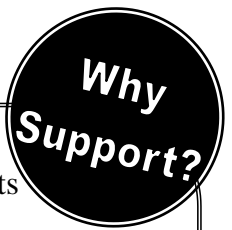


## A Smarter Way to Fight Crime



**Issue Explanation:** *Justice Reinvestment* is a strategy that state governments across the country are using to reevaluate public safety spending and move towards smarter investments. From a business perspective, our prison system is failing. Incarceration is the most expensive means of maintaining public safety. **Oregon needs to be more cost effective and strategic in its use of incarceration, while investing in the programs proven to reduce future crime and recidivism at a fraction of the cost.**

**We are on the verge of committing hundreds of millions of dollars to build a new prison in Junction City while cutting community-based addiction treatment and mental health services by at least \$100 million. This is a recipe for disaster from a public safety perspective and a poor use of tax dollars. The Justice Reinvestment model encourages legislators to pass smart criminal justice reforms that generate savings and prevent cuts to community-based treatment programs that are effective at reducing crime.**

**Background:** The goals behind Justice Reinvestment are to:

- Increase public safety
- Strengthen services that build safe, sound, and healthy communities
- Save the state money
- Gutting community-based drug and alcohol treatment, mental health services, and victim services will come at a time of increased need. The economic crisis aggravates people's existing struggles with addiction, mental illness, and domestic violence.
- It is profoundly less expensive to invest in these community treatment services than throw away hundreds of millions of dollars building new prison beds.
- There are a wide range of safe and sensible sentencing reforms that actually improve public safety while saving significant money. (*see back*)

### Key Facts

Oregon spends a greater percentage of its general fund budget on our prison system than any other state in the country.

For every dollar invested in community-based drug treatment, Oregon receives \$6 - \$7 dollars of savings and benefits in return.

In 2003, Washington State increased earned-time for a large segment of offenders in prison. After taking four years to study the impact, WA State found that it actually reduced recidivism while saving millions of dollars.

# Sensible Reforms that Save Money to Protect Vital Public Safety Programs:

- 1) **Phase-in of Measure 57:** Increasing sentences for addiction-driven crime while cutting treatment programs will not fulfill the true Promise of 57. Delaying the implementation of Measure 57 until the 2011-13 biennium creates significant savings. These savings could prevent massive cuts to community based addiction treatment in order to maintain the promise of treatment associated with Measure 57. Savings would be \$70 million in the 2009-11 biennium.
- 2) **Second Look for Youth:** Give retroactive access to Second Look hearings for youth convicted as adults. Second Look provides the potential for post-prison release (but does not guarantee it) for youth offenders who have demonstrated serious and tangible progress in their rehabilitation. This reform is supported by OYA line-staff and research suggests this would reduce recidivism. Savings in the 2009-11 Biennium projected at \$5.2 million and \$10.5 million when fully implemented.
- 3) **Increase Earned Time:** Return total amount of possible earned time for non-M11 sentences to 33% from the current 20% informed by WA State's success. Earned-time creates incentive for inmates to engage in rehabilitative work and provides Dept. of Corrections a valuable tool. Washington State increased earned-time in 2003 and found that it actually reduced recidivism and generated significant savings. A 2005 fiscal analysis from Oregon estimated \$6.6 million savings in the first biennium and \$23 million in the second biennium. *(These savings have not been increased to account for inflation.)*
- 4) **Modification to low-level offenses:** Convert simple possession of a controlled substance from a felony to a misdemeanor. This would reduce the state's community correction costs, while also reducing re-entry barriers for this specific population of offender. This change creates substantive savings without significant changes to accountability for low-level offenses. In 2003, DOC estimated the savings of this policy change would be \$24 million for the first biennium and \$36.7 million when fully implemented. *(These savings have not been increased to account for inflation.)*

**Total Savings in 2009-11 = \$105 Million**