

# STATE OF MICHIGAN



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## **CSG Justice Center Provides Michigan Policymakers with Options to Reduce Corrections Spending and Reinvest in Reducing Crime**

Lansing--The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center today joined Michigan's leaders to release the results of an unprecedented review of crime and corrections data to determine how the state might reduce corrections spending while reinvesting in measures that will make communities safer and stronger. This work was supported by the Public Safety Performance Project of The Pew Charitable Trusts' Center on the States; the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), U.S. Department of Justice; and the state.

At a policy forum held today in the State Capitol, the CSG Justice Center presented its findings after a rigorous, one-year analysis of the state's prison and parole population, reincarceration and rearrest rates, and other crime data. Governor Jennifer M. Granholm, Senate Majority Leader Michael D. Bishop, and Speaker of the House Andy Dillon requested the CSG Justice Center conduct the study, and appointed a bipartisan, inter-branch working group to guide the technical assistance project.

"Given our current fiscal crisis, we can't have business as usual," said Robert Emerson, state budget director, a member of the working group. "We welcome this range of options as a first step in generating some savings and ensuring that we get the best return on our investments."

Findings from the CSG Justice Center's report include the following:

- Rates of violent crime in Michigan declined just two percent between 2000 and 2007; arrests for violent crimes, however, declined 22 percent during the same 7-year period.
- Fifty percent of people on probation supervision and 50 to 70 percent of people on parole are unemployed.
- People released from prison in 2007 had served, on average, 127 percent of their court-imposed minimum sentence before being placed on community supervision.

Drawing on these and other findings, the CSG Justice Center delivered a package of policy options for the state's consideration, which include ensuring that most offenders (except for those with statutory maximum life sentences) serve 100 to 120 percent of their court-imposed minimum sentence. The Justice Center estimated that enacting this and other options could generate \$262 million in savings from

FY2011–2015. To successfully reduce corrections spending and increase public safety, the report describes some substantial upfront and sustained reinvestments of a portion of the projected savings. Options that the CSG Justice Center presented for potentially reducing crime include the following:

- Provide support to local law enforcement to deploy targeted crime-fighting strategies.
- Reduce the state’s crime lab backlogs to address the delays in processing evidence and facilitate prosecutions.
- Respond to probation violations with swift, certain and proportional sanctions.
- Expand employment services for high-risk probationers and parolees.

“Michigan has the highest violent crime rate in the region,” said Senator Alan Cropsy (R-Dewitt), a member of the working group. “Increasing public safety must be our number one goal, and we are pleased that the Justice Center presented us with a balanced package that reinvests savings from corrections in strategies to reduce crime and victimization.”

“The reports offer us a nonpartisan, data-driven approach to addressing crime, recidivism, and prevention,” said Representative Alma Wheeler Smith (D-Salem), who also serves on the working group. “We will give full consideration to these options and look forward to additional input from a diverse group of stakeholders.”

“I see the review of the policy options as a critical step in our journey toward an affordable and effective corrections system that helps us go beyond what we have achieved in cost savings since 2003,” said Corrections Director Patricia Caruso, another member of the working group. “We are deeply appreciative of the support and analysis we have received from the Justice Center, the Pew Charitable Trusts, and BJA.”

The assistance to Michigan is part of the Justice Center’s *Justice Reinvestment Initiative* partnership with the Public Safety Performance Project of The Pew Charitable Trusts’ Center on the States, with additional support from BJA. These efforts have provided similar data-driven analyses and policy options to help bipartisan groups of policymakers interested in increasing public safety and reducing spending on corrections in eight other states, including Texas, Kansas, and Arizona. In addition to the support from Pew, assistance from the Justice Center is made possible through funding provided by the Bureau of Justice Assistance of the U.S. Department of Justice, and the state of Michigan.

“The working group produced a truly bipartisan package of policy options that gives Michigan a real chance to achieve needed cost savings and prevent crime at the same time,” said Richard Jerome, manager of the Pew project.

*Justice Reinvestment in Michigan: Analyses of Crime, Community Corrections and Sentencing Policies and Policy Options to Deter Crime, Lower Recidivism, and Reduce Spending on Corrections* can be downloaded for free at <http://justicereinvestment.org/states/michigan/pubmaps-mi>.

For more questions about the reports or the Justice Center’s involvement in Michigan, please contact La Toya McBean (240-462-5422 / [lmcbean@csg.org](mailto:lmcbean@csg.org)).

*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. It provides practical, nonpartisan advice and consensus-driven strategies—informed by available evidence—to increase public safety and strengthen communities.*

*The Pew Public Safety Performance Project seeks to help states advance fiscally sound, data-driven policies and practices in sentencing and corrections that protect public safety, hold offenders accountable, and control corrections costs. The Pew Charitable Trusts applies the power of knowledge to solve today's most challenging problems. Pew's Center on the States identifies and advances effective policy approaches to critical issues facing states. Read more at [www.pewpublicsafety.org](http://www.pewpublicsafety.org).*

*The Bureau of Justice Assistance, a component of the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, supports law enforcement, courts, corrections, treatment, victims services, technology, and prevention initiatives that strengthen the nation's criminal justice system. BJA provides leadership, services and funding to make America's communities safer. Read more at [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA).*

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