

## **SB 3 Passes in Senate; Criminal Justice Advocates Urge House to Vote on and Pass Legislation**

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COLUMBUS— Today the Ohio Senate passed Senate Bill 3, sending to the House a bill that will provide more opportunities for Ohioans get treatment for substance abuse rather than sending them to prison. The ACLU of Ohio, Ohio Organizing Collaborative, Ohio Justice and Policy Center, and Policy Matters Ohio issued a joint statement thanking the Senate Judiciary Committee members and the full Senate for their efforts to pass this bill.

Senate Bill 3, introduced in February 2019, reclassifies some low-level drug possession crimes from felonies to misdemeanors to ensure that people struggling with addiction receive treatment rather than incarceration.

“Senate Bill 3 is long awaited recognition that locking people up because they have drug problems does not work and never has. We’ve seen the disastrous effects of the War on Drugs, it’s past time for our lawmakers to legislative with compassion and not criminalization. The time for criminal justice reform is now. I applaud members of the Senate seizing this opportunity to advance the bill, and urge every member of the House to do the same when they return in the fall,” added **Gary Daniels, Chief Lobbyist for the ACLU of Ohio.**

**Maurice Marbury, a community leader from Cleveland that has been working with the Ohio Organizing Collaborative** said, "All of us want to live in safe environments. Too many people are going to prison right now instead of getting treatment for addiction. In prison, you face harder situations that compound the traumas that led you to use drugs in the first place. What we need is what Senate Bill 3 starts to do, place alternatives in communities so that more people can go somewhere right now and say 'this is my problem, can I get help?' and actually get the help they need. "

“Through treatment not incarceration, Senate Bill 3 will help Ohioans get the second chance they deserve, no matter what they look like or where they live,” said **Jasmine Ayres, Policy Liaison for Policy Matters Ohio.** “People in big cities and small towns across our state are demanding justice, and this bill will make a difference.”