



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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November 14, 2001

To whom it may concern:

The Institute for Law and Policy Planning, under the direction of Dr. Alan Kalmanoff, was the high bidder on an RFP by Kalamazoo County, to study its criminal justice system towards improvements that could lead to a new jail and courts. During negotiations with ILPP, which was the Project Review Committee's first choice, the study was broadened to include the juvenile system, and the fee enlarged to over \$200,000.

Later, after an excellent and comprehensive study that was custom fit to our jurisdiction's needs, the Project Review Committee, which was composed of 28 stakeholders, unanimously approved the report and forwarded it to the County Board of Commissioners, of which I am a member. The Board, upon the spoken recommendation of the two Chief Judges, the Prosecuting Attorney, and the Sheriff, as well as others, voted 9-0 to accept the ILPP report and plan.

The report called for major changes in our system, including consolidating and unifying the courts, and changes in established practices of many agencies, towards a more efficient and effective system. ILPP's work received general public acclaim, and most agree that it gave us a framework that would lead us to being able to fund a new jail.

The Prosecutor, Chief Judges and Sheriff then asked the Commission to hire Dr. Kalmanoff to monitor implementation of the report's recommendations. The Commission approved the request by a 9-0 vote, after the Prosecutor Attorney urged that the system needed a knowledgeable and candid overseer to "hold their feet to the fire", and to act as "a cattle prod".

Dr. Kalmanoff performed this second job, as an individual, apart from ILPP. He was strong and candid in his observations, eventually running into major resistance, though he never wavered in his candor and the quality of his work. His engagement with our system ended because of that resistance. He stirred things up in this County, which was part of his mandate in the second engagement; however; it was professionally accomplished under very difficult circumstances. Despite the fact that Dr. Kalmanoff's monitoring role was more controversial, and that it led to the Commission deciding not to renew his contract at the present time, he left Kalamazoo with the respect of the Commission and statements by most of its members that they would be open to his return at an appropriate time.

For counties interested in better understanding a more efficient and effective justice system, and willing to make changes in order to develop expensive new facilities, the ILPP study process is highly recommended. But I would offer this caveat, you must be willing to make change if you are to benefit from ILPP's services. I am available for follow-up questions at 616-349-1533.

Sincerely,

Peter Battani  
Board of Commissioners  
District #6