

MARYLAND ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE REFORM

Working together for a criminal justice system that serves our communities



Justice Reinvestment Funding

What's the Problem?

Maryland's incarceration rate tripled between 1980 and 2001, including a 52 per cent increase for nonviolent offenders.

In 2014, Maryland pays about \$38,000 per year per prison inmate.

Yet Maryland's crime rate did not drop in proportion to this massive increase in incarceration and its burden on the taxpayers.

In fact, Maryland's mass incarceration policies don't work effectively to ensure public safety. In recent years, between 41 and 51% of Maryland prison inmates who complete their sentences recidivate—committing new offenses that return them to prison within three years.

What's the Proposal?

A bipartisan policy, called the "[Justice Reinvestment Initiative \(JRI\)](#)," offers a way both to save taxpayer dollars and to improve public safety.

Maryland would establish a representative coordinating council to develop and recommend strategies for accomplishing these goals. The Council would request assistance from the Council of State Governments Justice Center and the Public Safety Performance Project of the Pew Center on the States to support them in the development of a data driven, evidence-based approach to achieve these critical objectives.

Will this Work?

Seventeen (17) U.S. states and twenty-two localities have begun to initiate JRI strategies simultaneously to reduce crime and taxpayer costs, including Pennsylvania, Delaware, Ohio, & Oregon.

[Oregon reports](#) reduction of its recidivism rate below 23% while also reducing its prison population.

[Other states](#), earlier in the process, also report dropping prison and recidivism rates together.

The Legislation

MAJR's proposal for use of JRI policy in Maryland will amend Maryland Code – State Finance Art. to provide that its [sec. 7-302](#) will not apply to return prison savings to the general fund. Instead, a new revolving fund will be created, known as the “Maryland Safer Communities Corrections Fund” which, in turn, would make possible the following half-dozen initiatives.

[Read the proposed legislation here.](#)

Learn More!

The Federal JRI webpage explains just what the Justice Reinvestment Initiative is.

- [Justice Reinvestment Initiative: What Is JRI?](#)

Other JRI-related webpages

- [The Council of State Governments Justice Center](#) focuses on JRI: Justice reinvestment is a data-driven approach to improve public safety, reduce corrections and related criminal justice spending, and reinvest savings in strategies that can decrease crime and reduce recidivism.
- The organization [Right on Crime](#) notes that “Success of Justice Reinvestment Becoming Indisputable” and reports that “Governors Highlight the Need, Benefits of Justice Reinvestment”
- In a speech to the American Bar Association, [Attorney General Eric Holder](#) announced a series of policy changes aimed at slowing the growth of the federal prison system, acknowledging that “Justice Reinvestment Policies Improve Public Safety”

Contact your Legislators

Voice your opinion about this initiative to your legislators. Here is a list of the [members of the Maryland General Assembly](#) with links to their web pages. To find who represents you in the Assembly, [click here](#).

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View this fact sheet on the web at: <http://www.ma4jr.org/justice-reinvestment-funding/>
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