



# Justice Reinvestment in Michigan

Reducing Crime, Victimization  
and Corrections Spending



## Background

**G**overnor Jennifer M. Granholm, Senate Majority Leader Michael D. Bishop, and Speaker of the House Andy Dillon have requested intensive technical assistance from the Council of State Governments Justice Center (“Justice Center”) to help guide the development of a statewide policy framework that reduces crime and victimization in Michigan, manages the growth in spending on corrections, and reinvests in targeted efforts to increase public safety in high-crime neighborhoods.

The Justice Center is a national, non-partisan organization that works with state policymakers to analyze data and develop fiscally-sound, data-driven strategies. Assistance from the Justice Cen-

ter is made possible in part through funding support provided by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, a component of the U.S. Department of Justice, and the Public Safety Performance Project of The Pew Charitable Trusts’ Center on the States.

Members of the executive and legislative branches have established a bipartisan, bicameral, and inter-branch group to work with the Justice Center to design strategies with the paramount goal of increasing public safety. To guide their discussions, the working group has pledged to use the analyses constructively, and engage county and local government policymakers and representatives from community-based organizations in the process.

# Snapshot of Crime, Recidivism, and Corrections Spending in Michigan

Despite declines in both violent and property crime over the last decade, Michigan's crime rate remains higher than the national average.

- Whereas the violent crime rate in Michigan decreased 11 percent between 1996 and 2006, it declined 31 percent nationally.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, over the same ten-year period, property crime rates in Michigan decreased 16 percent compared with a 25 percent national decline.
- In 2006, the violent crime rate in Michigan exceeded the national violent crime rate; in the Midwest, Michigan had the highest rate of violent crime.

High failure rates among individuals on community supervision are contributing significantly to annual prison admissions.

- In 2007, approximately 58 percent of individuals admitted to prison were revoked for violating a condition of their probation or parole supervision.<sup>3</sup>
- Approximately 48 percent of individuals released from prison are returned to prison within two years of their release.<sup>4</sup>

State spending on corrections has increased significantly in recent years, and it is consuming a growing portion of the state's general funds.

- Michigan's spending on corrections increased 15 percent, from \$1.6 billion in FY 2001-02 to \$1.8 billion in FY 2006-07.<sup>5</sup>
- In the past ten years, state spending on corrections increased from 16.2 percent of state general fund expenditures in FY 1997 to 22.6 percent in FY 2007.<sup>6</sup>
- With the prison population at the end of 2007 at 50,203, Michigan had one of the highest annual costs per prisoner in the country—\$31,000, compared with \$24,000 and \$16,000 in Ohio and Texas, respectively.<sup>7</sup>
- One out of every three state workers is employed by the Michigan Department of Corrections.<sup>8</sup>

Michigan's incarceration rate is higher than in neighboring states, yet it sends fewer individuals to prison each year than neighboring states.

- Michigan's prison incarceration rate is high, despite having a low prison admission rate, because the length of time that individuals in Michigan spend in prison is above the national (or regional) average.<sup>9</sup>



# The Justice Center's Three Phases of Assistance

The Justice Center and its expert consultants will provide technical assistance to Michigan policymakers in three phases.

## PHASE 1

### Analyze Data January 2008 – July 2008

The Justice Center's expert consultants will analyze trends in Michigan's crime and arrest rates, conduct a system-wide analysis of the prison population, and review strategies currently being employed – or suggested – by policymakers to reduce recidivism, victimization, and corrections costs. Additionally, the Justice Center will conduct geographical analyses of specific neighborhoods where large numbers of individuals released from prison return to determine how coordination among agencies, community corrections, and law enforcement can be improved.

## Notes

1. U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation. *Crime in the United States, 1996* (September 1997). Retrieved April 28, 2008, from <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2006/>; U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation. *Crime in the United States, 2006* (September 2007). Retrieved November 29, 2007, from <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2006/>.
2. Ibid, *Crime in the United States, 2006*; William J. Sabol, Todd D. Minton, and Paige M. Harrison, *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2006*, U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, NCJ217675 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2007); William J. Sabol, Heather Coutoure, and Paige M. Harrison, *Prisoners in 2006*, U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, NCJ219416 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2007); Michigan Department of Corrections, Length of Stay Calculation, Internal memorandum to Council of State Governments Justice Center (June 13, 2008); Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction & Illinois Department of Correction. The methodology used to calculate the 2007 Michigan average length of stay is based on the time served to first parole and time served to discharge on the maximum without parole. Rate of prison admissions calculated by determining the number of admissions to prison in a given year per 100,000 in the general resident population.
3. Michigan Department of Corrections, Miscellaneous Preliminary Statistics (as of 11/2007), Internal memorandum to Council of State Governments Justice Center (January, 2008).
4. Michigan Department of Corrections, *Recidivism Reduction Report*, Report to the Legislature: Pursuant to P.A. 331 of 2006, Section 409 (January 2007).
5. Michigan Senate Fiscal Agency, *Issue Paper: Incarceration and its Costs in Michigan* (Lansing, Michigan: May 2007).
6. National Association of State Budget Officers, *1997 State Expenditure Report, National Association of State Budget Officers* (Washington, D.C.: National Association of State Budget Officers, 1998); National Association of State Budget Officers, *2006 State Expenditure Report, National Association of State Budget Officers* (Washington, D.C.: National Association of State Budget Officers, 2007).

## PHASE 2

### Develop Policy Options July 2008 – January 2009

Following a thorough analysis of data maintained by various criminal justice and human service agencies in Michigan, the Justice Center and its experts will help state and local policymakers design a policy framework for a more effective and affordable crime fighting strategy. The objectives of this framework will be to reduce crime and victimization caused by individuals on probation and parole, manage the growth in corrections expenditures, and increase public safety in high-crime neighborhoods.

## PHASE 3

### Ensure Accountability January 2009 – December 2009

To ensure that policies are implemented effectively and that the appropriate state agencies are held accountable for specific outcomes, the Justice Center will develop a “dashboard” tracking mechanism that state policymakers can employ to track the state's progress in implementing recidivism reduction efforts across multiple agencies. This “dashboard” will also track the impact of newly enacted policies on crime, court dispositions, jail populations, and the prison population.

7. Michigan Senate Fiscal Agency, *Issue Paper: Incarceration and its Costs in Michigan* (Lansing, Michigan: May 2007). The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, *The Pieces of the Puzzle: 2007 Annual Report*, (Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, 2008). The State of Texas Legislative Budget Board, *Criminal Justice Uniform Cost Report FY 2004-2006*, (January, 2007). Michigan Department of Corrections, *Prison Population Projections: Presentation to House Appropriations Subcommittee on Corrections* (April 8, 2008).
8. State of Michigan Civil Service Commission, *Annual Workforce Report: First Quarter, Fiscal Year 2007-08* (Lansing, Michigan: Michigan Civil Service Commission, 2007).
9. Further analyses will be conducted by the Council of State Governments Justice Center to calculate the percentage of people admitted to prison in Michigan for violent offenses compared to the surrounding Midwestern states and the national average. Reportedly, Michigan incarcerates a higher percentage of violent offenders which may contribute to longer average lengths of stay.

To learn more about the justice reinvestment strategy in Michigan and other states, please visit: [www.justicereinvestment.org](http://www.justicereinvestment.org).

## JUSTICE★CENTER

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

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. The Justice Center provides practical, nonpartisan advice and consensus driven strategies, informed by available evidence, to increase public safety and strengthen communities.



**BJA** Bureau of Justice Assistance



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To learn more about the Bureau of Justice Assistance, please visit: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/>.

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To learn more about the Public Safety Performance Project, please visit: <http://www.pewpublicsafety.org/>.

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