

Cost of doing nothing: \$500 million

Utah's prison population has grown by 18 percent since 2004. Without action, the state will need to house an additional 2,700 inmates - a 37 percent growth in the prison population - by 2034.

Utah taxpayers currently spend \$270 million annually on corrections. The relocation of the state prison at Draper is projected to cost more than \$1 billion, with half this cost tied to inmate growth alone.

For all this spending, taxpayers have not been getting a strong public safety return. Almost half (46%) of Utah's inmates who are released from state prisons return within three years.

The problem facing Utah

In April 2014, at the charge of the Governor, Chief Justice, Attorney General, and legislative leaders, the Utah Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice (CCJJ) began a seven month policy development process, beginning with a comprehensive review of the state's sentencing and corrections data. CCJJ found:

- **Utah's prison population has grown 18 percent since 2004** – six times faster than the national average during the same period.
- **A significant number of Utah's prison admissions are for nonviolent offenses** – Sixty-two percent of offenders sent directly to prison from court in 2013 were sentenced for nonviolent crimes.
- **Offenders on probation and parole supervision are failing at higher rates than they did 10 years ago** – Revocation from supervision—being sent back to prison for a violation of probation or parole—accounted for 46 percent of Utah's prison population in January 2014.
- **Despite research demonstrating the diminishing public safety returns of longer prison sentences, prisoners are spending 18 percent longer in prison than they did 10 years ago** – This growth in time served has occurred across all offense types, including nonviolent offenses.

HB 348: The comprehensive solution

HB 348, Utah's Justice Reinvestment legislation, represents a comprehensive package of legislative reforms that reduce recidivism, control ballooning prison costs and hold offenders accountable, while keeping Utah communities safe. The legislation is a result of recommendations developed by the Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice. HB 348 will put Utah on the right track by:

- **Focusing prison beds on serious and violent offenders** by revising the sentencing guidelines for some low-level offenders and the criminal history scoring system in order to avoid double counting and to limit factors to those most relevant to the risk of re-offense; revising penalties for drug offenders in order to target chronic felony offenders and drug dealers who sell to minors; establishing graduated revocation caps for technical probation and parole violators; and establishing a standard system of earned time credits for inmates who participate in certain programming.
- **Strengthening probation and parole supervision** by implementing a graduated sanctions and incentives process to ensure responses are swift, certain, and proportional; and allowing offenders to earn time off their supervision sentences for engaging in behavior that reduces their risk of committing another crime.
- **Improving and expanding reentry and treatment services** by increasing the availability of mental health and substance abuse treatment services across the state; ensuring quality by establishing statewide standards and certification processes for community-based providers; and implementing transition planning and reentry services for offenders returning to their communities.
- **Supporting local corrections systems** by establishing evidence-based jail treatment standards; increasing services for crime victims; and establishing a performance incentive grant program to provide funding for counties working to reduce recidivism and expand alternatives to prison.
- **Ensuring oversight and accountability** by training criminal justice decision makers on evidence-based practices; and requiring data collection and reporting of key performance measures.

What are the things that HB 348 will NOT do?

None of the reforms in HB 348 will:

- Decriminalize or legalize the possession, sale, or trafficking of any controlled substance.
- Require the resentencing of any offender.

How will the passage of HB 348 impact Utah's prison population growth?

HB 348 is a package of reforms that together, will avert nearly all of the anticipated growth in the prison population and will save taxpayers more than \$500 million dollars over the next 20 years. The dollars saved from implementing this comprehensive policy package will be reinvested in evidence-based practices that are proven to reduce recidivism and support crime victims.

How will HB 348 impact localities?

HB 348 will improve public safety and criminal justice systems at the local level by:

- **Expanding treatment services** to increase community substance abuse and mental health treatment capacity for offenders to meet demand for services statewide.
- **Increasing resources to reduce recidivism** by creating a grant program for counties to create locally-determined programs and practices that reduce recidivism and expand alternatives to prison.