

Grand Jury Report
September-October 2008
Christian County
Hopkinsville, KY 42240

We, the Christian County Grand Jury for September and October 2008, would like to address several issues that came to our attention during our service.

First, we commend the Christian County Sheriff's Office courthouse employees/bailiffs for protecting and ensuring the safety of all who enter the Christian County Justice Center. We understand that they come into contact with people from all walks of life, and we encourage them to execute their duties in a professional, respectful and consistent manner with each individual who enters.

As jurors, we were made aware that the juror pay of \$12.50 a day has not been adjusted for several decades. We would encourage lawmakers to consider increasing this pay to represent increases in costs of living and to encourage our citizens to carry out their duty to serve on a jury when selected. Kentucky's minimum wage rate has increased several times, and is now \$6.55 per hour. Jury service is an extremely important aspect of our criminal justice system, and the pay rate for jurors should reflect that.

On several occasions during our term, we heard cases regarding repeat offenses by certain individuals. We would also encourage lawmakers to review the sentencing guidelines that are currently in place in Kentucky and to consider increasing penalties for repeat offenders. The current punishments do not seem to adequately deter future criminal activity, and jail/prison is no longer a place where criminals fear going/returning.

Most of the cases that we heard were presented by law enforcement officers who work tirelessly to keep our community safe. We understand that the officers we have are stretched very thin, and often their investigations are limited by the time and resources available to them. However, when the freedom of an individual is involved, we believe it is of utmost importance that police investigations are thorough and unbiased. Without a doubt, Christian County is protected by some of the most dedicated and hardest working law enforcement officers around, and we applaud them for facing the dangers on our streets and in our schools every day.

Overall, our Grand Jury experience was positive and we want to thank the staff of the Commonwealth Attorney's office for treating us with the utmost respect and professionalism during our term of service. They are clearly dedicated to their jobs and motivated to making Christian County a better place to live. Their work is clearly tireless and in many ways unrewarding, but they should be commended for the hard work and countless hours they put into it.

Respectfully submitted,

This 31st day of October, 2008

Scott Ganley
Grand Jury Foreman