



## Justice Reinvestment in Hawaii: Improving Public Safety by Expanding Treatment Programs and Strengthening Victim Services

In June 2012, state leaders in Hawaii enacted legislation to reduce corrections spending and invest in strategies to increase efficiency and decrease recidivism. Using a data-driven “justice reinvestment” approach, the state received intensive technical assistance from the Council of State Governments Justice Center (CSG Justice Center), in partnership with the Pew Center on the States and the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance. With continued resources and support, Hawaii leaders are now working to implement the legislation.

### Hawaii’s Justice Reinvestment Process

Over the past decade, rapid growth in the state’s prison and jail populations has led to overcrowding in the state’s correction facilities. As a result, Hawaii began contracting with prison facilities on the mainland to house some of its prison population. By 2011, the number of individuals housed out of state had reached 1,700—almost half of the state’s prison population—at a cost of \$45 million annually. In response, the Governor, Chief Justice, and legislative leaders sought ways to reduce the number of prisoners and dollars being sent out of state. Through a comprehensive analysis of Hawaii’s criminal justice system, the CSG Justice Center identified inefficiencies that contributed to growth in the jail and prison populations and increased corrections costs. The analysis found that unnecessary delays in Hawaii’s pretrial process contributed to a 117% increase in the pretrial population between FY 2006 and FY 2011. In addition, programs intended to reduce recidivism were not being focused on people most likely to reoffend. Finally, victim services were not sufficient to ensure that individuals responsible for making restitution payments to victims were being held accountable.

Presented with these key findings, an inter-branch, inter-agency working group chaired by Senate President Shan Tsutsui (D, District 4), Department of Public Safety (PSD) Director Jodie Maesaka-Hirata, and First Circuit Judge Steven S. Alm worked with the CSG Justice Center to develop a policy framework to increase efficiency, reduce recidivism, increase public safety, and hold individuals accountable for their restitution obligations. State legislators translated this framework into Senate Bill 2776 and House Bill 2515.



*Governor Neil Abercrombie signs Hawaii’s justice reinvestment legislation*

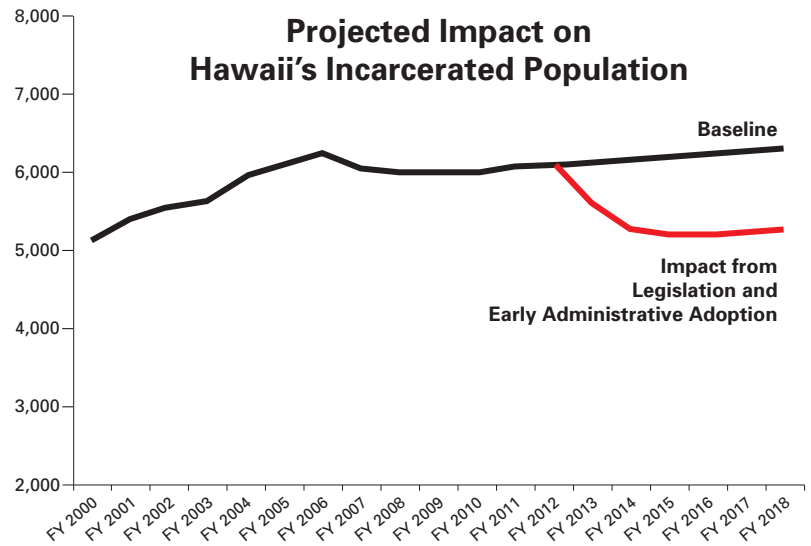
The policy framework addressed three core objectives: First, to increase efficiency by requiring timely risk assessments of pretrial defendants to lessen the costly delays in the pretrial process. Second, to reduce recidivism by focusing probation and parole resources on individuals most likely to reoffend; by requiring programming and parole resources on individuals most likely to reoffend; and by allowing more judicial discretion at sentencing to select the most appropriate sanction for second-time felony drug offenders. Third, to hold offenders more accountable for their actions by increasing the amount that they must pay towards victim restitution to 25% of inmate account deposits and ensuring that institutions have the mechanisms in place to collect, track, and disperse these funds effectively.

SB2776 and HB2515 passed both chambers of the legislature with bipartisan support and Governor Neil Abercrombie signed the bills into law on June 20, 2012. If the state

effectively implements the policies and continues to increase its level of reinvestment, the CSG Justice Center estimates that the state's prison and jail population will decline by 1,000 beds by the end of FY 2018, reducing spending by \$130 million. Out of the savings and avoided costs anticipated in the first year, the state reinvested \$3.4 million in order to expand the availability of community-based treatment programs, hire additional corrections staff to complete risk and needs assessments and support reentry efforts, and reestablish PSD's research and planning office. The reinvestments also support 22 new staff positions for victim services in PSD, Prosecuting Attorney offices, and the Crime Victim Compensation Commission. This increased staffing, along with the improvements to restitution collection, represent the most substantive policy inclusions for victims to date in a justice reinvestment project. Above all, the law will significantly improve public safety by focusing community supervision and treatment resources on individuals at high risk of recidivism.

## Looking Ahead

Hawaii's efforts to increase public safety do not stop with the enactment of these policies. State officials are now working to translate the legislation into practice. The state



has convened meetings of key inter-branch, inter-agency work groups tasked with ensuring that these policies are implemented and these investments realize the projected outcomes. To enhance the state's capacity to implement the legislation, Hawaii is receiving technical assistance from the CSG Justice Center and funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance that will support training, education, and upgrades to data systems.



The Pew Center on the States is a division of The Pew Charitable Trusts that identifies and advances effective solutions to critical issues facing states. Pew is a nonprofit organization

that applies a rigorous, analytical approach to improve public policy, inform the public, and stimulate civic life. Launched in 2006, The Public Safety Performance Project helps states advance fiscally sound, data-driven policies and practices in sentencing and corrections that protect public safety, hold offenders accountable, and control corrections costs. For more information, visit [www.pewcenteronthestates.org](http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org).



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

*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 and the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance. These efforts have provided data-driven analyses and policy options to state leaders in 16 states.*

*For additional information about Justice Reinvestment in Hawaii, please visit [www.justicereinvestment.org](http://www.justicereinvestment.org).*