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To: House Committee on Judiciary
From: Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs (SAS)
Date: February 25, 2026
Subject: Testimony Regarding H.382 / Data Reporting Mandates and Operational Constraints; For Discussion Purposes

SAS faces a stark contrast in analytical and records management capacity compared to its peer agencies. While most executive and judicial branch entities employ dedicated staff for records management and data analysis, SAS lacks similar resources.¹

Multiple agencies employ full-time, professional data and/or records staff to drive policy and operating efficiency. In contrast, **SAS currently has zero dedicated staff members assigned to data analysis or records management.** Our records officer, Attorney Kim McManus, manages her role as the Records Officer alongside a heavy portfolio of other legal and policy duties.

For years, SAS has requested a full-time records attorney and a justice data manager/docket manager. **Currently, SAS reports are produced using judicial filing data** (rather than internal SAS data) ([FINAL-SAS-DATA-SNAPSHOT-from-2025-12-10-PUBLIC2.pdf](#))—a task handled ad-hoc by the Executive Director and a single State's Attorney. This creates a significant operational gap and strain. While colleagues in the Judiciary and Corrections can produce real-time reports, SAS must request data from external entities and then attempt to analyze it using overburdened administrative staff. Without data and records professionals, dedicated to this important work, our ability to track outcomes, manage existing voluminous digital and physical records, identify systemic bottlenecks, and respond to legislative and public inquiries is severely compromised.

A critical aspect unique to criminal justice data is the requirement for legal expertise to oversee the analytical process. Data in this field is not merely numerical; it is rooted in complex statutes, "terms of art," and the practical realities of courtroom procedure.

¹ E.g., *Department of Public Safety (dedicated data and records staff); The Judiciary (dedicated data and records staff); Agency of Digital Services; Agency of Human Services / Department of Corrections (dedicated data professionals); The Office of Racial Equity (dedicated data professionals); The Secretary of State's Office (dedicated records staff).*

Historically, data produced by outside or non-justice entities often over-emphasizes subjectivity or fails to capture the full framework of the legal process or justice-context. Without the oversight of an attorney with "on-the-ground" experience, reports frequently fail to accurately explain the practical basis for justice trends and records-related pressures. To ensure the integrity of the reports mandated by H.382, or otherwise, an SAS data unit, **not currently in existence**, should be led by, or integrated with, legal professionals who can provide the context necessary to prevent the misinterpretation of prosecutorial discretion and case outcomes.

For SAS to be a full partner in a modern, data-informed justice system, we must move toward parity with our partner agencies. We cannot manage what we cannot measure, and we cannot measure with a staff of zero. To fulfill the mandates of H.382, or future requests for data and records work, SAS would likely require:

1. IT Infrastructure Appropriation: Funding for new IT solutions. Our current Case Management System (CMS) transition was not designed or solicited to perform the high-level analytical work envisioned in H.382. (Estimated cost: Unknown but likely in the millions).
2. Dedicated Records and Data Attorney: At least one (1) full-time attorney.
3. Additional Data Staff: At least three to four (3–4) specialized administrative or paralegal staff to records management and data analysis.

While the Department is committed to transparency and improving data outcomes and records management, we have significant concerns regarding the operational and fiscal viability of Section 4 of H.382 as drafted.

As noted, the reporting requirements in subsections (a)(1) through (a)(5) are granular and complex. SAS lacks the trained personnel to meet these requirements while simultaneously managing the host of other crucial daily operations.

To meet the standards of this bill, SAS must build a Data & Analytics Unit from the ground up.

- A viable unit would require new full-time employees (FTEs), including data analysts, database administrators, and a unit director (who is an attorney). AND, we would need a dedicated records attorney – given that expansion of data reporting will also expand the data being sought by outside entities and other governmental entities to SAS.
- SAS currently lacks software capable of tracking specific variables, such as "rationale for declination" or "state of last residence," across 14 counties.
- Without a multi-million dollar appropriation, ongoing, SAS would be tasked with a mandate it is structurally and financially incapable of fulfilling.

Section 4(a) of H.382 requires tracking variables that our current systems are not designed to capture and that our current judicial filing data also fails to capture. Without a professional data team to bridge the gap between software and reporting requirements, this work would fall on existing staff who have no remaining capacity. Diverting legal staff to manual data entry would directly impact our ability to prosecute cases and serve victims of crime.

For H.382 to be contemplated we would suggest a full fiscal note with an assessment of the millions of dollars required for both IT infrastructure and new FTE positions. And – SAS maintains that no data mandate should move forward without a dedicated, permanent funding stream for SAS data and records-related staff.

SAS welcomes the opportunity to improve transparency and standardize data metrics, including the definition of recidivism. However, successful implementation is contingent upon receiving the professional staffing and resources currently utilized by the Judiciary, Department of Public Safety, and Department of Corrections.