REVIEW RECOMMENDATION STATEMENT

DATE: November 15, 2012

I.   RESEARCH PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Principal Researchers: Marie VanNostrand, PhD, and Christopher Lowenkamp, PhD, of Luminosity, Inc., in St. Petersburg, Florida

Title: "Identifying the common predictors of court appearance and risk to public safety: The development of a National Model Court-based Risk Assessment Tool."

Institution: Luminosity, Inc., in St. Petersburg, Florida

Description: The purpose of this project is to empirically identify predictors of failure to appear and new arrests by examining existing multi-jurisdictional and large single jurisdiction pretrial risk assessment datasets across the United States. Further, this project extends beyond this effort and seeks to identify if there are research-based predictors for new arrests involving a more serious charge or an increase in severity level. With few jurisdictions being able to adopt, develop, or validate a pretrial risk assessment instrument to manage release decision-making, this project intends to develop a national model court-based risk assessment instrument that is both actuarial in terms of incorporating both theoretically and statistically sound measures and is representative so that agencies can consider the adoption of this tool to address the needs of the court, community and jail systems.

This study applies to PSA only.

Type of Data and Analysis:

The overall project will require an exhaustive review process to identify all existing secondary and deidentified pretrial risk assessment databases across the United States. Formal data requests will be made to all agencies and jurisdictions that have databases which meet the necessary parameters and data elements (e.g., risk factors, offense variables, demographics, release or detention decision, outcome measures, and timeframe) to conduct this study. The statistical analysis to identify predictors of pretrial failure and public safety risk and to develop a national pretrial risk assessment instrument will include calculating univariate and bivariate statistics, and examining multivariate regression models, effect sizes, and conducting ROC analyses.

The samples requested for this project are the same samples and databases used to develop and validate PSA's risk assessment. The first database contains information on 44,823 defendants' cases from the time period of October 2007 through August 2010. The second contains criminal history data for those defendants included in the first data

set. Neither database includes personal or other identifying information about defendants or filed cases.

II.   RECOMMENDATION

The RRC recommendation for this study:

■ **Support**   ☐ Support with Conditions   ☐ Do Not Support

The RRC considers the proposed study to be non-agency research as defined in Research and Evaluation Policy Statement 1201. The RRC recommends support of this request as described in the researcher's proposal.

III.   SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Regulatory:

- The proposed research shows no evidence of non-compliance with Agency policies pertaining to research.

Other Considerations:

- The proposed research requires non-identifiable data that readily can be extracted with minimal PSA resources.
- The researchers request the identical dataset that already has been made available to The Urban Institute under RRC-10-01-PSA-SKennedy-Risk Assessment and Validation. Therefore, RAD does not need to expend additional resources for programming the request.

Benefits to Agency:

The proposed research is consistent with Agency priorities and/or interests as follows:

- This study has minimal benefit to the Agency at an operational or program/policy planning level. The primary benefit of this research to the Agency is that PSA can contribute to advancing knowledge in the field as the data used to develop the current PSA risk assessment instrument will be integrated into this larger analytic file. PSA will be among a variety of agencies across the United States that participate in this project which has the potential to offer a more representative model risk assessment instrument for pretrial agencies to consider adopting and implementing into their own justice systems.
- Specific to PSA participation, the researchers will review items from the assessment instrument independently for this project and provide a brief report of these findings at the study's conclusion.
- Overall, PSA's participation in this project is consistent with the Agency's vision to be

a leader in the field and support the implementation of evidence-based practices across the nation.

Related Issues or Concerns:

- None

I **ACCEPT** the RRC recommendation	I **DO NOT ACCEPT** the RRC recommendation
Clifford T. Keenan, Director, Pretrial Services Agency for the District of Columbia	
Comments:	