



Everything New Orleans

City Council's Criminal Justice Committee to take up proposed gun offender registry law

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By **The Times-Picayune**

The New Orleans City Council's Criminal Justice Committee is set to meet at 2 p.m. today. The committee's members -- Councilman Jon Johnson and Councilwomen Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson and Susan Guidry, plus Councilwoman Stacy Head, who is an alternate -- will hear a presentation on a pretrial services program that is scheduled to be implemented in Criminal District Court this fall.



Daniel Erath,
The Times-
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New Orleans
Councilwoman Jackie
Clarkson

Representatives from various offices, including the district attorney, the criminal court judges, the public defender's office, the New Orleans Police Department and the Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office, will be on hand, as will Jon Wool of the nonprofit Vera Institute of Justice, which has been advising the city on criminal justice reforms.

The new program, which is expected to be similar to programs in other cities, would employ staff to assess each criminal defendants' arrest history and background to determine what kind of bond should be set or if the person is suitable to be released on his own recognizance.

Next, the committee will take up a proposed ordinance by Guidry and Councilman Arnie Fielkow to create a "gun offender registry" in NOPD. Among those scheduled to speak on the topic are Police Superintendent Ronal Serpas, Orleans Parish District Attorney Leon Cannizzaro, and Dawn Segura and James Mullaly of the city attorney's office.

The law would require those convicted of gun offenses to check in with New Orleans police upon their release from prison, and provide vital information like their date of birth, address and a picture ID. They would have to check in again every six months for the next three years.

Serpas is pushing for the registry, saying 42 percent of gun offenders in New Orleans are recidivists, and citing other cities' success with similar programs. But civil-liberties groups, including the ACLU, oppose the

proposed law, saying it could lead to police harassment of people with criminal histories, even if there is no evidence they have re-offended.

The full council is expected to vote on Fielkow's ordinance when it meets tomorrow.

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