



RENEW. REFORM. REVIVE.

BUDGET OF THE STATE OF OHIO • FISCAL YEARS 2012–2013

REFORMING OHIO'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Making our Communities Safer, Saving Lives and Controlling Costs

The lack of judicial sentencing options and proper incentives for positive inmate behavior has hindered rehabilitation. The budget and House Bill 86 take significant steps to enact public safety-focused sentencing reform aimed at reducing future crime. Approximately 12,000 low-level Ohio offenders spend less than a year in state prison, where they are exposed to far more dangerous criminals. Diverting first-time, non-violent offenders to intensive, community-based rehabilitation programs avoids exposing them to the corruptive influence of career criminals, reduces incidents of prison violence, reduces over-crowding, reduces costs and better prepares inmates for productive re-entry to society.

SENTENCING REFORM: Originally part of Gov. Kasich's proposed budget, sentencing reform was removed and placed into stand-alone legislation – House Bill 86. Reforms housed within HB 86 and signed by Gov. Kasich on June 29, 2011 implement comprehensive and public safety-focused sentencing reforms to keep dangerous and violent offenders behind bars, and rehabilitate inmates who one day can become productive citizens. The law seeks to reduce incidents of prison violence, reduce over-crowding and prepare inmates for productive societal re-entry. These new reforms exclude all sex offenders, gun crime offenders, repeat violent offenders, and those who commit violent acts while incarcerated.

KEY PROVISIONS:

- Diverts first time, non-violent offenders to community-based sanctions with appropriate rehabilitate programming;
- Equalizes penalties for crack and powder cocaine;
- Allows inmates to qualify for an eight percent term reduction based on successful completion of educational, vocational and mental health programming. This provision only applies to inmates who enter prison after the law is enacted;
- Increases felony status for theft related crimes from \$500 to \$1,000;
- Permits the Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections to petition for judicial release of inmates who have served 80 percent of their sentence, successfully completed rehabilitative programming and have no incidents of violence while incarcerated; and,
- Fully funds community corrections based on proper utilization of the Ohio Risk Assessment System available to all sentencing jurisdictions.

OUTCOME: These reforms will reduce Ohio's prison population by more than 3,700 inmates by 2014, at a savings of over \$46 million (From 50,655 inmates today to 46,891 inmates in 2014). Additional cost savings will be realized throughout the criminal justice system as overall crime rates are reduced because first-time, non-violent offenders are deterred from a criminal lifestyle. Also, these reforms will ease overcrowding in Ohio's prison system, which is currently at 131percent capacity.

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