



# THE CONNECTION

The Bi-Annual Newsletter of the  
Federal Probation and Pretrial Officers Association

Volume XXXIX

March 2015

## President's Message

*From the desk of... Barbara Oswald, FPPOA President*

In 1936, Richard McSweeney, a Chief U.S. Probation Officer from Boston, Massachusetts said: *The need is very great for a national association of federal probation officers which should include every federal probation officer in the country.* The need remains the same 79 years later. The desire of the FPOA (Federal Probation Officers Association) 60 years after Chief McSweeney continues to be the same desire for our current FPPOA and that is to be the voice that advocates on behalf of all federal probation and pretrial officers.

We are at a pivotal point in our profession. We are being tasked with re-entry reforms to reduce recidivism and reduce the amount of money spent on the federal prison system. We are the answer to reducing the number of federal prisons being built yearly and with that responsibility, there is additional accountability and stress. Our officers continue to walk that fine line between law enforcement and social work and trying to effectively balance the safety of the community with needs of the offender. However, our officers are required to be on-call 24/7 with location monitoring responsibilities. When it comes to prison reform, location monitoring is becoming the answer to all Washington's budgeting solutions. Placing low risk offenders on al-

ternative custody programs; such as, half-way houses and/or location monitoring programs, does not follow the research or principles of evidence-based practices. Placing low risk offenders in Residential Reentry Centers and location monitoring programs takes resources which are already scarce from higher risk offenders. These actions could possibly lead to higher recidivism rates and even jeopardize public safety.

I recently requested an update from Chief PPSO Matthew Rowland, regarding the FPPOA's Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Initiative submitted on November 6, 2014. I had previously been advised that the Office of General Counsel was reviewing the letter. It was suggested that I put a request for an update in writing, which has been completed. Hopefully, we will receive a timely response. I will keep you posted.

Now some food for thought. If you have not had the chance to read FBI Director James Comey speech on Hard Truths: Law Enforcement and Race, it is very thought provoking. As our brothers and sisters in the

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