



### Corrections

## **ISSUE 1: REDUCING INCARCERATION, IMPROVING COMMUNITIES**

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Ohio spends \$1.3 billion a year to keep nearly 50,000 people in prison. Only thirteen states imprison a higher share of residents and only two states have a higher share in the probation system. Incarceration has more than tripled from fewer than 14,000 people in 1980.

Many of these Ohioans have not committed a violent crime and are incarcerated only because they were drug users. Others are in prison only because they violated probation in some minor way, missing an appointment or staying out past curfew. And currently incarcerated Ohioans would emerge from prison better able to work and be part of society if they had more reason to be part of rehabilitation and education programs.

Ohio Issue 1 will appear as a constitutional amendment on the November 2018 statewide ballot in Ohio. Issue 1 would reduce incarceration and free up over a hundred million dollars a year for Ohio to redirect toward treatment, community safety and victim services.

This analysis finds that Issue 1 would divert more than 10,000 Ohioans from expensive incarceration, treating them instead in the community, where they can better participate in work and family life. This would free up more than \$136 million dollars in the first year of full implementation.

Issue 1 reclassifies non-violent drug possession as a misdemeanor; prevents re-imprisonment when the only new infraction is a minor probation violation; rewards rehabilitation by reducing sentence terms for participation in education, behavioral, and treatment programs; and directs savings to treatment, safety and victim recovery.

Reducing incarceration through this measure would lower costs in the prison system, reduce overcrowding, help more Ohioans work and contribute to their families and communities, and enable better treatment for crime victims and offenders.

Of the 49,512 Ohioans currently in prison, we estimate that 2,688 were sentenced for drug possession as their most serious offense; on average, about 4,019 of those newly sent to prison each of the last five years were re-incarcerated for minor probation violations (about one in five new inmates); and at least 3,628 would be eligible for earlier release in the first year because of better rewards for participation in rehabilitation, work or education. In total, the projected reduction in the prison population is 10,335.

Ohio spends nearly \$27,000 per prisoner each year or about \$73.76 a day. The amendment stipulates that \$30 per inmate per day be redirected to community purposes for diverting technical probation violations and that \$40 per inmate per day be redirected for other elements of the initiative. With 10,335 fewer prisoners, \$373,210 a day or \$136 million a year will be redirected. The initiative requires that this be spent on public safety, victim services, trauma recovery and addiction treatment.

Ohio citizens should take advantage of the opportunity to save costs, reduce addiction and address public safety by supporting Issue 1.