Criminal Justice Reform: Policies to Improve Probation & Parole Outcomes

CSG West, July 17, 2019
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U.S. Incarceration Rate Quadrupled Over 3 Decades
Changes to sentencing and release policies drove up prison and jail populations
Figure 1
Number of Adults Under Community Supervision More Than Tripled Over 36 Years
Criminal justice populations by type, 1980-2016

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To Safely Cut Incarceration, States Rethink Responses to Supervision Violations

Evidence-based policies lead to higher rates of parole and probation success
Figure 1
Fewer People Sent to Prison From Probation in North Carolina After Policy Changes
Revocation rates by risk level, fiscal 2010 and 2015

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Figure 2
Earned Compliance Did Not Affect Recidivism in Missouri
Reoffense rates for those released from supervision, before and after implementation of credits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1-year reconviction</th>
<th>2-year reconviction</th>
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<tr>
<td>Comparison group</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit group</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
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South Carolina Prison Admissions for Rule Violations Fell by More Than Half After Reforms

Technical revocations by sanction, 2010-18


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Figure 4

Louisiana’s Cap on Supervision Revocations Maintained Public Safety

Percentage of individuals reincarcerated within a year of release from a jail or prison term for a revocation, before and after Act 402, by offense type

Note: Data reflect similar individuals whose supervision was revoked between 2000 and 2004 (before implementation of Act 402) and from September 2007 to April 2012 (after Act 402).


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Maryland Voters Back Limited Use of Prison for Technical Violations

Respondents were asked which statement comes closer to their points of view about responding to a violation of the rules of supervision, for example, failing a drug test or missing a curfew, that is not another crime.

62% of Marylanders believe people on supervision who commit technical violations should serve either no prison time or no more than 45 days.

- 42% Sent back to prison for up to 45 days
- 20% Treatment and programs designed to change behavior instead of prison
- 35% Sent back to prison for the remainder of their sentence
- 2% Not sure


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Figure 3
1 in 55 U.S. Adults Is on Probation or Parole, Though Geographic Variation Is Significant
Supervision rates by state, 2016

[Map showing supervision rates by state, with states color-coded to indicate rates.]