



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER  
GOVERNOR

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **IDAHO LEADERS DISCUSS INNOVATIVE PUBLIC SAFETY STRATEGIES**

(BOISE) – Senior representatives from all three branches of Idaho's State government convened a public safety forum today where national experts and a delegation of South Dakota state leaders spoke about evidence-based strategies for reducing the incidence of repeat criminal offenders filling prison cells.

Speakers at the Capitol included Dr. Ed Latessa from the University of Cincinnati's School of Criminal Justice, policy advisors from the Council of State Governments Justice Center (CSG Justice Center), and five South Dakota officials who helped lead their state's justice reinvestment effort, including Governor Dennis Daugaard's chief of staff and general counsel and the state court administrator.

Justice reinvestment is a data-driven approach to avert growth in the prison system and reinvest savings in strategies that increase public safety. South Dakota used the approach in 2012 and 2013 and Idaho launched its own effort in June 2013 following a request from Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter and Idaho legislative and judicial leaders for technical assistance from the CSG Justice Center, The Pew Charitable Trusts, and the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance.

An interim legislative committee and an interdisciplinary working group including legislators, members of the Idaho Criminal Justice Commission and others will review data analysis from CSG Justice Center policy advisors and develop policy options for the Legislature to consider in the 2014 session.

"As Idaho looks for solutions that address the unique needs of our criminal justice system, hearing how South Dakota approached similar issues is enlightening. We're grateful to them for joining us and sharing their lessons learned," Governor Otter said. "Our state is at a crossroads, and we need to choose a path that best protects the public and enables us to be better stewards of tax dollars."

The South Dakota delegation told the interim legislative committee that South Dakota's prison population had been projected to grow 25 percent by 2022. However, thanks to the bipartisan package of justice reinvestment policies enacted by the South Dakota Legislature and Governor Daugaard in February 2013, the state now is projected to reduce prison growth by 716 beds, avert the construction of two prisons, and save state taxpayers \$207 million in construction and operating costs through 2022.

Idaho Senate Judiciary and Rules Committee Chairman Patti Anne Lodge, co-chair of the interim legislative committee, explained the importance of hearing from national experts such as Dr. Latessa about what works to reduce recidivism.

“Today, 40 percent of Idaho’s prison beds are occupied by individuals who have failed on probation or parole supervision,” she said. “We must adopt more effective evidence-based strategies to strengthen our supervision system both for the sake of public safety and cost effectiveness.”

Idaho House Judiciary, Rules and Administration Committee Chairman Rich Wills, the interim committee’s other co-chair, agreed and called for Idaho to build on progress already made on public safety investments and strategies.

“Idaho is ahead of the game with its use of an objective risk assessment to determine how likely a person is to commit another crime,” he said. “Let’s take effective approaches like this and transfer them to other areas of our criminal justice system.”

To learn more about the justice reinvestment strategy in Idaho and other states, please visit [csgjusticecenter.org/jr/idaho](http://csgjusticecenter.org/jr/idaho).

*[The CSG Justice Center’s work in justice reinvestment](#) is conducted in partnership with [The Pew Charitable Trusts](#), and [the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance](#). These efforts have provided similar data-driven analyses and policy options to state leaders in 17 other states.*

*[The Council of State Governments Justice Center](#) is a national nonprofit organization that serves policymakers at the local, state, and federal levels from all branches of government. It provides practical, nonpartisan advice and evidence-based, consensus-driven strategies to increase public safety and strengthen communities.*

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