



# Criminal Justice Trends & Current Policy Responses in Louisiana

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# Agenda

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- 1 Introduction
- 2 Violent Crime Trends in Louisiana
- 3 2017 Smart on Crime Policies & Outcomes
- 4 Current Policy Considerations
- 5 Data Gaps

# About the Crime and Justice Institute

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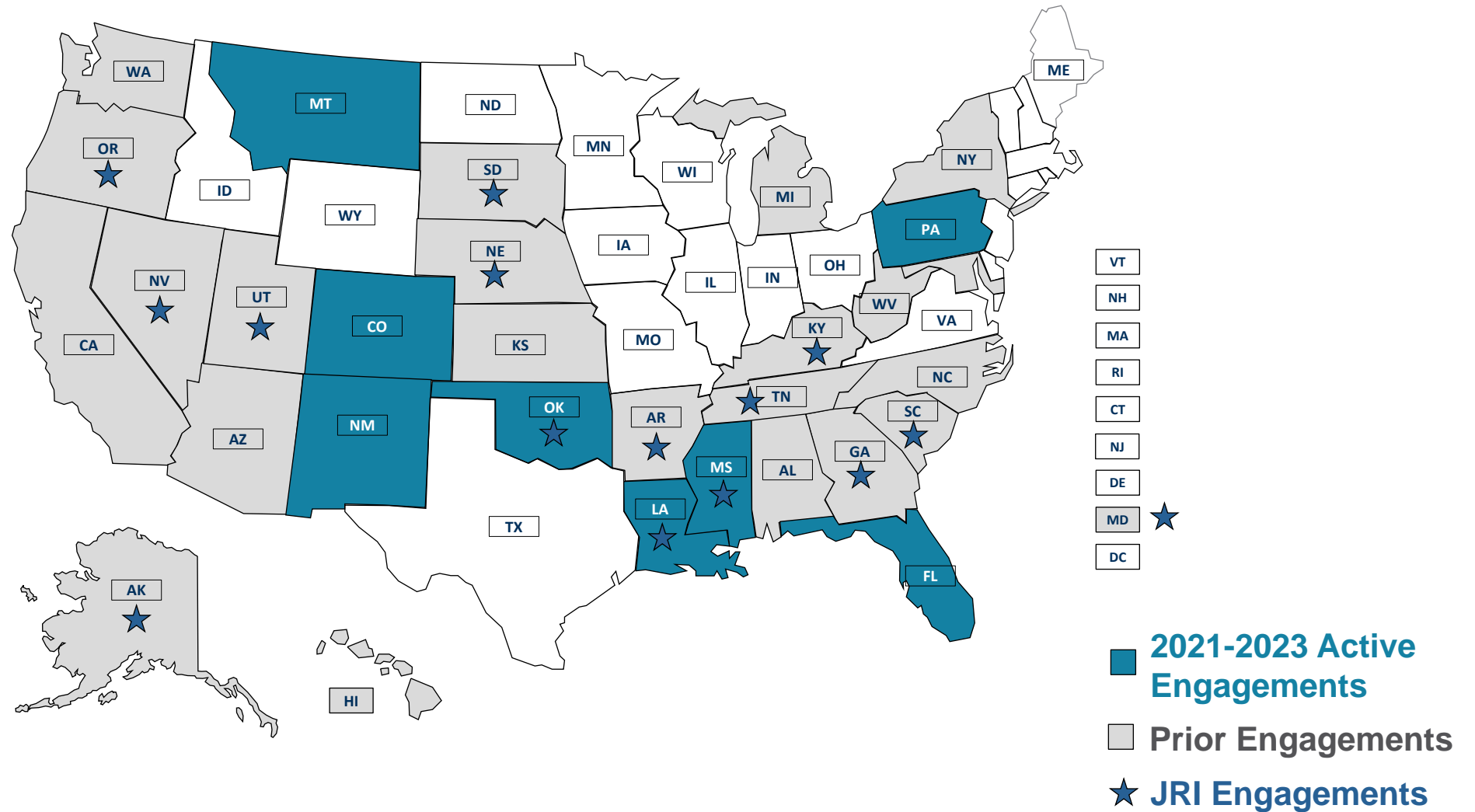


The Crime and Justice Institute (CJI) works with local, state, and national jurisdictions to help develop and implement data-driven solutions to strengthen their justice systems



CJI is a technical assistance provider for the Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI) grant funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

# CJI's Work Across the Country



# CJI's Role in Louisiana

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- Analyze publicly available criminal justice data
- Provide research and outcome data on best practices
- Review state examples that have enacted similar policies
- Examine potential costs of policy proposals
- Identify data gaps

**It is not CJI's role to influence policy decisions, but to provide data analysis and serve as a resource for research and best practices in other states and jurisdictions.**

# 2024 Extraordinary Special Session

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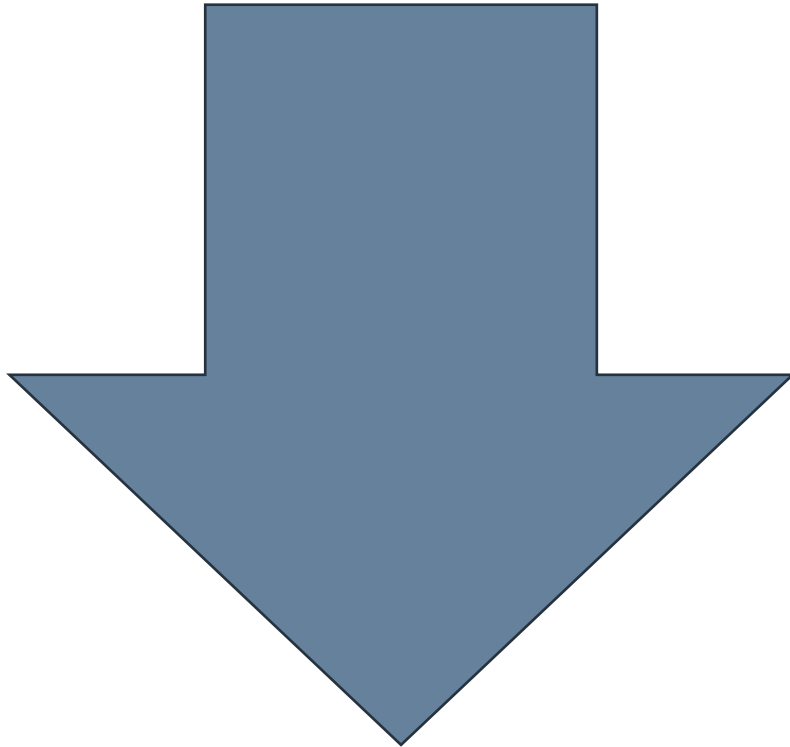
- Special Session called to address violent crime
- Introduced Legislation (12 Senate Bills & 9 House Bills) involves:
  - Data Collection (HB1)
  - Criminal Procedure & Infrastructure (HB2, HB3, HB4, HB6, SB2, SB6, SB8, SB9)
  - Criminal Offenses (HB5, HB7, HB8, HB12, SB7)
  - Release Eligibility (HB9, HB10, SB5)
  - Community Supervision (HB11)
  - Juvenile Justice (SB3, SB4)
  - Firearms (HB12, SB1)



# Violent Crime Trends In Louisiana

# Louisiana's Post-Pandemic Crime Trends

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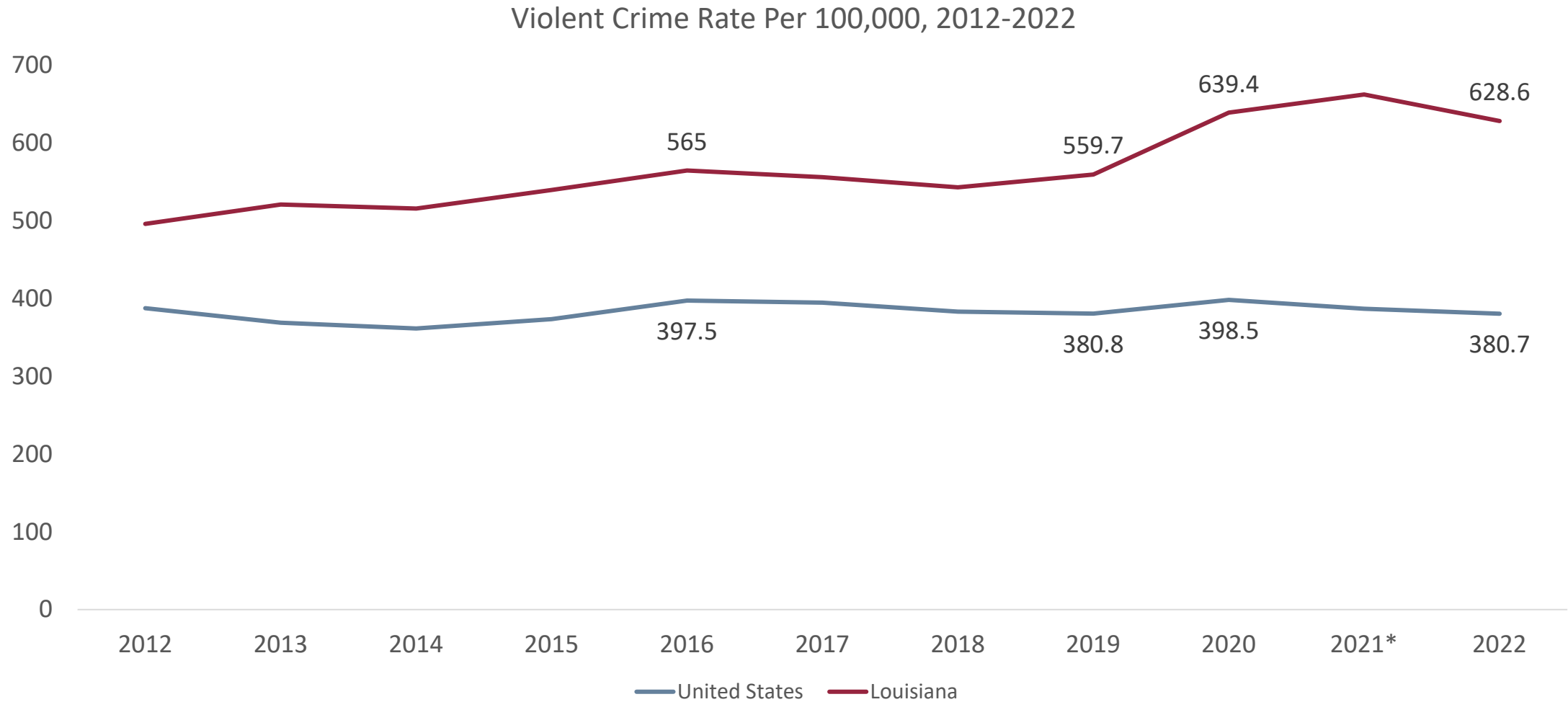


## Quick Facts

- Between 2021 and 2022, **Violent Crime Decreased 5%** Across the State
- **Murder Rates Decline Significantly** in New Orleans and Baton Rouge

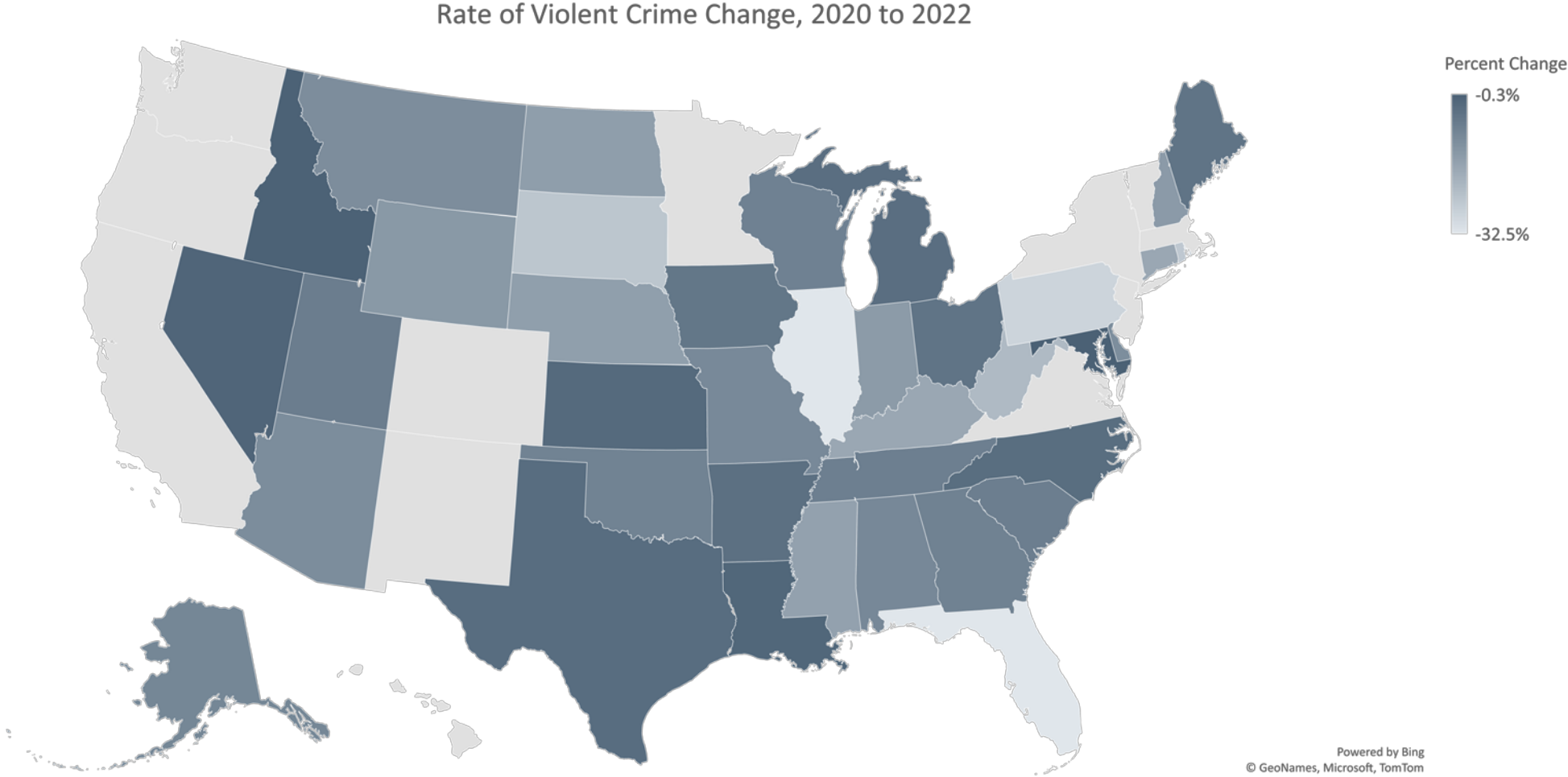


# Violent Crime Trends Track National Trends



Source: FBI Crime Data

# Louisiana One of 38 States to See Crime Decline Post Peak

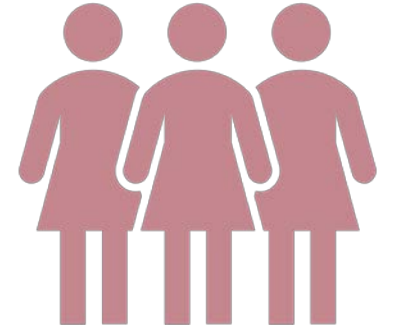
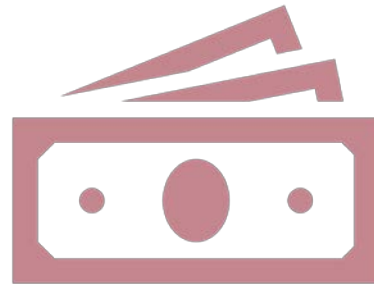
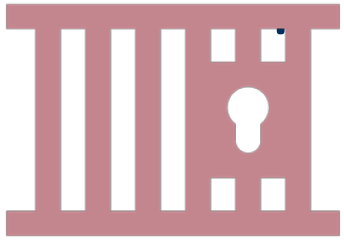




# 2017 Policies & Outcomes

# Reason for Reform

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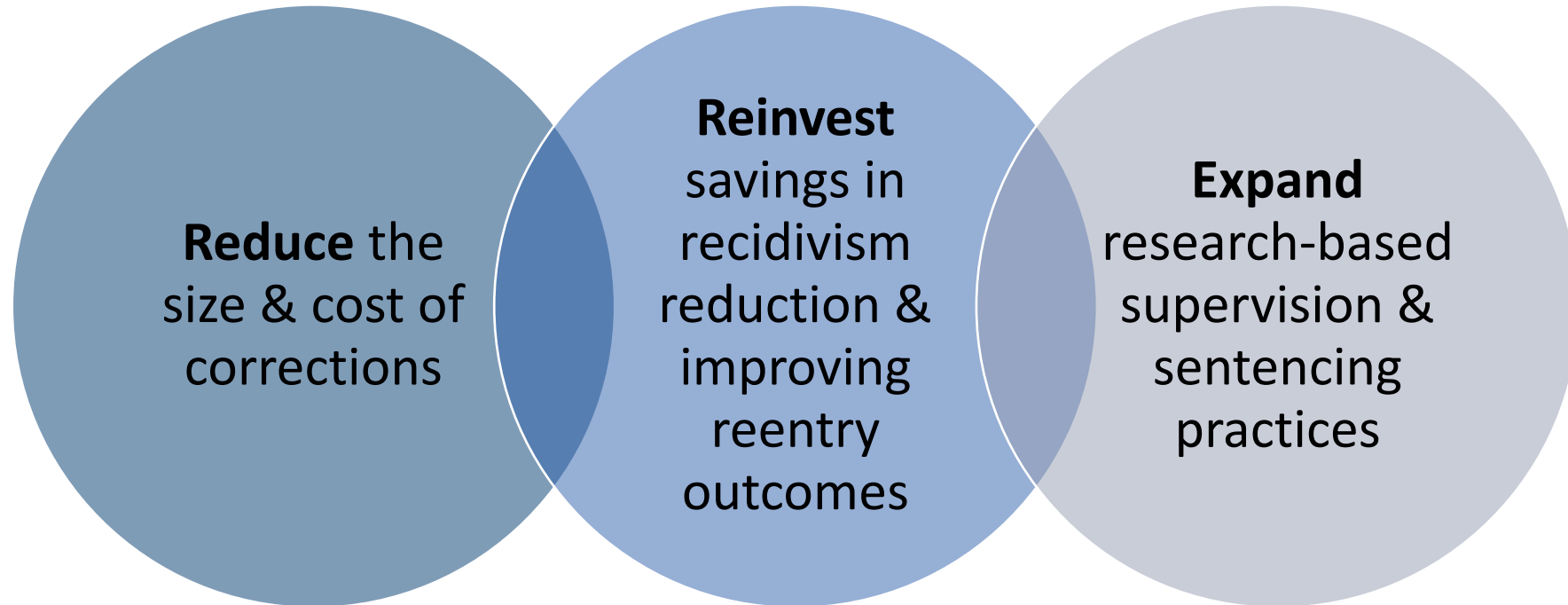
Highest  
Incarceration Rate

\$700 million Budget

1 in 3 People Released  
Return to Prison

# Task Force Legislative Priorities

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# Legislative Changes

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## Reduce the Size & Cost of Corrections

- Eliminated mandatory minimums and reduces maximum sentences for several non-violent offenses

## Reinvest in Recidivism Reduction & Improve Reentry

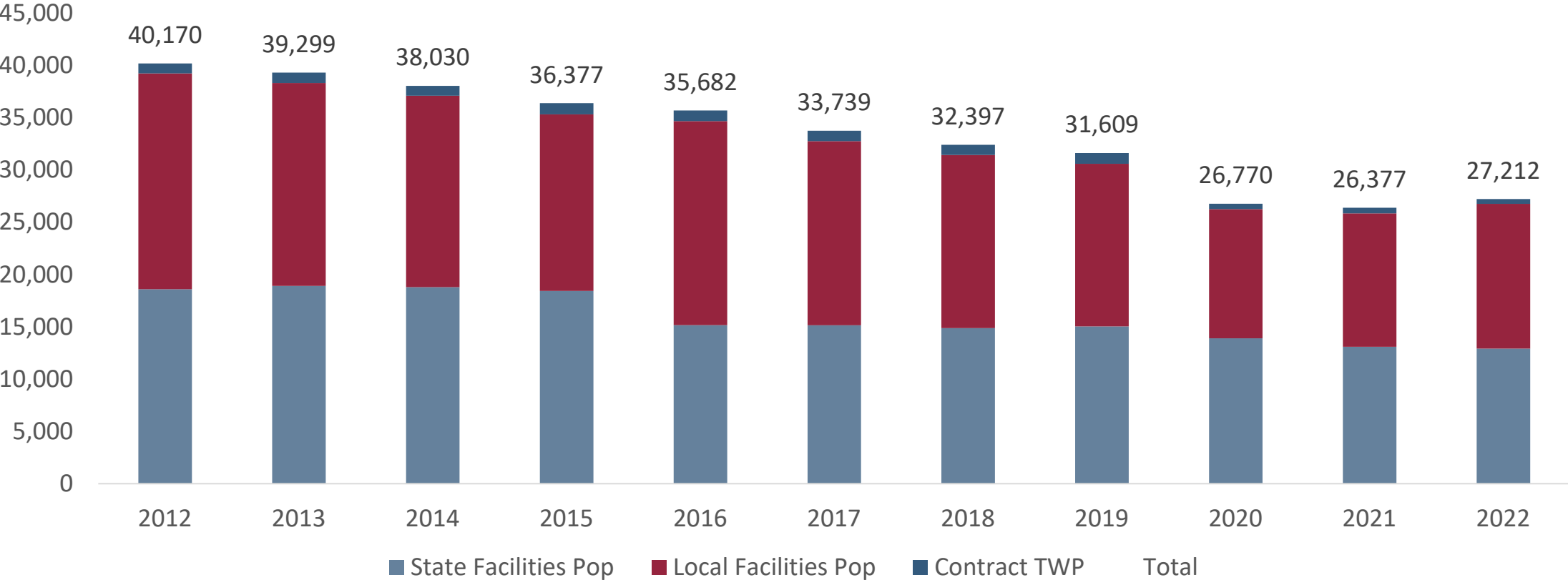
- Required LA to reinvest 70% of savings from prison population reduction into community-based alternatives, victim services, and recidivism-reduction programs.
- Simplified the process for people with criminal convictions to receive occupational licenses.

## Expand Research-based Supervision & Sentencing Practices

- Expedited parole eligibility and good time release and extended eligibility for certain inmates.
- Expanded eligibility for alternatives to prison, including probation.

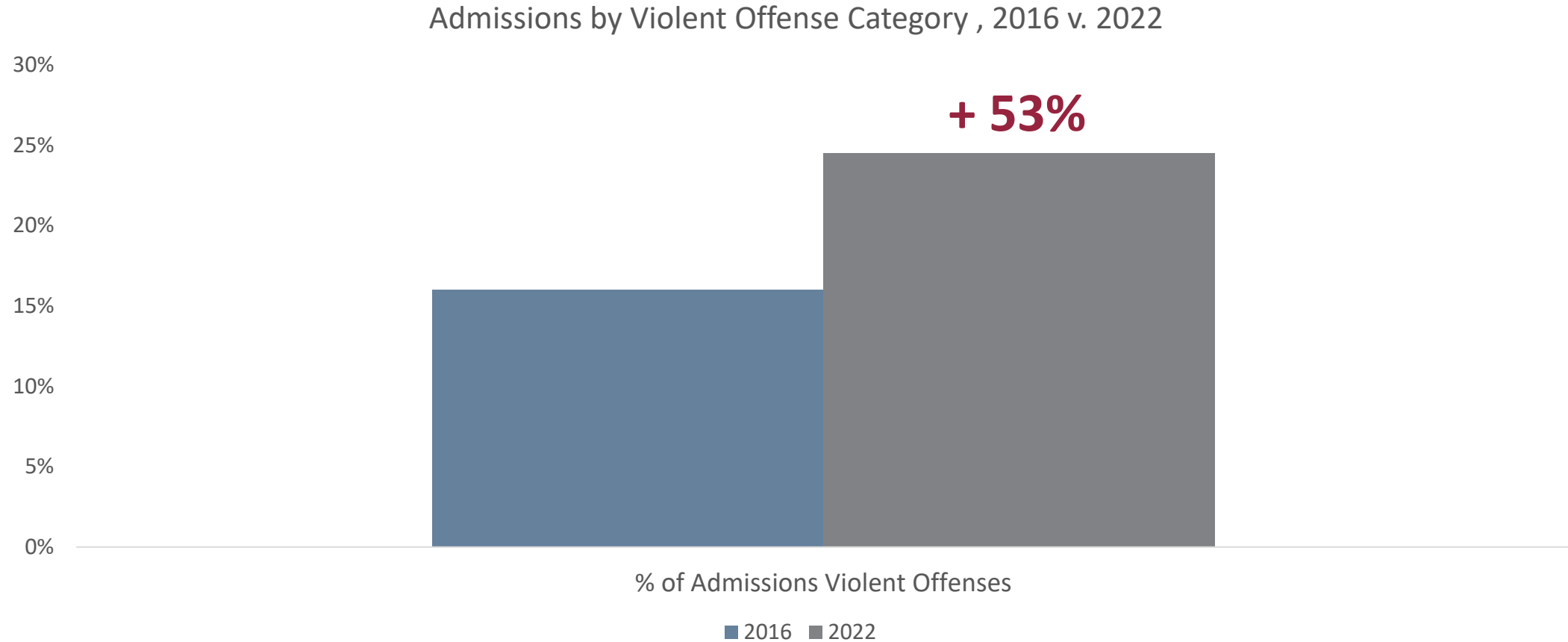
# Outcome: Prison Population Declines 24% Since 2016

Louisiana State and Local Facility Total Custody Population,  
Dec. 2012 - Dec. 2022



Source: DPS&C 2023 Briefing Book

# Outcome: More Violent Offenders Going to Prison

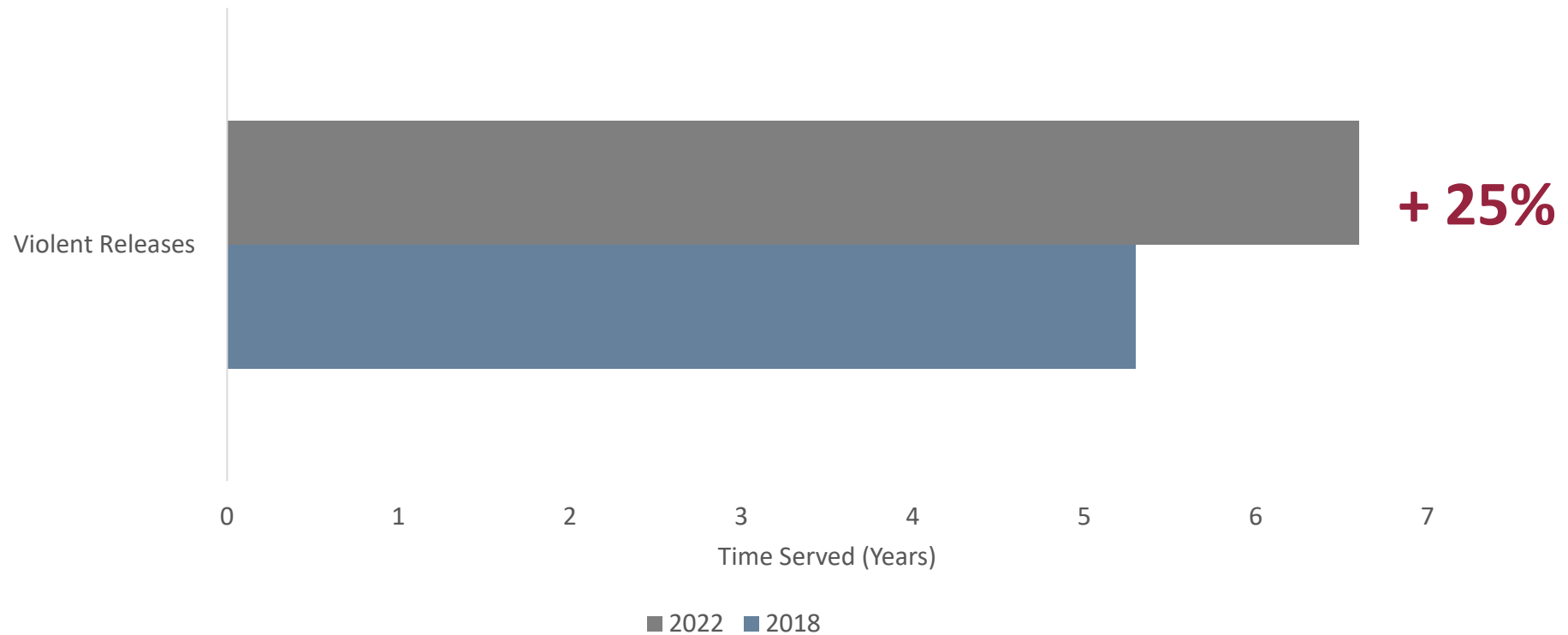


Source: Louisiana Department of Corrections Data Dashboard



# Outcome: Violent Offenders Serving Longer

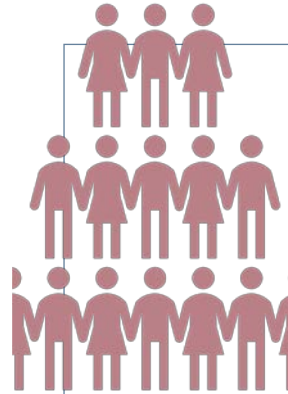
Average Time Served for Releases of Individuals Serving for Violent Offenses, 2018 v. 2022



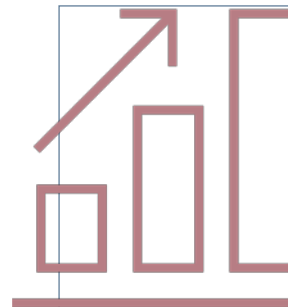
Source: Louisiana Department of Corrections Data Dashboard

# Outcome: Increased Probation & Parole Successes

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The percentage of successful completions on **probation** increased **4%** between 2016 and 2021.

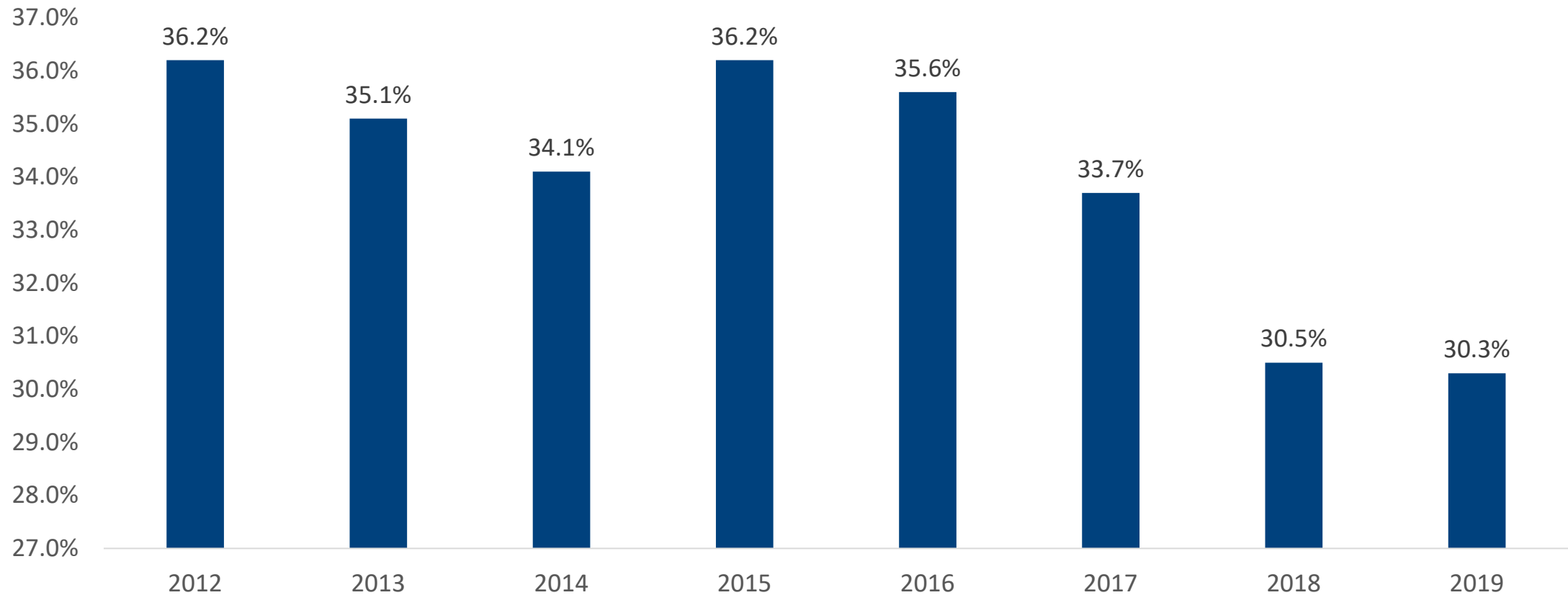


The percentage of successful completions for **parolees** increased **28%** between 2016 and 2021.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Parole and Probation Series

# Outcome: Recidivism Declines 15% Since 2016

% of Released Individuals Reincarcerated within Three Years of Release by Release Year (Total Population), 2012-2019



Source: Louisiana Department of Corrections

# Current Policy Proposals

# Policies Impacting Release Eligibility

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HB9

- Removes Parole Eligibility for all Individuals after August 1, 2024



HB 10

- Revises good time to allow individuals to earn up to only 15% credit after August 1, 2024



SB 5

- Requires unanimous Board approval for release
- Allows Board to rescind parole

# Research Key Takeaways

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- Long prison sentences prevent some crime, although estimates of the magnitude are inconsistent and vary by crime type.
- Research findings on the specific deterrent effect and public safety impacts of long prison sentences continue to be mixed and are varied by offender and crime type.
  - Long prison sentences for non-violent offenses have demonstrated adverse public safety outcomes.
- A small percentage (5% to 10%) of individuals are responsible for a majority of violent crime and drug trafficking.
- The certainty and swiftness of consequences function as a more effective crime deterrent than their severity.

Source: Council on Criminal Justice, "The Impacts of Long Sentencings on Public Safety".

## Outcome: Limited Impact on Public Safety



### WASHINGTON

1. Violent crime increased 26% over past decade, despite being the first state to enact an 85% requirement.
2. In 2022, 66% of prison admissions were due to a supervision revocation
3. Violence in institutions increased considerably between 2009 and 2011, prompting the need for specific violence deterrent programming

# Outcome: Increased Prison Population and Costs



## FLORIDA

1. Florida abolished parole in 1983.
2. Nearly a 1/3 of the prison population is 50+, up 10% from a decade ago. Incarcerating seniors, who research finds are least likely to reoffend, costs roughly twice as much as other individuals.
3. Estimated cost to address prison system needs between \$6-\$12 billion.



# Outcome: Disincentivizing Rehabilitation



## ARIZONA

1. 50% increase in infractions within the first year of enacting its 85% requirement.
2. 20% reduction in education program enrollment.
3. Higher rate of reincarceration (7 percentage points) for those released within 3 years of the 85% requirement.

Source: McDonald, D.C. (2021). Truth in Sentencing, Incentives, and Recidivism.

## Release Eligibility

# Outcome: Long Sentences With Limited Deterrent Value



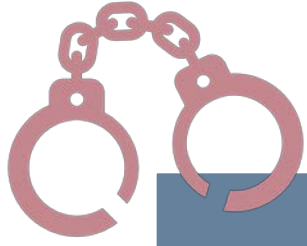
## MICHIGAN

1. Individuals serve 17 months longer than the national average.
2. Nearly 1 in 4 individuals serve 10 years or more.
3. Violent crime rates in 2022 were 20% above the national average.

Source: Safe and Just Michigan, "The Long Haul"

# Policies Impacting Community Supervision

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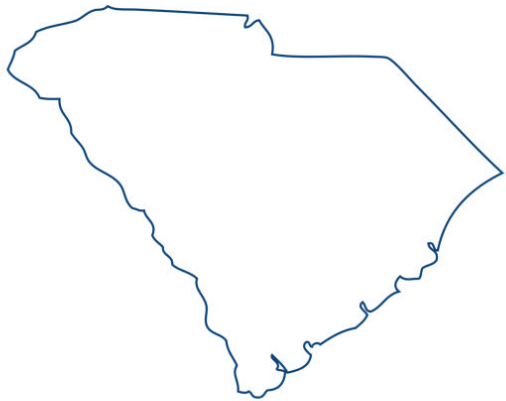


## HB 11

- Increases imprisonment for technical violations
- Removes earned compliance credits
- Extends probation
- Removes credit for time served
- Narrows definition of technical violation

## Community Supervision

# Outcome: Swift, Certain, and Proportionate Sanctions Reduce Revocations and Improve Public Safety



## SOUTH CAROLINA

1. 46% decline in revocations.
2. 50% reduction in incarceration of individuals within their first year of supervision.
3. Violent crime rates have declined 12% in past decade.

Source: Urban Institute, "Assessing South Carolina's Reforms in Probation and Parole"

## Community Supervision

# Outcome: Earned Compliance Credits Reduce Caseloads and Cut Costs



### MISSOURI

1. Supervision population declined by 18% or nearly 13,000 individuals between 2013 and 2018.
2. Average caseloads decreased by 16%, down from 70 cases per officer to 59.
3. Reinvested savings into community treatment programs.

Source: Pew Charitable Trusts, "Assessing Missouri's Community Supervision Reforms"

# Lessons Learned

## Lessons From Alaska

- By 2014, Alaska's prison population had grown 27% in the previous decade, and it had filled up a recently opened prison in Goose Creek.
- In 2016, after an extensive analysis of its system challenges, the legislature adopted sweeping criminal justice changes similar to Louisiana.
- Over the following two years, the prison population declined 9.4%, the state closed a 500-bed prison, and saved \$5.6 million in operational costs.
- In 2017, a new governor began to repeal much of the reforms passed in 2016.
- Over the next four years admissions to prison for nonviolent offenses increased 44%, the prison population rose 5%, and the state had to reopen a closed prison to accommodate the rising population.



# Lessons From Louisiana

Louisiana previously operated under sentencing model focused on mandatory minimums, which was gradually reformed over time. After decades under this structure, it was found that Louisiana's sentencing laws had:

- Done little to deter criminal behavior
- Resulted in disproportionate sentences for many criminals (both relative to other similar crimes and relative to federal sentencing mandates)
- Prohibited judges from applying sentences that might have been more effective in deterring future criminal behavior
- Disincentivized rehabilitation, especially of non-violent offenders
- Resulted in a significant increase in Louisiana's prison population, with attendant costs to Louisiana's taxpayers.







# What Do We Need to Know

# What Exactly is Happening with Violent Crime in Louisiana?

LA's Violent Crime Task Force concluded that the state lacks sufficient data.

**What We Need:** More data on arrests and rearrests, juvenile offenders, re-entry programming successes, supervision failures, recidivism drivers, time served, etc.

## What Has Worked?

Violent crime has declined over the past two years.

**What We Need:** An assessment of current crime-control initiatives

# How Would Current Proposals to Address Violent Crime Impact the State?

The average cost per inmate per day at a state facility is \$89. In 2016, the Department had close to 8,500 more individuals in custody, which would cost the state **an additional \$276 million today.**

**What We Need:** Projected impacts of the prison population. Additional funding sources for programs to protect victims and incentivize staff to fill vacant positions.

# How Would Current Proposals to Address Violent Crime Impact the Parishes?

In 2023, 53% of the state's inmates were serving in local Parishes. A state prison population similar to 2016 could cost the Parishes an **additional \$79.9 million today.**

**What We Need:** Projected impacts of prison population housed in local facilities. Additional funding sources for Parishes to accommodate this population.

**Questions ?**

# Contact Information

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