



PRESS RELEASE
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Ohio Issue 1 would redirect over \$136 million a year from incarceration to treatment and victim services

Ohio Issue 1, the Neighborhood Safety, Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Amendment just certified and approved for the November 2018 Ohio ballot, would reduce incarceration and redirect over a hundred million dollars a year from prisons to treatment, community safety and victim services, according to a new analysis released today by Policy Matters Ohio.

Issue 1: Reducing incarceration, improving communities finds that that Issue 1 would divert more than 10,000 Ohioans from incarceration, treating them instead in the community, where they can participate in work and family life. It would redirect those whose only violation was drug possession or probation violation, or those who participate in rehabilitation, work, or education programs. It would redirect more than \$136 million dollars in the first year of full implementation to be spent in communities.

“Issue 1 shifts resources to local communities, allowing people with addiction to stay close to their families and find meaningful employment,” said Donald Hutcherson, Ph.D., criminologist and report coauthor.

Ohio spends \$1.3 billion a year to incarcerate nearly 50,000 people. Only 13 states imprison a higher share of residents and only two have a higher share in the probation system according to the report. Incarceration has more than tripled from fewer than 14,000 people in 1980 and Ohio prisons are at 132 percent of capacity.

Of the 49,512 Ohioans in prison, for 2,688 drug possession was their most serious offense, 3,628 would be eligible for early release in the first year for participating in prison programming, and an average 4,019 of those imprisoned each year are in for minor probation violations. They would be redirected to community-based programs, reducing prison population by a projected 10,335 in the first full year of implementation.

Ohio spends nearly \$27,000 per inmate each year, about \$73.76 a day. The amendment stipulates that \$30-\$40 per inmate per day be redirected to community purposes. With 10,335 fewer prisoners, \$373,210 a day or \$136 million a year will be redirected. The initiative requires this be spent on public safety, victim services, and addiction treatment. The report does not attempt to estimate all possible sources of savings - prison cost reductions could be well over \$30 or \$40 per inmate per day.

“It’s rare that voters get a chance to simultaneously reduce incarceration, improve public safety, and redirect money from overcrowded prisons to communities,” said Amy Hanauer, Policy Matters executive director and report co-author. “Issue 1 promises to give communities more tools to address addiction, while reuniting families and pulling people back into our economy.”