

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

REPORT OF THE
SPECIAL COMMISSION
RELATIVE TO AUTHORIZING
THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
HAMPDEN COUNTY TO BUILD A
NEW HOUSE OF CORRECTION
AND A JAIL

(Under Chapter 11 of
the Resolves of 1972)

January 8, 1973

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

RESOLVE CREATING THE COMMISSION

(Chapter 11 of the Resolves of 1972)

RESOLVE PROVIDING FOR AN INVESTIGATION AND STUDY BY A SPECIAL COMMISSION RELATIVE TO AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF HAMPDEN COUNTY TO BUILD A NEW HOUSE OF CORRECTION AND A JAIL.

Resolved, That a special commission, to consist of two members of the senate, five members of the house of representatives, the sheriff of Hampden county or his designee, and three persons to be appointed by the governor, one of whom shall be mayor of a city in said county, one of whom shall be a selectman of a town in said county and one of whom shall be a resident of said county, is hereby established for the purpose of making an investigation and study of the subject matter of current house document numbered 4068, relative to authorizing the County Commissioners of Hampden County to building a new house of correction and a jail.

Adopted in the House – February 29, 1972

Adopted in the Senate – June 14, 1972

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MEMBERSHIP OF COMMISSION.

- Rep. ARTHUR J. McKENNA, *Chairman*
Rep. EDWARD W. CONNELLY, *Vice-Chairman*
Rep. JAMES J. BOWLER
Rep. JOHN P. O'BRIEN
Rep. VERNON R. FARNSWORTH
Sen. STANLEY J. ZAROD
Sen. ROGER L. BERNASHE
EDWARD J. ZIEMBA, *Mayor*, Chicopee, Massachusetts
MARC S. KATSOULIS, *Selectman*, West Springfield, Massachusetts
JOHN G. CURLEY, *Sheriff*, Hampden County
BENJAMIN SWAN, Citizen appointed by Governor.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL TO THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE

To the Honorable House of Representatives and Senate:

GENTLEMEN: — We, the undersigned, hereby submit a final report on the results of its investigation and study (authorized under the provisions of an order adopted by the House, see House Document No. 5197 of 1972) as to authorizing the County Commissioners of Hampden County to build and maintain a new house of correction and a jail.

Respectfully submitted,

Rep. ARTHUR J. McKENNA, *Chairman*
Rep. EDWARD W. CONNELLY, *Vice-Chairman*
Rep. JOHN P. O'BRIEN
Rep. JAMES J. BOWLER
Rep. VERNON R. FARNSWORTH
Sen. STANLEY J. ZAROD
Sen. ROGER L. BERNASHE
EDWARD J. ZIEMBA, *Mayor*, City of Chicopee
MARC S. KATSOU LIS, *Selectman*, West Springfield
JOHN G. CURLEY, *Sheriff*, Hampden County
BENJAMIN SWAN, Citizen appointed by Governor.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

FINAL REPORT OF THE
LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE AND STUDY
THE NEED FOR A NEW HOUSE OF CORRECTION AND JAIL
IN HAMPDEN COUNTY

In order to properly ascertain the potential need for a new jail in Hampden County, the Commission arranged for bi-monthly meetings with county officials, local officials, members of the judiciary, members of law enforcement agencies, and respective mayors of Holyoke, Westfield and Springfield, and one meeting devoted entirely to the general public at large.

The meetings were held at the present Hampden County Jail, the County Commissioners' office, the Springfield City Hall, Springfield District Court and Chicopee City Hall. Meetings were open to all forms of media.

On the basis of testimony given this Commission by all avenues of interest, the final opinion which we present to the Great and General Court is that there is no need for construction of a new jail facility in Hampden County. The vote of the commission has been recorded as ten (10) in agreement with this decision and one (1) member — Benjamin Swan, abstaining.

We feel on the basis of strong testimony indicating a decisive change in thinking given this commission with respect to incarceration of convicted persons, that further recommendations beyond the initial commission finding should be made at this time.

The majority of the Commission believes a recommendation should be made to the Hampden County Commissioners that a study be instituted through their efforts and in conjunction with the County Commissioners of the counties of Franklin, Hampshire and Berkshire to investigate the feasibility of a regional facility for the possible dual-purpose of processing and incarceration of non-'hardened' criminals. It is the belief of a majority of the Commission, on the basis of testimony provided, that a new trend in the field of correction requires complete examination, testing, diagnosis

and recommendation for rehabilitation, training and education. It is with this thought in mind that a central processing area be utilized and further that existing facilities in the four (4) mentioned counties be seriously considered for utilization of training, rehabilitation, education and vocational purposes.

The Commission, as a whole, feels that the strong testimony presented to it mandates serious consideration of this recommendation by the county commissioners.

It is further recommended by a majority of this Commission that the county commissioners initiate legislation for the purpose of providing needed renovations as recommended by the Sheriff of Hampden County for the existing Hampden County Jail and House of Correction. A portion of the sheriff's recommendations conceivably belong in the annual county budget request. However, there are major renovations which this Commission feels should be considered by the Commissioners for legislative assistance and state funding. Reference specifically is made with respect to an adequate heating system, a sprinkler system to afford complete fire protection, renovation of the boiler room equipment, window bar replacement and the installation of sinks and hot water system in each and every cell.

It is further recommended that the commissioners seriously consider the conversion of the existing farm land area at the rear of the present facility into suitable parking area.

It is genuinely felt that the existing street parking facility is detrimental to the maintenance of adequate prisoner transfer to and from the existing facility.

This Commission further recommends that the county commissioners pursue the study on the basis that they may accept and expend gifts and grants of money from the federal government or any other public or private source. We would recommend that they also plan to enter into cooperative agreements and contracts with any agencies of the Commonwealth or its political subdivisions including local planning districts for the receipt and expenditure of federal and state grants and gifts and for performance or other services and supplies in connection therewith.

It is the opinion of the committee that the sole objector to any form of renovation expenditure would be the Honorable Edward Ziemba, Mayor of the City of Chicopee, who has so indicated in a statement to this Commission.

In the event the county commissioners decide to file legislation to consider recommended renovations of this eighty-four year old facility, they are urged to file same on or before January 15, 1973.

CONCLUSION

This report recommended to the Great and General Court by the Legislative Commission does not purport to solve the problems existing in Hampden County. It is merely the consensus of this Commission that these recommendations are very important to the continued safety and well being of the citizens of Hampden County.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy-Three.

RESOLVE REVIVING AND CONTINUING THE SPECIAL COMMISSION ESTABLISHED TO MAKE AN INVESTIGATION AND STUDY RELATIVE TO AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF HAMPDEN COUNTY TO BUILD A NEW HOUSE OF CORRECTION AND A JAIL.

1 *Resolved*, The special commission established by chapter
2 eleven of the resolves of nineteen hundred and seventy-two to
3 make an investigation and study relative to authorizing the
4 county commissioners of Hampden county to build a new house
5 of correction and a jail is hereby revived and continued. Said
6 commission shall file its final report on or before March first,
7 nineteen hundred and seventy-three.