrated Approach* (2nd edition). Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett Publishers.

(Curry & Decker, 1998)⁶. More importantly, longitudinal studies following youth have found that gang membership during adolescence is, for most, a transitory phenomenon with the majority of youth joining for a year or less (Esbensen, Huizinga & Weiher, 1993; Hill, Lui & Hawkins, 2001; Peterson, Taylor, & Esbensen, 2004; Thornberry, Krohn, Lizotte, Smith, & Tobin, 2003)⁷. However, a criminal conviction obtained at age 16 or 17 will follow them for the rest of their lives and will negatively impact their access to education and career opportunities.

Retaining 16-17 year olds in the juvenile system in North Carolina will provide more wraparound services for those at an age of great need without having to build new support systems to serve those who are 17-18 years old and in the adult system. This would be particularly crucial to reformed gang members in need of services during re-entry.

Retaining 16-17 year olds in the juvenile system in North Carolina will allow our youth the opportunity to be more competitive for jobs not only here in the state, but across the nation. Our youth have to “check the box” indicating a felony conviction that youth from 48 other states do not.

Retaining 16-17 year olds in the juvenile system in North Carolina will increase the ability for reformed gang members to obtain employment, licensing, and be able to attend colleges that would otherwise not accept a convicted felon.

Retaining 16-17 year olds in the juvenile system in North Carolina may allow the state to tap into additional federal funding streams by bringing the state in compliance with federal regulations.

Implementation steps:

- Review the Youth Accountability Planning Task Force Summary of Final Report to the General Assembly of North Carolina, January 2011.
- Provide legislators with empirical data illustrating that the vast majority of juveniles turn away from crime around the age of 18.
- Review the effect of the age change on corollary laws; for example, related to education.

Recommendation 3: Encourage the enhancement and expansion of the Security Threat Management Unit (STGMU) and the Community Threat Group Program (CTG) within the North

⁶ Curry, G.D., & Decker, S. H. (1998). *Confronting Gangs: Crime and the Community*. Los Angeles: Roxbury.

⁷ Esbensen, F.-A., Huizinga, D., and Weiher, A.W. (1993). Gang and non-gang youth: Differences in explanatory variables. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 9:94–116; Hill, K.G., Lui, C., and Hawkins, J.D. (2001). *Early Precursors of Gang Membership: A Study of Seattle Youth*. Bulletin. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; Peterson, D., Taylor, T.J., and Esbensen, F.-A. (2004). Gang membership and violent victimization. *Justice Quarterly*, 21:793–815; Thornberry, T.P., Krohn, M.D., Lizotte, A.J., Smith, C.A., and Tobin, K. (2003). *Gangs and Delinquency in Developmental Perspective*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Carolina Department of Public Safety for the purposes of affecting desistance among certain categories of gang members while incarcerated and upon re-integration.

The STGMU and Community Threat Group Programs are programs that focus on gang identified and affiliated persons who are at risk of violence both within the prison population and upon re-integration. These programs are necessary to help reduce gang tensions within the prison systems and to provide gang specific supervision for gang identified and affiliated felons who are on probation.

Implementation steps:

- Explore the expansion of the STGMU program to include a pre-release program that includes working components of the STGMU programs coupled with local re-entry program transitional oversight. This will enable better communication between the reentrant and the local re-entry community and provide better oversight for the transition to probation/parole.
- Establish mandatory programs for Community Threat Group probationers that include, but are not limited to, mental health services, job training programs, and educational programs.
- Explore funding to expand the present STGMU program to other facilities.
- Create pilot programs for Community Threat Group Programs to evaluate the value of enhanced probationer requirements and mandatory work/assistance/activity programs.

Conclusion

This submission concludes the initial work of the Task Force that was formed by Executive Order Number 69. The Task Force believes these recommendations represent the first steps in which to holistically address the presence of and the problems associated with gangs in North Carolina communities. The process of bringing together leadership positions within state agencies, leaders in law enforcement, community, legislators, and other key figures involved in gang prevention programs was an important step, as several significant relationships were made and fostered by this process. This is a model for the state and every community in the state. The synergy already developed should not only sustain the efforts of the Task Force, but create lasting positive change. These recommendations span a comprehensive continuum of issues and opportunities. It is our sincere hope that the state of North Carolina will embrace these recommendations and allocate the necessary resources to improve public safety through intentional and focused commitment to comprehensive gang deterrence.

Appendix A: Executive Order 69

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 69

GOVERNOR'S GANG TASK FORCE

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Street Gang Suppression Act, Article 13A of Chapter 14 of the North Carolina General Statutes, defines and criminalizes gang activity; and

WHEREAS, in December 2009, the North Carolina GangNET database identified 898 validated gangs and 13,699 validated gang members and associates in 52 counties across North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Organization Act of 1973 established the Governor's Crime Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Conference Committee Report on the Continuation, Expansion, and Capital Budgets, which accompanied North Carolina Session Law 2009-451, appropriated \$200,000 in funding from the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act to establish a statewide gang task force within the Governor's Crime Commission.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and laws of the State of North Carolina, IT IS ORDERED:

Section 1. Establishment

The Governor's Gang Task Force (hereinafter the "Task Force") is hereby established to enhance anti-gang law enforcement efforts and develop gang prevention policies in North Carolina.

Section 2. Membership

a. Task Force members shall be appointed by the Governor and shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Task Force shall consist of at least 25 members, but no more than 40 members. The Governor shall appoint a Chair and a Vice Chair of the Task Force.

b. The Governor's appointees will include the following persons or their designees:

1. Chair of the Governor's Crime Commission.
2. Secretary of the Department of Crime Control and Public Safety.
3. Secretary of the Department of Correction.
4. Secretary of the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
5. Attorney General.
6. Director of the State Bureau of Investigation.

7. A representative of the Department of Public Instruction.
 8. Chair of the GangNet Steering Committee.
 9. A representative of the North Carolina Gang Association.
 10. The Governor's Policy Director.
 11. A district court judge.
 12. A superior court judge.
 13. A district attorney.
 14. An elected official representing the state's local governments.
 15. Representatives of local law enforcement agencies, representing both sheriff and police departments in both rural and metropolitan areas.
 16. School board members, representing both rural and metropolitan areas.
 17. Representatives of non-profit religious or community groups.
 18. A member of the North Carolina State Senate.
 19. A member of the North Carolina House of Representatives.
 20. An academic who has conducted research on gangs and gang activity.
- c. The following federal agencies are invited to participate in the Task Force:
1. A representative of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
 2. Representatives of the United States Attorney's Offices for the Eastern, Middle, and Western Districts of North Carolina.

Section 3. Duties

The Task Force shall have the following duties:

- a. Develop a comprehensive plan to ensure a well-coordinated, statewide enforcement program. The program should increase the flow of gang-related information among various law enforcement agencies, correctional institutions, and the judicial system.
- b. Investigate and identify current and emerging gang issues.
- c. Investigate and identify policy changes to better prevent, mitigate, and address gang activity.
- d. Recommend legislative and executive action necessary to implement a comprehensive, coordinated plan and to make identified policy changes.

The Task Force shall report its progress, findings, and recommendations to the Governor every six months or more frequently, if warranted.

Section 4. Meetings

- a. The Task Force shall meet at least quarterly.
- b. Meetings shall be held upon the call of the Governor or the Task Force Chair.
- c. A majority of the Task Force shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section 5. Administration

- a. The Task Force shall be housed within the Department of Crime Control and Public Safety, under the Division of the Governor's Crime Commission.
- b. The Task Force shall be a separate entity from the Governor's Crime Commission. The Governor's Crime Commission shall create a new committee on gang prevention, which shall work with the Task Force staff to implement policy priorities identified by the Task Force.
- c. The Governor's Crime Commission shall hire two staff members for the Task Force. Salaries and expenses of Task Force staff shall be paid with funding from the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act and provided through the federal Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program.
- d. Task Force staff shall organize all Task Force meetings, prepare reports on behalf of the Task Force, identifying current and emerging gang issues, assist with gang-related grants, and work with the gang prevention committee of the Governor's Crime Commission.
- e. No per diem allowance shall be paid to members of the Task Force. Members of the Task Force may receive necessary travel and subsistence expenses in accordance with State law and the policies and regulations of the Office of State Budget and Management.

Section 6. Implementation and Duration

This Executive Order is effective immediately. It supersedes and replaces all other executive orders on this subject. It shall remain in effect until June 30, 2012, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 147-16.2, or unless earlier rescinded.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto signed my name and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in the City of Raleigh, this 4th day of October in the year of our Lord two thousand and ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

Beverly Eaves Perdue

Governor

Appendix B: Executive Order 119

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 119

EXTENDING THE GOVERNOR'S GANG TASK FORCE

By the power vested in me as Governor by the laws and Constitution of North Carolina, IT IS ORDERED:

Executive Order Number 69, Governor's Gang Task Force, is hereby extended until June 30, 2013. The terms of the members of the Task Force are hereby extended until June 30, 2013.

This order is effective immediately.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto signed my name and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in the City of Raleigh, this twelfth day of June in the year of our Lord two thousand and twelve, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

Beverly Eaves Perdue

Month Day Year

GOVERNOR'S GANG TASK FORCE

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