



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 17, 2014

14:009

CONTACT: Jon Hanian

(208) 334-2100

GOVERNOR OTTER APPLAUDS REPORT OUTLINING COMPREHENSIVE PUBLIC SAFETY FRAMEWORK

EFFORT AIMS TO REDUCE RECIDIVISM AND SAVE TAXPAYER DOLLARS

(BOISE) – Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter thanked legislative leaders and criminal justice stakeholders today for delivering a report and package of policy recommendations designed to make Idaho's communities safer while saving taxpayer dollars.

The proposed "Justice Reinvestment" policy framework is estimated to help Idaho avoid spending more than \$288 million over the next five years to keep up with the state's growing prison population. It recommends investing \$33 million over the same time period in more training for probation and parole officers, an expansion of community-based treatment options for probationers and parolees, and quality assurance measures to ensure that programs designed to keep offenders out of additional trouble are working effectively.

The report is a product of Idaho's justice reinvestment effort, a data-driven approach to avert growth in the prison system and reinvest savings in strategies that increase public safety. Idaho received technical assistance from the Council of State Governments Justice Center (CSG Justice Center) in partnership with The Pew Charitable Trusts and the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance.

The process was guided by an interim legislative committee and a nearly 30-member interdisciplinary working group, which has been reviewing data analyses and developing the policy framework since last June.

"While our crime rate is among the lowest in the nation, our recidivism rate is increasing," Governor Otter said. "This framework outlines a variety of sensible changes we can make as a state that will greatly impact both public safety and the amount of taxpayer dollars that go towards corrections. This is simply a no-brainer for me, and I hope the Legislature sees a similar value and acts accordingly."

The number of people incarcerated in Idaho's prisons increased 28 percent from 2004 to 2012, from 6,312 to 8,097 inmates. Without policy changes, researchers projected that Idaho's prison population would increase 16 percent to 9,408 inmates by 2019.

The [comprehensive report](#) was issued by the CSG Justice Center on Wednesday at the fourth and final Justice Reinvestment Interim Legislative Committee meeting. The committee unanimously endorsed the report and will submit it to the full Legislature for consideration.

On Thursday, the co-chairs of both committees – Senator Patti Ann Lodge and Representative Rich Wills – led a joint House/Senate Judiciary Committee meeting to release the report, summarize the data analysis and policy framework, and outline the next steps in the process.

“Idaho has just been given a plan to change the landscape of recidivism based on comprehensive facts, data analysis and proven strategies,” Senator Lodge said. “The policy proposals are tough, smart, strategic and fiscally sustainable all at once, so I intend to get to work immediately to develop legislation for this session based on these findings and the input of all the stakeholders.”

People convicted of nonviolent offenses in Idaho stay in prison close to double the national average and twice as long as the average minimum term required. People approved for parole often remain in prison due to delays in completing prison programs. The policy framework proposes tailoring sanctions to respond to supervision violations, providing judges more information at sentencing, and structuring parole to make more productive use of prison space.

“This plan presents innovative strategies that can improve the return on investment for taxpayers in this state,” Representative Wills said. “Having just undergone the most comprehensive criminal justice system analysis in state history, my hope now is to see these proposals put into law, not put on a shelf.”

Link to Justice Reinvestment in Idaho: Analyses and Policy Framework:

<http://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/IdahoFrameworkReport.pdf>.

To learn more about the justice reinvestment strategy in Idaho and other states, please visit 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 18 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. The Justice Center provides practical, nonpartisan advice and consensus-driven strategies—informed by available evidence—to increase public safety and strengthen communities.

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