

New Solutions Campaign

Promoting Fair & Effective Criminal Justice • Strengthening Families & Communities

New Jersey Can Build Upon Its Criminal Justice Reform Success by Fixing Its Broken Parole System

Over the last 15 years, New Jersey has reduced its prison population, crime rate and recidivism rate. However, more can be done. More than 40 percent of those who are incarcerated “max out” their sentence—meaning they are released without the support and supervision needed to successfully reintegrate into their communities. The decision about when a person is released after they serve their basic sentence is often arbitrary and ineffective and not in the best interests of the individual or the larger community. The parole system is broken and the time for reform has come.

Incarcerating a low-risk individual after they have completed their basic sentence wastes taxpayers money and reduces their chance of successful reentry and reintegration into the community upon their release. The overuse of incarceration tears apart vulnerable families and communities. These unfair and ineffective policies disproportionately impact New Jersey’s most vulnerable communities. While African Americans and Latinos make up less than 30 percent of the state’s population, they account for more than 80 percent of those who are incarcerated. And racial disparities in New Jersey prisons are the highest in the nation.

Reforming New Jersey’s Broken Parole System Will Increase Successful Reentry and Improve Public Safety

Parole policies should reward good behavior and encourage rehabilitation. Once a low-risk individual completes their basic sentence and has demonstrated good behavior, it is imperative to take the next step of transitioning back into the community with effective support and supervision.

- Low-risk offenders who spend more time in prison are more likely to re-offend than those who serve less time.
- Recidivism rates are lower for those who are released on community supervision than for those who are incarcerated longer and released with no supervision.
- Treatment is more effective in the community than in prison.

Over the last 15 years, New Jersey has reduced its prison population by more than 20 percent, reduced its crime rate by more than 30 percent and reduced prison recidivism by more than 10 percent. New Jersey should build on this success by fixing its broken parole system.

Senate Bill 895/Assembly Bill 2182 Will Build on Previous Successful Reforms

The time has come to build on New Jersey’s already successful criminal justice reforms by fixing our broken parole system. Senate Bill 895/Assembly Bill 2182 will reform New Jersey’s parole policies thus saving taxpayer money, increasing successful reentry and reintegration, reducing recidivism and improving public safety.

Sponsored by

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