

**FACT SHEET**

# The Public Safety and Prison Reduction Act

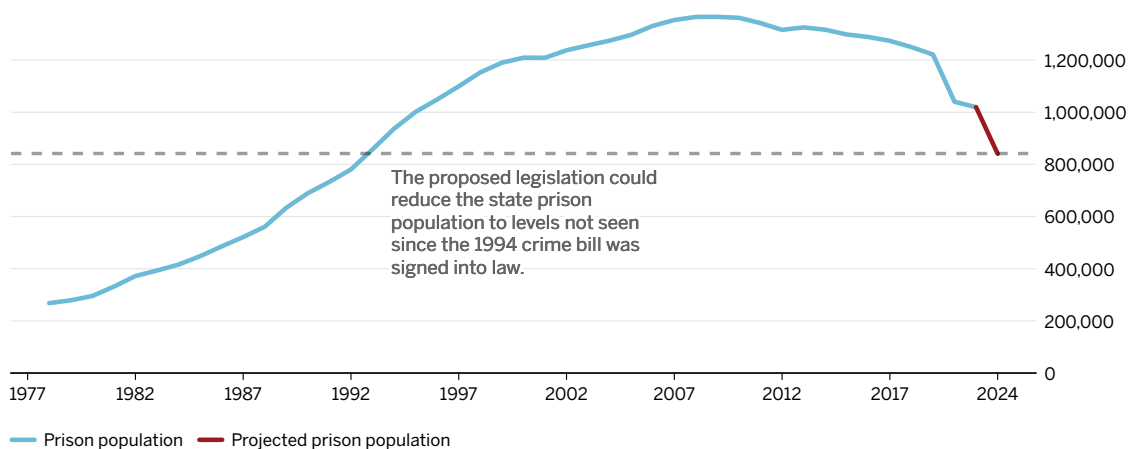
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**F**or a half century, federal grants have incentivized states to incarcerate more people and to impose longer sentences. The result: U.S. prisons now hold over 1.2 million people, approximately 40 percent with no public safety justification. The Public Safety and Prison Reduction Act would reverse those incentives, offering states federal grants to invest in programs that reduce unnecessary incarceration and build a safer and more just society.

## Highlights

- Authorizes \$1 billion for states to analyze the causes of unnecessary incarceration and implement policies to reduce it
- Provides extra funding to states that reduce incarceration rates by 20 percent over three years
- Gives states the freedom to design their own policy reforms for reducing prison populations
- Promotes accountability by requiring states to report results to the federal government, including racial, ethnic, gender, and socioeconomic disparities
- Requires states to consider a range of perspectives — including those of formerly incarcerated people — in deciding how to spend grant funding
- Prohibits states from enacting excessive sentencing laws, such as truth-in-sentencing or mandatory-minimum measures, which perpetuate unnecessary incarceration
- Sets aside at least 20 percent of funding for local nonprofit organizations, with priority given to groups serving communities with high incarceration rates

**Projected Declines in the State Prison Population**



**Note:** The projection assumes the 25 states with the largest prison populations reduce imprisonment by 20 percent. The projection is based on figures for 2021, the latest year for which data is available.  
**Source:** Bureau of Justice Statistics; Brennan Center calculations.

Read more about the proposal and find a model bill [here](#).