pennsylvania

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION

Testimony of

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Before the

Senate Communications & Technology Committee

Regarding

Pennsylvania Justice Network (JNET)

October 19, 2011 – 9:30 am – Hearing Room 8E-A, East Wing

Chairman Folmer, Chairman Farnese and members of the Committee, thank you for inviting us here today to brief you about the commonwealth's Justice Network – also known as JNET – and to answer any questions you may have about the system.

JNET Overview

By executive order, the Pennsylvania Justice Network (JNET) was established in 1998 to facilitate information sharing among criminal justice and public safety partners. Through the adoption of innovative concepts, cost-effective business practices and ongoing collaboration with key stakeholders, JNET has matured into a nationally renowned platform for integrated justice services.

Today, JNET is the commonwealth's primary public safety and criminal justice information broker connecting over 38,000 authorized practitioners to critical information from various contributing municipal, county, state and federal agencies.

The decision was made early on that JNET would take a unique approach to meeting stakeholders' information sharing needs. JNET neither would create public safety data nor store public safety data. Rather, JNET would provide a secure, standards-based mechanism that allows criminal justice and public safety partners throughout Pennsylvania to access and exchange data historically maintained in individual systems.

Many participants deserve credit for JNET's successes. A strong governance structure and decisive executive sponsorship has allowed JNET to grow, mature and enhance public safety with unprecedented results. Overwhelming participation from municipal, county, state and federal agencies has helped guide JNET through more than a decade of changes and integrated justice development. These key elements, coupled with JNET's dedicated staff and leadership, have resulted in numerous awards, hundreds of success stories, and a platform for cost-effective and secure information sharing for commonwealth partners.

It is important to point out that JNET's business partners go well beyond the agencies that we typically refer to when we think about public safety. While the Pennsylvania State Police,

the Office of Attorney General and local law enforcement are key partners, JNET's domain also extends to the Board of Probation and Parole, the Department of Public Welfare, the Commission on Sentencing, the Juvenile Court Judges Commission and the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts. In fact, JNET supports more than just state agency information sharing, often referred to as "horizontal integration." JNET also is integrated in a "vertical" manner with federal agencies, all 67 Pennsylvania counties and the majority of the commonwealth's municipalities. These horizontal and vertical integration points serve users and agencies with application integration and data exchange capabilities.

As for staff, the JNET office is comprised of both commonwealth employees and contracted resources with the overall total increasing and decreasing depending upon current projects, initiatives, and organizational goals.

Security

JNET has taken a strict approach to ensure that the JNET environment and the data available via JNET remains protected. The JNET Office works closely with designated JNET security officers within each agency and county to monitor audit logs, conduct audits, reinforce policy, and ensure user accountability.

Budget

Along with JNET's successes, a number of challenges exist. JNET currently has 29 new initiatives in the development stage. These new assets are in addition to over 45 existing applications and approximately 100 existing data exchange services.

Among the business partner community is a growing dependency on JNET to develop new applications and services. After allocations are dispersed to support existing services, only twenty percent of JNET's operational budget remains for new projects. Therefore, the reality is that JNET's personnel and fiscal assets will not be able to fulfill the expectations of all of its user communities.

The continued success of JNET can be attributed to the effective use of both state and federal funds. Beginning in FY 98/99, $11 million dollars was allocated for the initial JNET build, and funding continued at a steady rate through FY 05/06. Over the past several years, global economic setbacks contributed to significant fiscal cuts, which then resulted in shifting organizational priorities. JNET's current operating budget is $4,453,000 (FY 11/12) and is earmarked to sustain existing services within the secure JNET infrastructure, including the current implementation of a disaster recovery environment.

In FY 10/11, JNET received $805,000 in federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant funds via the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD). This budget augmentation positioned JNET to complete four new critical projects defined by the governing body's five-year strategic plan: 1) Federated Background Search, 2) Electronic Reporting of County Inmate Information, 3) Federated Warrant Search Enhancements and 4) the Centralization of the Juvenile Court Judges Commission records management system. Without the assistance of grant funding, it is extremely challenging to capitalize on the existing platform to provide new services and applications to the user community.

The JNET Budget vs. User History chart (see Attachment A) contrasts the decreases in funding over the past several years with the dramatic year-to-year increase in users. Although the reduced appropriation coupled with the increased number of users in theory has driven down the cost per user from $504 in FY 04/05 to $117 in FY 10/11, the growth in the number of users challenges the JNET budget from an operational sustainment perspective,

specifically in software licensing, hardware refreshes, and annual maintenance. In order to meet this challenge, JNET continues to streamline its operations by making improvements through innovative solutions and by capitalizing on existing investments. Additionally, JNET is proactive when renewing annual support contracts by renegotiating costs as well as developing multi-year support agreements with vendors.

Governance

JNET's governance structure (see Attachment B) was established to manage the process of working across multiple agencies and levels of government, to balance competing interests, to formalize the decision-making process and to influence and approve the strategic plan for justice information sharing. The governance structure not only enables difficult decisions affecting the involved entities to be made but also ensures stakeholders' interests are represented.

In addition to defining the tactical deployment plan, another key aspect of JNET's governance includes the establishment of privacy policies for the sharing of information. Such policies deal with data ownership, accessibility, data quality and accountability if information were used improperly. Finally, the governing body is charged with adopting national information exchange standards to ensure consistency between sharing partner implementation approaches.

Standards

Regardless of the domain, the adoption of data standards among participating business partners is vital to integration. As national standards began to become more prevalent, in 2007, JNET adopted the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) 2.0 as a data standard for development and exchanging information. These standards essentially establish a common framework for communication – very similar to that of a multi-lingual dictionary. They further ensure that business partners speak a common language and allow for assets to be reused – not redeveloped.

Architecture

Within its architecture, JNET maintains an Enterprise Service Bus (ESB) to facilitate XML standards-based data exchange and messaging capabilities. This is the secure layer that ensures data is exchanged (per agreed upon standards) and securely delivered only to the designated recipient. Meanwhile, the JNET web-portal permits users to benefit from over 45 secure criminal justice and public safety applications. Cumulatively, these applications and services provide authorized JNET users and systems with access to a multitude of commonwealth and federal sources of information.

It is important to point out again that JNET does not create, retain or store data. JNET's business partners maintain their existing systems; and through secure means, JNET facilitates the sharing of designated data from those systems. Simply stated, JNET represents the technology that allows dissimilar information technology systems to interact and share data.

JNET Budget vs. User History

Chart axes:
- Top axis: Number of JNET Users (0 to 45,000 in increments of 5,000)
- Bottom axis: Funding $ ($- to $20,000,000 in increments of $2,000,000)
- Horizontal axis (Fiscal Year): FY98/99, FY99/00, FY00/01, FY01/02, FY02/03, FY03/04, FY04/05, FY05/06, FY06/07, FY07/08, FY08/09, FY09/10, FY10/11, FY11/12

Legend:
- State Funding
- State/Fed Grant Funding
- Program Revision Request
- Number of JNET Users

Governance Agencies

Governor's Policy Office
Office of Administration
Office of Attorney General
Office of the Budget
Office of General Counsel
Office of Inspector General
Juvenile Court Judges' Comm.
Pennsylvania State Police

Governance Agencies

Admin Office of Pa Courts
Board of Pardons
Board of Probation and Parole
Commission on Crime & Delinquency
Commission on Sentencing
Department of Corrections
Department of Public Welfare
Department of Transportation

JNET EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
Strategic Policy
Budget – Oversight

Secretary
Deputy Secretary

STEERING COMMITTEE
Tactical Planning
Project Implementation
Agency CIO/Director/JNET EX.Dir.

JNET AGENCY ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE
Analysis and Issues,
Recommendations
Agency & JNET Office
Representatives

OA / OIT
Organizational Oversight
Enterprise Standards

Director of
Enterprise Projects

SENIOR POLICY TEAM
Policy, Legal Oversight
General Counsel

CIO, Policy Office, Budget
Office, Governor's Office

Action
Teams

Work
Groups

THE PENNSYLVANIA JUSTICE NETWORK
Day-to-Day Project Office, Contract Management, Development and Operation of JNET

JNET Executive Director
JNET Office