

Letter to Des Moines Register, June 26, 2013

Dear Editor,

Polk County Attorney John Sarcone accuses AMOS of distortion and grossly misleading people about juvenile justice in our county. We stand by our comments. They are based on a careful and objective study conducted by a branch of our state government, the Iowa Department of Human Rights. The study included interviews with Mr. Sarcone, his Juvenile Bureau Chief, Frank Severino, Juvenile Court Services and other members of the Judiciary.

What's more our comments were based on dozens of interviews we've conducted with members of the judiciary, juvenile court services, juvenile attorneys, the police department, school officials and juvenile service providers, many of whom share our concerns.

The trends in juvenile accountability in our county clearly point towards a punitive, racially-biased and less effective approach. There is another way. Let's find it together.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. Brigitte Black
Bethel AME

Rev. Denny Coon
Walnut Hills United Methodist

Both Members of AMOS Criminal Justice Leadership Team