

The full report can be accessed: <http://www.justicereinvestment.org/states/indiana/pubmaps-in>

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INDIANA CORRECTIONS REPORT ADDRESSES RISING PRISON POPULATION

Data and Analysis Highlight Opportunities to Increase Public Safety, At Less Cost to Taxpayers

Indianapolis, IN— The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center, in partnership with the Pew Center on the States, released a report today summarizing the analyses and policy framework that Governor Daniels and state leaders endorsed yesterday. The report identifies what policies and practices are causing Indiana's prison growth at a time when many other state's prison populations are declining or holding steady.

Findings show that Indiana's prison population grew by more than 40 percent in the last 10 years—three times faster than any neighboring state—while the state's crime rate declined only slightly. The increase in the prison population is primarily due to an increasing number of property and drug offenders being sentenced to prison.

"Indiana is at a crossroads: stay on the current path and spend \$1.2 billion on additional prisons, or find other ways to increase public safety at less cost," said Senator Brent Steele (R), chair of the Senate Committee on Corrections, Criminal and Civil Matters. "This report maps the way to the second path."

"Last year, Indiana spent almost 680 million dollars on its prisons," said Representative Matt Pierce (D), chair of the Criminal Code Evaluation Commission. "The CSG report shows we can give taxpayers more for their money when it comes to public safety and ensure there is plenty of room for serious offenders who need to be off the streets."

"We are not alone in facing budget deficits, rising costs, and an increasing prison population, but we have to be judicious in our approach to solving these problems, that we do what's right for Indiana," added Senator Richard Bray (R). "We are using the best data available from corrections, prosecutors, law enforcement and others to find what works."

"If we are going to get corrections costs under control and achieve savings, we need to understand what's at the core of the problem," said Representative Ralph Foley (R). "This analysis makes it clear that by investing in effective community services and better coordinating our systems, we can safely reduce our prison population and demonstrate fiscal responsibility."

The report identifies three key challenges facing Indiana, with supporting data and findings:

1. Indiana's one-size-fits-all drug sentencing laws have led to even minor, nonviolent drug offenders' spending more time behind bars than some violent and sex offenders.

2. Probation and parole agencies are not well coordinated; people sentenced to community supervision are routinely monitored by multiple agencies, wasting valuable resources and undercutting public safety goals.
3. People who have committed crimes and have substance use disorders, mental health issues or little education have limited access to programs, outside of the Indiana Department of Correction, that reduce their likelihood of reoffending.

The CSG Justice Center estimates that addressing these challenges with the 10 policies outlined in the report and endorsed by the governor and state leaders yesterday would save the state \$1.2 billion by averting construction and operating costs.

Earlier this year, the governor, Supreme Court Chief Justice Randall Shepard, Attorney General Greg Zoeller, then-House Speaker Patrick Bauer, and Senate President Pro Tempore David Long asked the CSG Justice Center to comprehensively review the state's crime and corrections data.

"This package helps make sentences proportional and gives us more confidence in community supervision," notes Chief Justice Randall Shepard. "If we want to stop the revolving door to our prisons, the state has to invest in innovative approaches in our communities."

"It's been more than 30 years since we've taken a hard look at these policies," said Attorney General Greg Zoeller. "Our goal is to create an efficient system that increases public safety."

"We believe these efforts demonstrate that Indiana's criminal justice system is truly acting as a system, with all partners working together to bring about results that are not just 'tough on crime' but more importantly 'smart on crime'," said IDOC Commissioner Edwin G. Buss. "All of this can be accomplished without compromising public safety."

"In such a difficult budget climate, Indiana needs a bipartisan, data-driven policy framework to achieve critical cost savings while protecting public safety and holding offenders accountable," said Richard Jerome, manager of the Pew Center on the State's Public Safety Performance Project.

This report is the result of more than six months of exhaustive analyses that were conducted in consultation with state and local government leaders and community stakeholders. The report reflects the months of hard work by a bipartisan group convened by state leaders. The 14-member steering committee included legislators, judges, state leaders, law enforcement professionals, prosecutors, and public defenders.

The CSG Justice Center will present the research report to the Criminal Code Evaluation Commission later today. The Commission is reviewing the report and the legislative package outlined by the Governor yesterday before sending it on to the General Assembly for hearings in January.

The [CSG Justice Center's Justice Reinvestment Initiative](#) to address corrections spending and public safety is a partnership with the [Public Safety Performance Project of The Pew Center on the States](#), with additional support to CSG from the [Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice](#). These efforts have provided similar data-driven analyses and policy options to state leaders in 12 other states.

The Council of State Governments Justice Center is a national nonprofit organization that serves policymakers at the local, state, and federal levels from all branches of government. The Justice Center provides practical, nonpartisan advice and consensus-driven strategies—informed by available evidence—to increase public safety and strengthen communities.

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