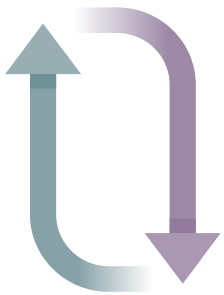


# JUSTICE REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE

## PRIORITIZING PRISON RESOURCES WHERE THEY MATTER MOST

The **Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI)** is a partnership with state leaders from all three branches of government committed to using their criminal justice data to examine and improve their systems by implementing proven, innovative, and comprehensive approaches to reduce crime, cut recidivism rates, and shift resources toward more effective public safety strategies.



A central goal for states engaging in JRI is to focus prison space on those who have committed serious, violent, or repeat offenses, freeing up resources to invest in more effective recidivism-reduction strategies.

The Justice Reinvestment Initiative is an intensive, data-driven approach that allows states to address key challenges in their criminal justice systems, including violent crime, opioid addiction, mental illness, corrections costs, and recidivism. Funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the initiative supports states to increase the cost-effectiveness of their justice systems and reinvest the savings into high-performing strategies to increase public safety.



# Mississippi

JRI PASSED IN 2014



PORTION OF PRISON BEDS OCCUPIED BY VIOLENT OFFENDERS

FY14-FY17

### MISSISSIPPI DROVE THIS CHANGE BY:

- ▶ **INCREASING** eligibility for prison alternatives such as probation, intensive supervision, and drug court for those convicted of nonviolent offenses
- ▶ **GRANTING** the option for retroactive parole eligibility for some individuals incarcerated for a nonviolent offense
- ▶ **REQUIRING** mandatory time served before parole eligibility for nonviolent offenses and doubling that time for violent offenses

# Utah

JRI PASSED IN 2015



PORTION OF PRISON BEDS OCCUPIED BY VIOLENT OFFENDERS

FY14-FY17

### UTAH DROVE THIS CHANGE BY:

- ▶ **REDUCING** penalties for certain lower-level offenses, most of which are nonviolent
- ▶ **INCREASING** alternative sanctions in lieu of revocation to prison
- ▶ **EXPANDING** the availability of community-based drug and mental health treatment

# Achieving the Goal

A key indicator of progress toward prioritizing prison resources where they matter is the increase in the proportion of a state's prison population comprised of people convicted of violent offenses versus nonviolent offenses.

Four states that received technical assistance from the Crime and Justice Institute, with funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, enacted policies to achieve this goal.

The main strategies to shift the composition of the states' prison populations include:

1

### CREATING

tiered penalties to address violent conduct based on severity



2

### FOCUSING

recidivism reduction resources on those most likely to reoffend



3

### PRIORITIZING

earned time for those convicted of nonviolent offenses



4

### EXPANDING

parole eligibility for those convicted of nonviolent offenses



## Alaska

JRI PASSED IN 2016\*



### ALASKA DROVE THIS CHANGE BY:

- ▶ **EXPANDING** law enforcement arrest discretion to focus on serious offenses
- ▶ **RECLASSIFYING** certain lower-level misdemeanors as violations and some nonviolent felonies as misdemeanors
- ▶ **REDUCING** presumptive sentencing ranges for some offenses
- ▶ **INCREASING** penalties for homicides



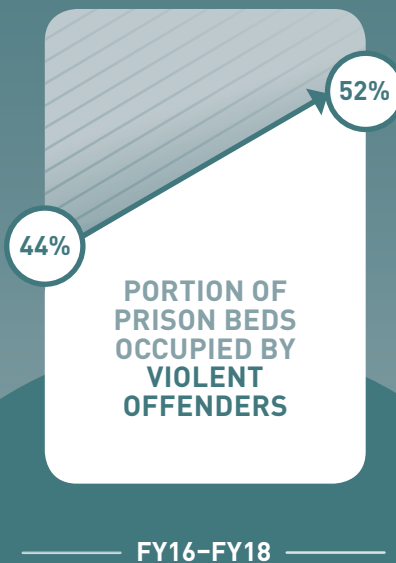
## Louisiana

JRI PASSED IN 2017



### LOUISIANA DROVE THIS CHANGE BY:

- ▶ **REDUCING** penalties for some nonviolent offenses and expanding eligibility for prison alternatives and treatment for some nonviolent offenses
- ▶ **ALLOWING** more nonviolent offenders to earn time off their prison sentence through good behavior and participation in rehabilitative programs
- ▶ **EXPANDING** parole eligibility to nonviolent, non-sex offenders, including those sentenced under the habitual offender statute



This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-ZB-BX-K002 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the SMART Office. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

\*In 2019, HB 49 rolled back portions of the original legislation.