

Arizona spends more than one billion taxpayer dollars on prisons annually. And it simply isn't working.

Too many people are warehoused in prison for non-dangerous offenses, even when they pose no risk to public safety. Accountability and treatment are abysmal. And that's why Arizona suffers one of the worst recidivism rates in the country – 50 percent. Yes, Arizona's corrections system fails *half* the time.

Last year, community leaders, police officers, crime victims, parents of children recovering from addiction, corrections officers, conservatives, liberals and more put politics aside to improve Arizona's failing system. They built Prop. XXX on the premise that the most important goal is public safety. To achieve that, our system must prevent crime and rehabilitate people.

Here's how it works:

- **Earned Credit for Rehabilitation:** Instead of warehousing people in private prisons, Prop XXX allows people serving time for non-dangerous offenses to earn release through job training, treatment and education. This has been proven to reduce repeat crime and save money.
- **Judicial Discretion:** Current law takes away judges' power and requires mandatory sentences even when they're not appropriate. Prop. XXX gives judges discretion for non-dangerous offenses when it's in the interest of justice. People who are dangerous remain incarcerated while non-dangerous folks could be sentenced to treatment, halfway houses, or other programs that are best for public safety.
- **Victim Support:** This establishes a fund to provide services for victims of violent crime, to reduce trauma and to address post-traumatic stress disorder experienced by first responders in the line of duty.

Prop XXX will safely reduce prison populations, expand rehabilitation, reduce recidivism AND save taxpayers money.

It will bring Arizona in line with Texas, Illinois, Michigan, Georgia, Kentucky and 25 other states that have reformed criminal justice to improve safety and save money.

Join us in voting yes.

**Eric Chalmers, Chairperson, Arizonans for Second Chances, Rehabilitation, and Public Safety, Phoenix**  
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Arizona has the 5th highest incarceration rate in the nation. This is not because Arizonans commit more crime—in the last 20 years property crime dropped by 44%, and violent crime went down 12%. The reason is that our state has some of the most ineffective, outdated and merciless laws in the nation. While most states have reformed their criminal justice systems and seen greater

decreases in crime rates, Arizona has remained ruthless in criminalizing poverty, substance abuse, and mental health.

Our unfair and outdated laws come at a huge price to the community and taxpayers. With an annual budget at over \$1 billion per year, the Department of Corrections is the third largest state agency budget. While we defund education and allow children to fall through the cracks, prisons have had an increased budget every year since 2012. We spend more on prisons than state colleges and universities, the Department of Public Safety, and the Department of Economic Security.

And what are we getting for our investment? A 50.5% recidivism rate. How can we continue to support a system that fails half the time?

Incarceration does not just impact an individual; it tears apart families and communities. Almost 60% of people in Arizona prisons are parents, causing separation and trauma for children. One in every 13 Arizonans has a current or prior felony conviction, making it hard for them to obtain stable housing, employment, and education.

You should vote YES on Proposition XXX because it is a first step at modernizing our laws to prioritize rehabilitation over punishment, restore fairness, and give people a second chance.

**Caroline Isaacs, Program Director, American Friends Service Committee, Arizona, Tucson**

Arizona Attorneys for Criminal Justice (AACJ) strongly supports the Second Chances Rehabilitation and Public Safety Act and urges everyone to vote “YES” on this important initiative. Arizona’s criminal justice system is broken. The state has the fourth highest incarceration rate in the country and Arizona taxpayers spend over \$1 billion dollars every year warehousing people in prison with very little to show for it. But voters can choose a better way forward. The Second Chances initiative would safely reduce the prison population, expand rehabilitative programs, reduce recidivism, and address the root cause of crime, creating a more just sentencing system AND saving taxpayers money.

The Second Chances initiative makes several necessary reforms to modernize Arizona’s corrections policy. First, the initiative incentivizes people who are serving time for non-dangerous offenses to break the cycle by allowing them to earn additional release credits for good behavior and participation in rehabilitation programs. Second, it returns discretion to judges and allows them to impose fair sentences for non-dangerous offenses based on the facts of each case instead of being forced to impose a mandatory minimum sentence in all cases. Finally, it clarifies that anyone being sentenced for the first time be considered a first-time offender, ending the unjust policy that allows prosecutors to charge people as repeat offenders the very first time they ever see a judge.

As a state-wide not-for-profit membership organization dedicated to protecting the rights of the accused in the courts and in the legislature, AACJ understands that the Second Chances initiative is a vital first step to reforming Arizona’s criminal justice system. We should all demand a criminal

justice system that is more just, fair, safe, and effective. We should all vote “YES” for Second Chances.

**Jared Keenan, President, Arizona Attorneys for Criminal Justice (AACJ), Phoenix**

We are the Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence. We provide services to victims and survivors of sexual and domestic violence every single day.

And we support the Second Chances Act. Why?

Arizona’s criminal justice system is harmful, particularly to communities of color and people living in poverty, including many survivors and their families. Too much money is spent warehousing people for months, years, even decades with very little opportunity for treatment or rehabilitation. This does nothing to help them change their behavior or to provide healing for survivors.

Victims overwhelmingly prefer criminal justice approaches that prioritize rehabilitation over punishment. They strongly favor investments in crime prevention and treatment over more spending on prisons and jails. <https://allianceforsafetyandjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/Crime%20Survivors%20Speak%20Report.pdf>

The billion dollars Arizona spends annually on corrections is the wrong investment. Folks suffering from mental health problems are incarcerated, not treated. People striving to overcome substance use disorders are locked up and forgotten, not rehabilitated. Meanwhile, victim services – even those as fundamental as a state Rape Crisis Line -- go unfunded year after year.

This initiative supports victims by dedicating resources to trauma survivors and prevention. The reforms in this initiative do NOT apply to violent offenses or dangerous crimes. Sentences for people convicted of rape, murder, and child molestation will remain unchanged.

We are committed to justice that heals, not punishment and warehousing that perpetuates the cycle of crime. The Second Chances Act is a step in the right direction. Please vote yes.

**Katie Ares, Public Policy Specialist, Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence, Goodyear**

Our criminal justice system and our prisons are not something many of us often think about, simply because they are not a part of our everyday lives. However, if you’re like me, once you read more about our justice system in the United States, and specifically Arizona, the need for reform is undeniable.

The stats tell one part of the story. Per the Prison Policy Initiative, Arizona has an incarceration rate of 877 per 100,000 people, meaning that it locks up a higher percentage of its people than many wealthy democracies around the world do... including the United States (698/100,000), the United Kingdom (139/100,000), and Italy (96/100,000).

I’m a native Arizonan and I have always been proud to say so. However, I never knew the stats above nor did I know this – in Arizona we incarcerate 3,184 black people per 100,000, 2,267

American Indians per 100,000, and 1,453 Hispanic people per 100,000. Compare those numbers to the 633 white people per 100,000 and contrast with the fact that 54% of the state's population is white, 32% is Hispanic, 5% is black, and 5% is American Indian and we have the poster of an actively discriminating system.

To all my fellow Arizonans, you are paying over ONE BILLION DOLLARS a year for your state to actively tear apart families and leave thousands of non-violent offenders who want to earn a second chance with no option. When I learned this, I knew I had to do something which is why I'm proud to be the chair of the Arizonans for Second Chances Act.

Now that you know, I hope you agree that it is time for change and will join me in voting yes on proposition xx.

**Eric Chalmers, Chair, Arizonans for Second Chances, Rehabilitation, and Public Safety, Phoenix**  
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Currently, Arizona spends more tax dollars imprisoning people - including first-time, nonviolent offenders - than it does on all types of college and university expenses combined. As local educators, parents and business leaders, Save Our Schools Arizona supports the Second Chances act because it allows more Arizonans to reintegrate into our communities as productive contributors. This, in turn, frees up millions more tax dollars each year for public education and relieves common demands on public schools, which often have to step up and provide basic needs for students and communities for whom too many adults are caught in a costly cycle of repeat incarceration, joblessness and a lack of support. By emphasizing rehabilitation, reintegration training and smarter sentencing, the Second Chances act addresses the other side of the school-to-prison pipeline that holds back too many Arizona families. Creating a rehabilitative pathway will also help keep families intact, reducing the generational harm caused to students by over-incarceration. Our state needs stronger education programs at every level and a clear path to productivity for all our citizens. The Second Chances act achieves both of those objectives.

**Dawn Penich-Thacker, Cofounder and spokesperson, Save Our Schools Arizona, Tempe**  
**and Beth Lewis, Cofounder and director, Save Our Schools Arizona, Chandler**