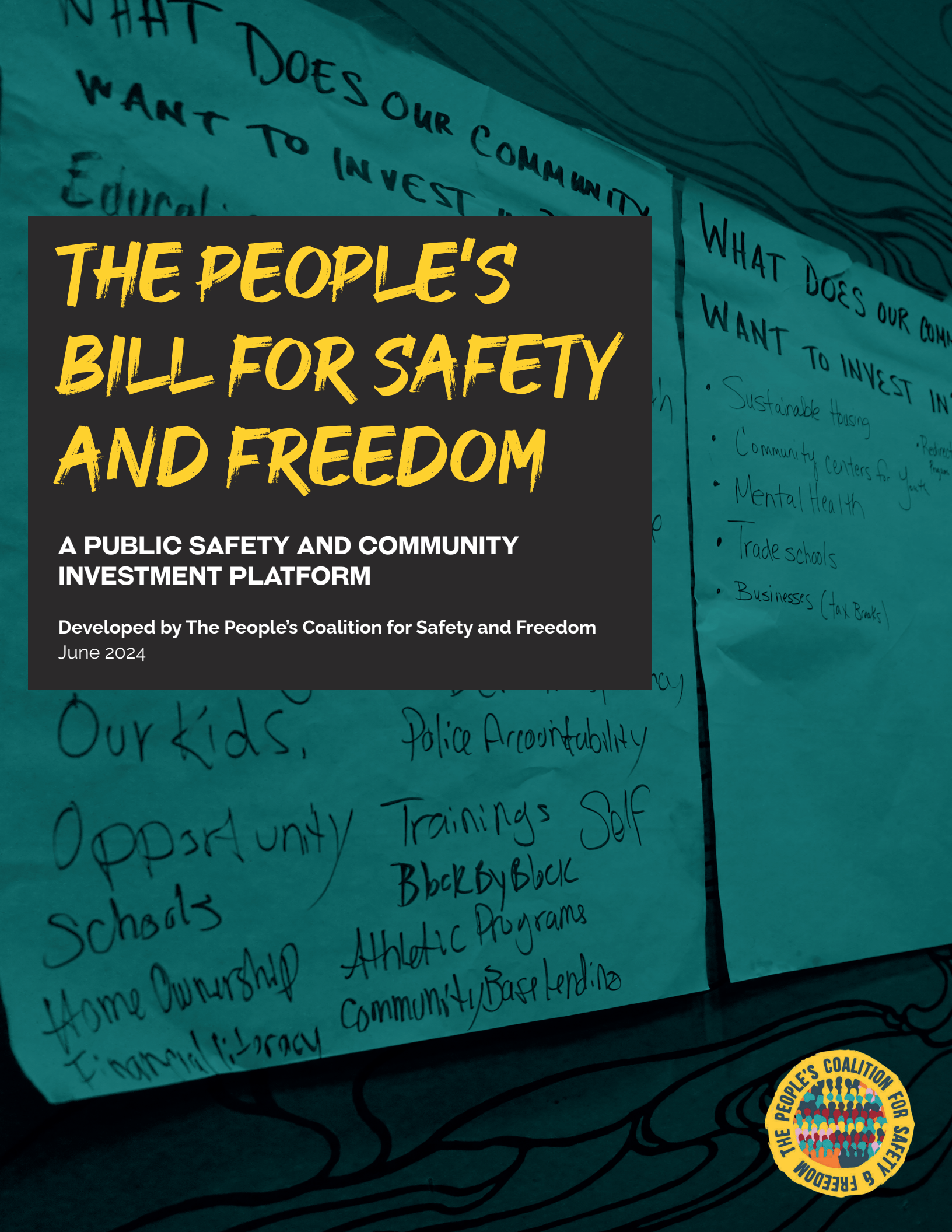


THE PEOPLE'S BILL FOR SAFETY AND FREEDOM

A PUBLIC SAFETY AND COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PLATFORM

Developed by The People's Coalition for Safety and Freedom

June 2024

CONTENTS

ABOUT THE PEOPLE'S COALITION FOR SAFETY AND FREEDOM (PCSF)

The People's Coalition for Safety and Freedom ("The People's Coalition" or "PCSF") is made up of base-building and member-led grassroots organizations, racial justice policy and advocacy institutions, most of which are Black- and queer-led, representing a cross-section of communities impacted by systems of criminalization and incarceration who are committed to transforming the legal system and redefining public safety.

Our primary vehicle for accomplishing this goal is to dismantle the harmful 1994 Crime Bill and replace it with a new federal law that adopts The People's Bill for Safety and Freedom, which was developed with the participation of the people most harmed by systems of policing, surveillance, criminalization, and incarceration.

The cornerstone of the PCSF campaign strategy is the implementation of "The People's Process," a democratic process that gathers the expertise of those most impacted by the 1994 Crime Bill. The People's Process relies on and strengthens existing grassroots organizations, networks, and other groups of community members fighting to curb criminalization and create safer communities.

Organization that participated in PCSF and/or The People's Process:

- Justice Teams Network
- Motivating Individual Leadership for Public Advancement (MILPA) Collective
- All of Us or None Riverside
- Illinois Alliance for Reentry and Justice
- Fully Free
- Indivisible Aurora
- Challenge II Change
- Illinois Coalition to End Permanent Punishments
- North Carolina Statewide Police Accountability Network (NC SPAN)
- North Carolina Black Leadership and Organizing Collective
- Durham Beyond Policing
- Center for Resilient Individuals, Families and Communities (CRFIC) South
- Communities in Partnership
- Free Hearts
- No Exceptions
- Community Defense of East Tennessee
- Concerned Citizens for Justice
- Texas Organizing Project
- All of Us or None San Antonio
- Law 4 Black Lives
- Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI)
- Common Justice
- National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls
- VOCAL - NY
- MomsRising
- Black Youth Project 100
- Center for Popular Democracy
- JustLeadership USA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From 2020-2023, The People's Coalition for Safety and Freedom (PCSF) engaged community members in multiple states in a democratic process—The People's Process. We drew on their expertise with criminalization, policing, and incarceration to ask: What does freedom and safety look like for us? What do we need to create that vision in our neighborhoods? From that democratic process, we created The People's Bill for Safety and Freedom, a proposal for a law that would replace the harmful Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act (the 1994 Crime Bill).

PCSF is a coalition of base-building and member-led grassroots organizations and racial justice policy and advocacy organizations, most of which are Black- and queer-led and represent a cross-section of communities impacted by systems of criminalization and incarceration. As part of our efforts to put into reality a vision of real public safety grounded in the expertise and experience of the people most affected by policing and incarceration, we aim to repeal and replace the 1994 Crime Bill with a law that embodies and supports a new vision of public safety that centers investments in community, healing, and restoration.

Our Guiding Values include an understanding that the communities who are closest to the problem should be key in determining the solutions; any policy changes must include proactive provisions that repair harms for everyone impacted; policies and narratives must recognize the full humanity and dignity of our people without divisions, such as "drug seller/user"; and policies must build community infrastructure and facilitate community-controlled and -run alternatives to incarceration and criminalization.

The People's Process is a democratic, transformational approach to the policymaking process that is grounded in those values. It reimagines and rewrites public policy to center the needs, voices, and ideas of the communities most impacted by those policies. The People's Process empowers community members through many mechanisms, such as surveys, focus groups, and People's Movement Assemblies, which are gatherings where community members collectively brainstorm and collaborate to make decisions together.

Community members' visions and solutions starkly contrast with the 1994 Crime Bill. While the law pushed harmful investments in criminalization, community members identified investments in our communities as what creates safety, well-being, healing, and freedom: in food security, safe and affordable housing, access to good jobs, supportive health and mental health care, youth programs, good, culturally competent schools, as well as restorative justice programs that address harm without police and increased access to democracy and policymaking.

The People's Bill for Safety and Freedom framework consists of five titles:

TITLE I: ENHANCING COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS
We, the People, call for lawmakers to authorize and properly fund essential community services that are proven to address poverty, mental health conditions, substance use disorder, and inequities imposed on our communities and exacerbated by the 1994 Crime Bill. These investments improve safety in our communities and include, for example, raising the minimum wage

and investing in job training programs; investing in universal child care and preschool; providing community-based health services and a continuum of addiction and substance use disorder services; expanding public housing, vouchers, and rental subsidies as well as affordable, low-income housing; and strengthening federal food safety net programs.

TITLE II: ELIMINATING THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE

We, the People, call for the elimination of the school-to-prison pipeline. We seek to shift our schools from a punitive discipline structure and make investments in alternative conflict resolution and restorative practices. We aim to prohibit federal funding for school resource officers and police and schools with zero-tolerance policies. We want investments that fund support structures, including school-based counselors, social workers, psychologists, restorative and transformative justice programs, and other conflict resolution models.

TITLE III: ADDRESSING POLICING

We, the People, call for ending law-and-order policies that prioritize and fund policing and reallocating such funds to community-driven, community-tailored, and community-focused resources that are proven to create harm reduction, safe havens, and violence intervention and prevention programs. Our goals include abolishing or defunding harmful programs and agencies, including the Community Oriented Police Services (COPS) program, the U.S. Department of Defense 1033 Program, the Drug Enforcement Agency, and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE); increasing police accountability structures by eliminating qualified immunity, banning federal law enforcement from using no-knock warrants; and investing in people-led, community-building offices and programs, including establishing an Office of Harm Reduction, incentivizing community-led governance and oversight of police budgets to ensure greater transparency and accountability with local governments, and providing resources for community-based violence interruption and intervention programs.

TITLE IV: REFRAMING THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM

We, the People, call for lawmakers to repeal the 1994 Crime Bill and replace it with a law that transforms our legal system so it bends toward justice for our communities, too. This law must outline effective accountability measures, restorative practices, and other alternatives to incarceration for all individuals, including forgiveness. These reforms include changes to sentencing, criminal statute, prison, pretrial release, courtroom procedure, and post-conviction policies.

TITLE V: EXPANDING COMMUNITY AND REENTRY PROGRAMS

We, the People, call for expanding community and reentry programs, with the expectation that reentry services start at the first point of contact with the criminal legal system and no later than when a person first becomes incarcerated. Critical provisions supporting reentry include requiring Ban the Box (requiring automatic sealing of criminal records); investing in comprehensive and coordinated reentry services; expanding and investing in sustainable, safe, and affordable housing for all formerly incarcerated people; expanding education, job training, and job placement programs; increasing access to healthcare, primarily through Medicaid; ensuring that all social safety net programs, including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, are open to formerly incarcerated individuals; and securing voting rights to all people, including formerly incarcerated individuals.

INTRODUCTION

PICTURE YOUR PERFECT DAY. After waking up, you eat breakfast and then go to your favorite places where you live—a stroll through the neighborhood, a visit to the city park, or a walk to a favorite coffee shop. What do you see along the way? What do you smell? Who is around you?

While imagining this, did you see any police, notice any jails or prisons, or feel surveilled?

For nearly everyone, the answer is likely no.

For many people in our communities—especially those who live in suburbs that are overwhelmingly white and wealthy—that is their daily reality. They live in communities with well-paved roads and sidewalks, beautiful parks, and well-resourced schools, where their children get to make mistakes without lifelong repercussions in the criminal legal system. They are not under constant police surveillance.

For other community members, however, another America exists that looks and feels strikingly different. Theirs has parks filled with concrete and schools surrounded by barbed wire with metal detectors at the doors and police officers roaming the hallways, eager to arrest and trap children in the penal system as punishment for common kid behaviors. Community members in these neighborhoods live under intense surveillance from police, whose constant presence often leads to interrogations, harassment, and violence.

These two Americas are greatly divided in their experiences of safety and freedom.

This first America (the suburban one) shows that what many Black and other communities are demanding—real safety and freedom, resources, and an end to police and incarceration—is not only possible but exists in key ways today.

People around the U.S. have long called for new ways to make their communities safe without policing and incarceration. Launched in 2020, The People's Coalition for Safety and Freedom ("The People's Coalition" or "PCSF") works with communities around the country to put their visions of real safety, justice, and freedom into reality. PCSF is a coalition of base-building and member-led grassroots organizations and racial justice policy and advocacy organizations, most of which are Black- and queer-led and represent a cross-section of communities impacted by systems of criminalization and incarceration.

As part of our efforts to make this vision a reality, **PCSF aims to repeal and replace the harmful Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act (1994 Crime Bill)[1] with a law that embodies and supports a new vision of public safety that centers investments in community, healing, and restoration.**

The 1994 Crime Bill significantly boosted mass incarceration and harmful policing in Black and Brown neighborhoods. In doing so, it continues to undermine the safety and freedom of these and other communities.

While mass incarceration began in the 1980s, thanks mainly to the Nixon and Reagan administrations, **the 1994 Crime Bill—written by then-Senator Joe Biden and passed by a Democratically controlled Congress under Democratic President Bill Clinton—was the most far-reaching "crime" bill Congress has ever passed** and worsened the crisis of incarceration.[2]

The law endorsed and financed ineffective and damaging policies and practices at the state and local levels that encouraged the growth of police departments and prison infrastructure, the adoption of laws that lengthened prison sentences, and eliminated or reduced access to education and additional programming for people in prison, while failing to prioritize community investments that would have increased public safety, particularly in under-resourced communities.[3]

The many provisions of the Crime Bill have helped harm and destabilize an entire generation of people, our families, and our communities by ensuring that more people went to prison, stayed there longer (away from their families and communities), and had access to fewer resources to help them rebuild their lives after they were released. Black communities around the U.S. have been the primary targets and the overwhelming victims of these harms.[4]

The people and communities forced to live with the consequences of and harm caused by the 1994 Crime Bill had little to no voice in its creation and implementation. PCSF believes strongly that **the people closest to the harm are the ones closest to the solutions**[5] because they have the lived experience and knowledge about what their communities need that policymakers tend to lack. Thus, to build our vision and the content for a replacement bill, PCSF developed "The People's Process," which brought together people from the communities most impacted by the 1994 Crime Bill and incarceration to identify the solutions that will reverse and repair the harms of the law and build real safety and freedom.

> PCSF envisions safety as being secure and having all of your needs met. It includes being free from harm, surveillance, and coercion. Freedom means people do not live in fear, subjugation, or oppression but rather under conditions that allow us to exercise agency and thrive in the fullness of our humanity.

The People's Process is a democratic, community-driven process that facilitates people and communities who are usually shut out of the policymaking process to play a central role in creating policy that impacts them. Community members drew on their lived experience to work together to imagine what safety and freedom mean and look like and then translate that vision into a bill proposal.

Community members' vision and solutions contrast sharply with the 1994 Crime Bill. While the law pushed harmful investments in criminalization, **community members identified investments in our communities as what creates safety, well-being, healing, and freedom:** in food security, safe and affordable housing, access to good jobs, supportive health and mental health care, youth programs, good, culturally competent schools, as well as restorative justice programs that address harm without police and increased access to democracy and policymaking.

This report outlines our vision for building safety and freedom through both The People's Process and proposed bill framework, The People's Bill for Safety and Freedom.

The key principles of our bill framework are:

- Acknowledging the harms and ineffectiveness of policing, criminalization, and incarceration.
- Repairing the damage wrought by the 1994 Crime Bill and punitive, expensive, violent, and racist systems of criminalization.
- Investing in strategies, solutions, and resources that protect and improve the health, welfare, and safety of all communities.

Key provisions of our bill framework include:

- Prioritizing community investments in key areas, such as housing, employment, child care, and food security.
- Shifting our schools from punitive and carceral discipline structures to more transformative and restorative conflict resolution practices.
- Reinvesting government resources for public safety from law-and-order policies that center policing and incarceration to community-based programs that center harm reduction, safe havens, restorative and transformative justice, community and individual healing, and violence interruption and prevention.
- Reframing the current criminal legal system policies and procedures to encompass true forms of accountability, restorative practices and other alternatives to incarceration for all individuals, and forgiveness.
- Transforming and expanding reentry services so they start at the first point of contact with the criminal legal system and no later than when someone first becomes incarcerated.

THE PEOPLE'S PROCESS

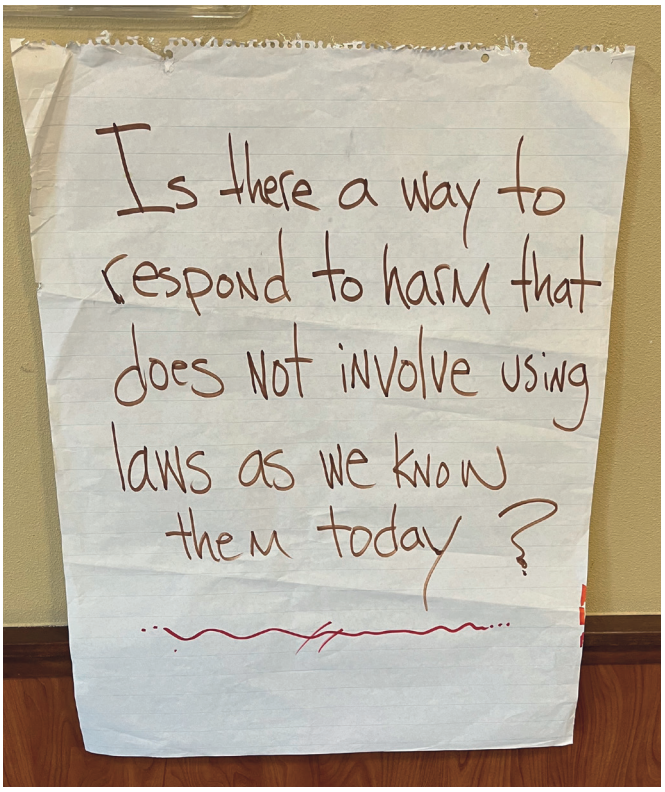
The People's Process is the cornerstone of The People's Coalition for Safety and Freedom's (PCSF) work in creating the People's Bill for Safety and Freedom and our broader work building real safety and freedom for our communities.

The People's Process is a people-led, democratic, transformational approach to the policymaking process that reimagines and rewrites public policy in order to center the needs, voices, and ideas of the communities most impacted by those policies. We built this process to meet our needs in creating the People's Bill for Safety and Freedom, but it is a model that works for other policymaking efforts. As part of the process, communities collectively analyze, envision, and draft content to repeal and replace the 1994 Crime Bill and other related policies that continue to harm our communities.

From 2020-2023, PCSF created and executed The People's Process, which brought our community members together in different locations around the country to analyze, envision, and draft content to repeal and replace the 1994 Crime Bill and other related policies that continue to harm our communities. This process included seven phases.

The Seven Phases of The People's Process:

1. Recruitment & Survey Design
2. Political Education
3. People's Movement Assemblies
4. Drafting Bill Framework
5. Drafting Convening
6. Feedback Loop
7. Ratification



Phase 1: Recruit Local Base-Building Organizations & Design the Survey. Building the power of local base-building organizations is the foundation for The People's Process. Twenty-one local organizations from California, Illinois, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas started this process alongside us, and most continue to work with us. All of these organizations operate in communities most affected by the 1994 Crime Bill, and many are led by formerly incarcerated people or loved ones of incarcerated people. Because they have borne the brunt of the law's harms, we must center system-impacted people and engage them in meaningful, transformative policy writing and advocacy.

During this phase, we also built the infrastructure needed to engage communities in this process, including writing surveys and developing a political education curriculum. We also prepared training materials for local organizations to administer surveys and host focus groups or People's Movement Assemblies (PMAs).

Building multiple ways of engaging our communities was essential to ensuring we worked with impacted community members as our thought leaders and gathered honest and detailed information directly from them. Providing multiple engagement options allowed us to organize across states, incarceration status, and during the restrictions under the pandemic. For example, creating a survey we could send to incarcerated community members was especially important because we could not meet with them in person, and their voices mattered significantly to the process. For our partners with insufficient capacity to conduct a deep survey, political education, and People's Movement Assemblies (PMAs), we offered focus groups as a forum for affected community members to provide feedback.

Our democratic processes to solicit the expertise of directly impacted people and communities resulted in 467 responses to our survey, with currently incarcerated individuals comprising 45% of respondents and formerly incarcerated individuals comprising 55% of respondents. The data is further significant because this group is rarely talked to when getting opinions/perspectives about public safety. Surveys were just one way we engaged some community members; our local partners also hosted four focus groups and five PMAs.

Phase 2: Educate the Community. Political education is a core component of good organizing and democracy and has been a vital part of The People's Process. In 2022, PCSF's local base-building organizations hosted Political Education Sessions for their communities. The Coalition collaborated with the Center for Political Education to develop a four-part curriculum and trained local organizers to implement the curriculum, which focused on:

1. The history of the Prison Industrial Complex and the 1994 Crime Bill;
2. Civics 101 to explain the legislative process and make it accessible to our communities;
3. Participatory democracy, which explored how local leaders and organizers could build a democratic process that brought community members together to make policymaking decisions; and
4. Safety, which allowed participants to explore what safety meant to them and what they needed to make their communities safe.

Phase 3: Convene the People's Movement Assemblies (PMAs) and Analyze the Data. People's Movement Assemblies (PMAs) are gatherings of community members seeking to share power and decision-making about their communities. During PMAs, community members collectively brainstorm and collaborate to make decisions collectively, rather than the usual top-down approaches to policymaking and creating social change.

In 2022, we hosted PMAs in California, Illinois, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas, with 331 people participating. In these PMAs, community members discussed what governments must do to keep our communities safe, including where we should reinvest federal funds. We framed the structured conversations into these overarching questions:

- What does our community want to invest in?
- What must be eliminated from the 1994 Crime Bill?
- What needs to be in the People's Bill for Safety & Freedom?
- What do we want to build in our communities at the local level, regardless of what happens at the federal level?

The PMAs were the most experimental yet critical part of The People's Process because they created space for our communities to come together and share their history and experiences, dream in detail about our communities being safe, and articulate their priorities and proposed solutions to address the harms of the 1994 Crime Bill and transform our country's carceral systems. At the end of each PMA, two delegates and two alternates from among attendees' local base-building organizations were selected to represent their community at the Coalition's convenings to draft a legislative framework, which took place in the fall of 2022.

In addition, four Coalition partner organizations hosted focus groups with their members to provide extended input on what they felt we should include in the People's Bill for Safety and Freedom.

PCSF collected a wealth of information from each PMA, focus group, and survey response, which Dr. Leslie Collins of Fisk University analyzed using quantitative and qualitative analysis (thematic coding process). Dr. Collins and her team read every transcript to analyze patterns in word usage, meaning, sentiments, and concerns to identify themes. Based on their analysis, five major themes resulted from the data:

1. Police Interaction – Respondents expressed conflicting feelings about how they often must interact with law enforcement. They discussed their experiences with police, law enforcement, and carceral centers.

2. Safety – Respondents believe that community resources must be leveraged to create and maintain safe communities. They contend that empowered communities (through education about rights and participation in policy and program/service decisions) and those with cohesive neighbors are safer than communities where people live disconnected from each other and local policymaking.

3. Barriers to Safety – Respondents believe law enforcement can be a barrier to safety. Their responses included incidents in which respondents felt endangered or identified factors that compromised individual and community safety.

4. Replacement of the 1994 Crime Bill – Respondents want to eradicate some of the most detrimental policies in the 1994 Crime Bill. They recommend sweeping changes to the legal system, including sentencing laws, and eliminating the school-to-prison pipeline by removing public school policies that create barriers to graduation and higher education and facilitate incarceration.

5. Services – Respondents spoke clearly about their community investment needs to fund housing, job planning and placement, food, education, and healthcare.

Phase 4: Draft a Bill Framework. PCSF, with technical assistance support, then wrote a draft of the bill framework based on the information, ideas, and analysis of community members that we gathered during the previous phases.

Phase 5: Host a Drafting Convening to Review The Bill Framework. In October 2022, the Coalition hosted a drafting convening with 43 delegates from the communities who participated in the People's Process and coalition partners in Chicago, IL, with a virtual option. Delegates and representatives of member organizations provided thorough and thoughtful feedback on the framework draft. The Drafting Convening also included some political education training on how the federal legislative process works to help participants prioritize and analyze the framework draft.

Phase 6: The Feedback Loop - Ensuring Our Bill Framework Accurately Reflects Community Demands. Following the Drafting Convening, delegates solicited feedback from their fellow PMA participants whom they were elected to represent. This "feedback loop," created by PCSF and Dr. Collins, included a survey to collect this additional feedback. The feedback loop helped the delegates to understand what needed to remain in the framework and ensured the overall framework fully reflected our communities' desires and demands. The feedback loop operated through the second half of 2023.

Phase 7: Ratify Our Bill Framework. Following the feedback loop, we revised the bill framework in preparation for the ratification process. The Coalition met virtually on November 13, 2023, to officially vote to ratify our bill framework. With a quorum met by representatives from each of our participating states and partner organizations, we reviewed the work we had done together over the past two years. We then adopted The People's Bill for Safety and Freedom as our offering to repeal and replace the harmful 1994 Crime Bill with policy proposals created by the people and for the people.

INTRODUCTION TO OUR BILL FRAMEWORK

As we call for the repeal of the 1994 Crime Bill, we have used The People's Process to create solutions that redefine safety and freedom for all communities through a comprehensive policy proposal we call The People's Bill for Safety and Freedom (also known as the "bill framework" or "framework"). For us, safety and freedom allow all people to live free from harm, surveillance, and coercion in communities that meet all of their needs. Our communities and all communities can exercise their agency and thrive in the fullness of our humanity, free from the burdens of oppression and subjugation.

Our bill framework consists of five titles: 1) Enhancing Community Investments; 2) Ending the School-to-Prison Pipeline; 3) Addressing Policing; 4) Reframing the Criminal Legal System; and 5) Expanding Community and Reentry Services. For each of these titles, we provide the Coalition's rationale and perspectives on many, but not all, of the provisions in the bill framework.

As we work with lawmakers to enact our framework and prioritize the lived experiences and expertise of directly impacted individuals and communities, we call for our communities to be centered in these policy conversations and engaged at all points of any relevant legislative and regulatory actions. We firmly believe that the people closest to the problem are closest to the solutions.[6]

THE PEOPLE'S COALITION FOR SAFETY AND FREEDOM'S GUIDING VALUES

The People's Process is the scaffolding of our bill framework; our Guiding Values are its foundation. Our country's pledge of "liberty and justice for all" is dishonored and broken when our governments create and inflict harm on the very people they must serve, especially when harm leads to disenfranchisement and an abject denial of freedom. This failure is why we call for repealing and replacing the 1994 Crime Bill with a solutions-oriented framework that reimagines safety and freedom nationwide.

Our definition of safety and freedom is rooted in the long tradition of abolition and our Guiding Values, which we uphold as necessary for repairing harm and restoring justice in our communities and all communities across this nation. Throughout The People's Process, we seamlessly integrated our Guiding Values into creating, discussing, and building consensus on our policy proposal—ensuring that every provision of our framework abides by our values.

Abolition: A political vision and practice with the goal of the dismantling of prisons, policing, and surveillance while actively creating the alternatives to punishment and imprisonment that builds real safety and support for all of our communities to thrive. Prison abolition is part of a long tradition of abolitionism of harmful, racist institutions in the U.S. and world, such as U.S. chattel slavery.[7]

OUR GUIDING VALUES

- Communities closest to the problem—currently incarcerated, formerly incarcerated people, those who are surveilled and criminalized under these policies, and other directly impacted people—should be key in determining the solutions.
- We believe any reform must include proactive provisions to assess, acknowledge, and seek to repair the harm imposed upon every person impacted by existing and historical policies.
- We advocate for policies that do not re-entrench current inequities based on race, ethnicity, disability, gender, financial status, class, sexual orientation, criminal history, nationality, or immigration status. We reject reforms that recreate or worsen current disparities or take a short-term view, even if they are supposedly "neutral" or "evidence-based."
- We promote policies and narratives that recognize the full humanity and dignity of our people. We will not promote policies or narratives that reinforce the false "violent/non-violent" and "drug seller/user" dichotomy or those that result in harm to any of our family members, including those designated as "too dangerous." We challenge the values of punishment, retribution, disposability, and incapacitation as defining justice and safety.
- We advocate for shifting public resources from punitive systems and institutions to community-accountable and community-controlled alternatives. We will not promote policies that give more power or resources to harmful structures within the criminal legal system.
- We want policies that build community infrastructure and formalize the implementation of promising community-controlled and operated alternatives to incarceration and criminalization, including broad investments and local programs in health, housing, education, youth, and harm reduction. We reject any policies that force our communities to police and surveil one another.
- We reject reforms that give opportunities to for-profit private companies and corporations to financially benefit from the criminal legal system.
- We adopt an intersectional and Black Queer Feminist analysis. We believe that people traditionally at the margins bear the most harm from the criminal legal system and are most likely to be left behind in reform efforts. Consequently, we believe our analysis, policy solutions, and narrative interventions must center those most marginalized—including currently and formerly incarcerated people, survivors, Black and Indigenous communities, Latine communities, people with disabilities, immigrants, Muslim, Arab, South Asian, queer people, trans people, young people, and cash poor people.

THE FIVE TITLES

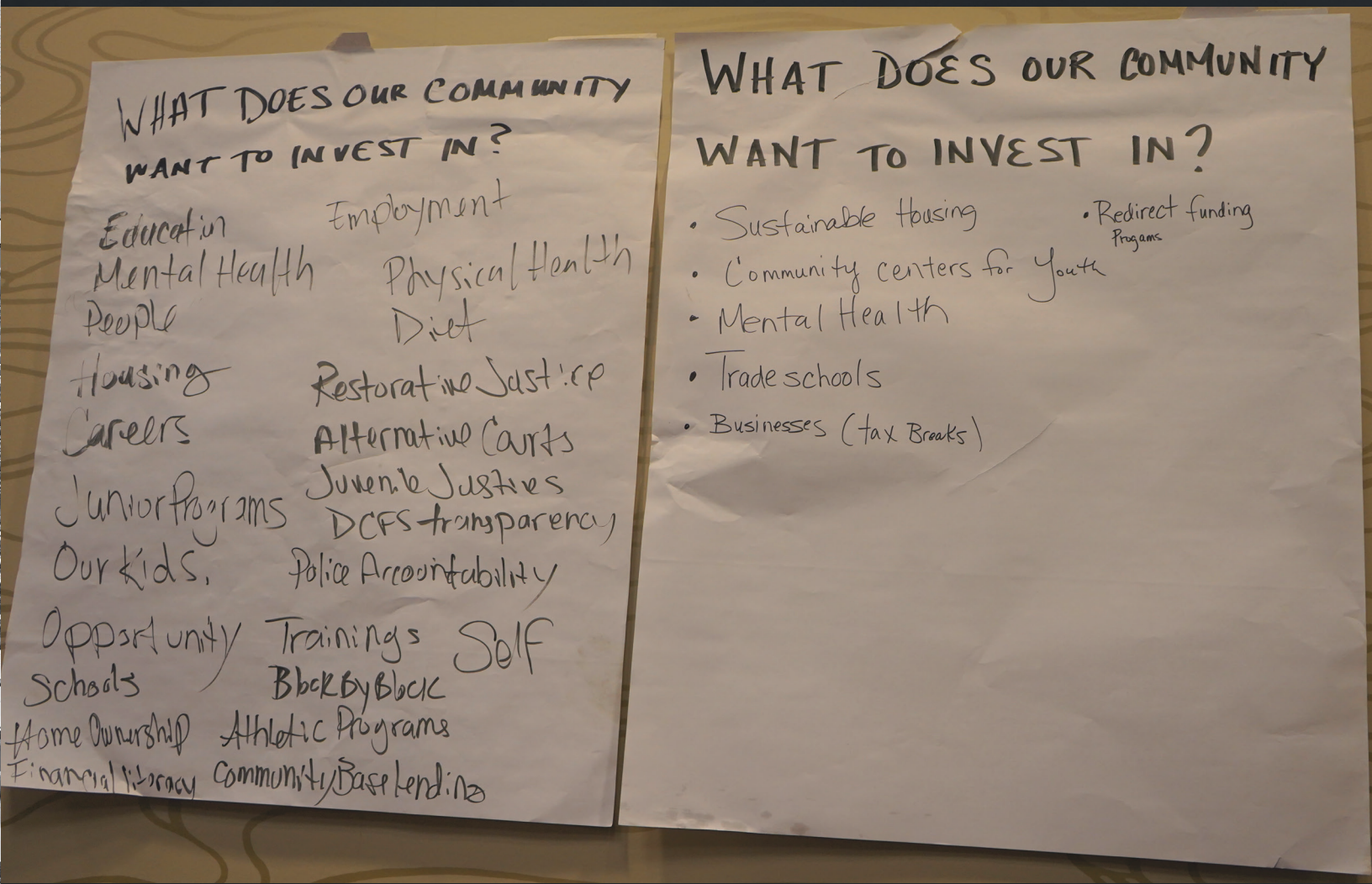
Title I: Enhancing Community Investments

Title II: Ending the School-to-Prison Pipeline

Title III: Addressing Policing

Title IV: Reframing the Criminal Legal System

Title V: Expanding Community and Reentry Services



TITLE I
ENHANCING COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS

We, the People, call for lawmakers to authorize and properly fund essential community services that are proven to address poverty, mental health conditions, substance use disorder[8], and inequities imposed on our communities and exacerbated by the 1994 Crime Bill. These investments will improve safety in our communities.

Lawmakers must prioritize and redirect more resources toward preventative services and harm reduction that meet the unique needs of our communities. We firmly believe community investments—not policing—are foundational to public safety. Many community members attest that these and other resources remain too scarce to meet basic human needs. They pointed to decades and decades of underfunding or redirected funding that could otherwise go to essential community services as one of the key reasons.

Specifically, community members shared that solving social issues like homelessness, substance use disorder, and high unemployment rates could reduce incarceration rates if our country prioritized investments in education, job planning and placement, healthcare, and food security. They recommended establishing community helplines for access to information about local resources and services, especially around substance use disorder and mental health services.

Further, community members emphasized that essential community services work best when created and implemented by people from trusted community-based organizations who know the community's needs and preferences intimately. Community members were adamantly against organizations that continuously come into the community with one-size-fits-all programming models and rely solely on data without accounting for their communities' culture, social norms, and nuanced history. Community members expressed frustration with many organizations providing services that have been inconsistent and ineffective despite being well-known and highly regarded at the local, state, or national levels because they are well-connected to lawmakers. Community members also noted that many of these organizations fail to create decision-making apparatuses that are participatory, leading to sidelining community voices to uplift and validate outside ones.

Our bill framework primarily focuses on enhancing community investments in employment, early care and learning, healthcare, housing, and food security.

EMPLOYMENT

First and foremost, we call for raising the federal minimum wage to a thriveable wage—a wage where 50% of income can go to basic needs and at least 20% toward savings and retirement. The federal minimum wage of $7.25 has not risen in 15 years despite skyrocketing costs to meet human needs like food and housing. If a person works a full day, day after day, their earnings should allow them to afford necessities like housing, healthcare, child care, and food. Nevertheless, many of our community members who work at least 40 hours a week cannot, which greatly contributes to instability in our communities, especially for formerly incarcerated individuals.

In 2021, due to the failure of the federal government to raise the minimum wage, nearly one-third of Black and one-third of Latine workers earned less than $15 per hour, placing them on the brink of poverty and financial hardship. Further, approximately 2 in 5 employed Latinas earned less than $15 per hour.[9] People should not work day after day after day to remain in poverty or fail to have access to basic human needs. People should not be in poverty in the first place.

We also prioritize investments in job training programs for adults and youth to make their communities safer. Studies show that effective job training programs that do not screen out individuals with a criminal record create community stability and reduce the likelihood of arrests.[10] Job training and placement programs that increase the probability of employment can lead to higher earnings and keep people off the streets, especially when these programs offer counseling and social support to increase course completion.[11]

When considering investments in job training, lawmakers should expand programs like Pell Grants to cover or significantly defray the costs of short-term training programs. Adults in our communities want to learn new skills or sharpen existing ones, and non-degree credential programs allow them to do so while working and supporting their families. They should not need to enroll in college to earn a two-year or four-year degree and incur significant debt, especially if they already have years of skills and working experience.

We call for lawmakers to:

- Expand vocational training and job placement services for individuals in communities with high unemployment rates to access opportunities that provide thriveable wages.

EARLY CARE AND LEARNING

Access to early learning programs like child care and preschool are essential for educational attainment, health, and job security, especially for formerly incarcerated individuals returning to their homes and actively seeking employment.

Community members highlighted that the high cost of child care is a financial burden, especially for single-parent households, and puts many of them on the brink of poverty or keeps them there. Before the pandemic, only 1 in 6 children eligible for federal child care assistance received it.[12] Presently, in every state, child care for two children is significantly more expensive than the average cost of rent, forcing families to choose lower-quality educational settings or less stable child care arrangements.[13] This circumstance is concerning as a baby's experience with their parents and other caregivers influences brain development and health.

We also support home-visiting programs that improve the overall health of mothers and children and families' economic well-being and connect them to resources in the community.

We call for lawmakers to:

- Provide universal child care and preschool for all.
- Expand home-visiting programs that help pregnant people and parents of young children improve their health and well-being, especially in coordination with early learning programs and policies.

HEALTHCARE

When it comes to health care in this country, there are two stark worlds. In many communities, particularly in the suburbs, it is unthinkable to use incarceration as the default intervention for addiction and substance use disorder or mental health conditions. However, in many of our rural and Black and Brown communities, governments criminalize these same health challenges due to recurring failed policies and discriminatory practices.

Often, when our community members talked about health care, they emphasized addressing mental health issues, drug use and addiction, and treatment and harm reduction. People with co-occurring disorders are 12 times more likely to be arrested than those with neither diagnosis.[14] Unsurprisingly, our country cages such a disproportionate number of people with mental health issues that the prison system itself is viewed as one of our country's largest providers of mental health care, especially for Black and Brown people. This should not be the state of our country's healthcare system.

We must prioritize integrated mental health care services and addictiontreatment, including for our children and youth, as there is an alarming rise in children experiencing a mental health crisis.

We call for lawmakers to:

- Provide robust and enhanced community-based mental health services in states and localities.
- Provide a continuum of substance use disorder services, including prevention, early intervention, and treatment services, in states and localities.
- Expand access to community-based mental health crisis support teams for the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. Current and future expansion of these services must prioritize behavioral health professionals and other resources that focus on the holistic well-being of each person and not involve interventions that rely on law enforcement.

HOUSING ACCESS

We call for lawmakers to fund critical Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs and services, including increased funding for homelessness assistance programs. Housing policy fails our communities when policymakers ignore the reality of how addiction, mental health conditions, homelessness, and incarceration intertwine.

Community members stressed that housing is a basic human need, and when this need goes unmet, our governments often criminalize the unhoused. In the U.S., one in 500 people experience homelessness—and houselessness can cause and also worsen mental health conditions and addiction.[15] At least 63% of unhoused people with severe mental health conditions will be arrested, with at least 48% becoming incarcerated during their lifetimes.[16] **Our country's housing crisis should not serve as a pipeline to the prison system.**

We also call for sufficient funding to expand quality Public Housing, Housing Choice Vouchers, and Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance, which assist nearly 90% of households receiving federal rental assistance.[17] Yet only 1 in 4 eligible households receive any federal rental assistance.[18]

"Housing First" programs, which provide permanent housing to the unhoused people without preconditions, are a proven solution to homelessness. In contrast, approaches that criminalize unhoused people are ineffective: they exacerbate and increase homelessness.[19] We call for lawmakers to adopt a "Housing First" approach to homelessness, while expanding supportive housing, as well as permanently and deeply affordable housing.

While eviction rates decreased significantly due to pandemic relief measures, as of mid-2023, rates are 50% higher than pre-pandemic levels in many cities across the country.[20] Rent costs increased by 6.6% between 2019 and 2021 for people with incomes of less than $15,000 per year, above the 3.2% increase for renters in other income categories, including the .9% decrease for renters with incomes of $75,000 and more.[21]

We call for lawmakers to:

- Expand public housing, vouchers, and rental subsidies through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- Address barriers to voucher acceptance.
- Expand deeply and permanently affordable and low-income housing, including supportive housing.

Five Titles

FOOD SECURITY

Our country's hunger crisis undermines safety in our communities. Adults and children who experience hunger have higher rates of mental health issues, including depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder.[22] Hungry children experience physical, developmental, and cognitive impairments, resulting in lower academic achievement than their peers.[23]

Safety net programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as food stamps), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the Child Nutrition Programs (e.g., the National School Lunch Program) can help create economic and health stability because they combat hunger caused by job loss, underemployment, low-wage employment, and pregnancy.

However, these programs remain inaccessible to our communities. For example, SNAP has eligibility limitations, administrative burdens, and outdated technology that prevents the program from reaching people in our communities. In fiscal years 2019 and 2020, SNAP benefits averaged less than $1.40 per person per meal.[24] Unlike other safety net programs, the maximum SNAP benefit amounts are fixed and do not account for regional differences in food costs.[25]

We call for lawmakers to:

- Protect and expand federal food safety net programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the Child Nutrition Programs, including eligibility requirements and benefits, to ensure access to nutritious and affordable food.

TITLE II
ELIMINATING THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE

We, the People, call for the elimination of the school-to-prison pipeline. We seek to shift our schools from a punitive discipline structure and make investments in alternative conflict resolution and restorative practices.

The People's Process captured expressed frustrations and continuous concerns about the negative physical and emotional impacts on students, their families, and the community of having police officers in schools. Community members stated that our educational system facilitates incarceration because our children's behaviors are treated punitively and often with police officers.

School resource officers, law enforcement officers with arrest powers who often handle students punitively, supplant necessary resources that communities could invest in positive behavior interventions and trauma-informed services. Many school districts and schools in our communities invest more in school resource officers instead of positive support staff, including counselors, social workers, psychologists, and other trained support personnel who are severely underfunded and understaffed.[26] The presence of police officers in schools inherently leads to criminalizing our children's behavior.[27] These investments reinforce schools as places of punishment and surveillance not learning, nourishment, and support.

Lawmakers must revise educational policies that result in the suspension and expulsion of children, which start as early as preschool and are critical in driving students away from schools and funneling them into prisons. Many children in our communities are not having their basic needs met and often act out due to the subsequent trauma and stress.[28] Many of our schools are ill-equipped with behavioral interventions such as proper health screenings, therapists, psychologists, and other resources.[29] Our government should incentivize schools in our communities to implement restorative practices and other interventions that improve the well-being of students, enhance their school climate, strengthen relationships, and build community as alternatives to suspensions and expulsions.

Zero-tolerance policies continue to push our children out of school and into the legal system from cradle to career. They normalize a false narrative that our children must be surveilled and policed in educational settings and for most of their waking hours. Under these failed policies, Black students experience suspensions and expulsions three times more than white students, and Black and Brown students account for 70% of police referrals.[30] What remains disturbing is that Black boys experience much higher expulsion rates in preschool. In a 2021 study, half of the 17,000 preschool students suspended or expelled nationwide were Black boys, despite only representing about 20% of enrolled children.[31]

A primary cause for these rates is that teachers find Black and Brown students' behaviors more problematic compared to white students in both the preschool and the K-12 system, even when there are no differences in behavior.[32] What is identified as problematic behavior is often subjective.[33] Studies point to a "culture clash" in the educational setting, as 79% of K-12 teachers are white[34]—meaning they can find Black and Brown students' behaviors problematic due to implicit bias and societal norms that stem from white supremacy.

Zero-tolerance policies give uncontested permission to school leaders, teachers, and staff to respond with bias and racism to our children's behaviors.[35] But these adults face little to no accountability, despite the expectation that we should trust them with our children's educational development. Instead, our children and their families are burdened with the consequences of these failed policies that can alter their lives, including robbing them of their liberties and basic human needs. Our government must provide support for teachers to be continuously trained on implicit bias, cultural competency, and behavioral supports, with accountability measures.

As part of Title II, our policy framework shifts schools from a punitive discipline structure to a safe, supportive learning environment by investing in alternative conflict resolution and restorative practices. This includes building new programs and structures to address conflicts and student misbehavior and requiring a more holistic approach to addressing other issues throughout schools. We place a special focus on improving staff-student ratios, particularly with mental and behavioral health personnel.

We call for lawmakers to:

- Prohibit federal funding for school resource officers.
- Prohibit the use of private police in schools.
- Provide federal grants to schools to implement restorative and transformative justice programs and other alternative conflict resolution models.
- Provide support to school districts to hire more school-based counselors, social workers, psychologists, and other trained mental health professionals.
- Prohibit zero-tolerance policies from schools receiving federal funding.
- Provide resources to schools to increase evidence-based intervention programming for children at risk of discipline or becoming out-of-school youth, including after-school programs, community centers, Boys and Girls Clubs, and programs that promote imagination for children.
- Require schools to conduct healthcare screenings for children in K-12 and make appropriate referrals, including to mental health treatment providers.
- Provide grants to states for teacher training, continuing education, and professional development, especially for behavior management and supports.
- Prohibit schools from allowing U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) on campus.

TITLE III
ADDRESSING POLICING

We, the People, call for ending law-and-order policies that prioritize and fund policing and instead reallocating such funds to community-driven, community-tailored, and community-focused resources that are proven to create harm reduction, safe havens, and violence intervention and prevention programs. Safety for our communities should focus on both physical and social well-being.

An overarching theme emerged through The People's Process: When community members feel safe, it is despite the police, not because of them. Overwhelmingly, our members expressed that the police do not make them safe in their neighborhoods, regardless of whether they interacted with them. Most community members shared instances in which they had been arrested, harassed by law enforcement, or physically and emotionally abused by them. For example, several people described being thrown against cars or walls as they were being detained or arrested. Some community members also described instances in which their neighbors or they have been detained or arrested for unknown reasons, and often, these responses have led to grave injury and death.

Yet, lawmakers continue to double down on law-and-order policies they must unlearn—meaning that policing is not the foundation or infrastructure to cultivate safe communities. Community investments are foundational, which is already evident in and experienced by many abundantly resourced suburban communities across this nation. In these communities, their first line of response for mental health issues or substance addiction, for example, is not arrests but a range of treatment services like behavioral care and rehabilitation.

As part of The People's Process, community members expressed outright anger at the harm law enforcement continues to impose on our communities, including ending lives and escaping all legal accountability due to qualified immunity—"a court-created rule that limits victims of police violence and misconduct from holding officers accountable when they violate a person's constitutional rights."[36] The irony was not lost on community members that their daily lives are under surveillance, and any mistake could lead to being caged, but those who inflict harm, harassment, and abuse have little to no accountability.

National data show that in 2023, police killed at least 1,232 people—about three people every day. This is the highest number of killings in more than a decade, despite 2023 experiencing a 13% decrease (2,000 fewer people) in homicides from 2022 nationwide. Further, Black people are 2.6 times more likely to be shot and killed by the police than white people.[37]

Couple this with the reality that there must be clearer federal guidelines on the use of deadly force by law enforcement, as our communities understand firsthand the grave realities of this absence of clarity. The federal standard for the use of force by federal law enforcement must change, and federal funding should incentivize states to do the same.

Community members also raised the need to ban federal law enforcement from using no-knock warrants. In 2022, law enforcement conducted tens of thousands of no-knock raids nationwide, primarily for drug-related searches. However, no federal or state agencies tracked the number of people killed or wounded in raids, and the same with all 50 state court systems and the District of Columbia.[38]

Whether direct or indirect, community members discussed how their interactions with the police impacted their emotional well-being. Some expressed fear and anger over how their neighbors and other community members were treated by law enforcement. Even when incarcerated, community members expressed similar sentiments. One community member reported feeling safest in isolation in prison because the correction officers and other prisoners had limited access to him.

While there was an overwhelming sentiment that policing undermines our communities' sense of safety, some community members discussed having conflicting and ambivalent feelings regarding the police. For example, some reported being socialized to believe that the police would be helpful in their communities and could count on them for assistance. For some folks, this was the case, especially in homes where violence persisted. However, for many others, the presence of law enforcement meant separating their families, including having their parents removed from their homes.

Further, some community members remarked how funding initiatives that focus on alternatives to policing allow for law enforcement to rebrand as trauma-informed organizations and specialists, stating that these same organizations use such funds to continue to inflict trauma and harm on our communities.

Relatedly, although the government can reduce harm, the government has failed to keep communities safe. Lawmakers constantly propose and allocate billions and billions of dollars to recycling 30-year-old policies that harm us. Many times, the government creates the very barriers to safety, such as funding ineffectual programs that recycle policing tactics from the 1994 Crime Bill, the War on Drugs, and the slave patrols.[39]

Even when states and localities experience a decline in crime, policing consistently accounts for 3.7% of their budgets on average.[40] In 2021, state and local governments spent $135 billion on police.[41] And in many cities, lawmakers give an enormous part of the city budget to police departments–usually over 20% and frequently over 40%—while underfunding safety net programs and frontline services that ensure people's basic human needs are met. Departments and programs that invest in our communities–such as parks, education, job training, youth programs, housing, and others–often receive less funding combined than police.[42]

The U.S. has nearly tripled its spending on policing, from $42.3 billion in 1977 to $114.5 billion in 2017.[43] The 1994 Crime Bill played a significant role in this alarming spending by authorizing and allocating $8.8 billion toward police services from 1995 to 2000.[44] For example, under the Crime Bill, the Community Oriented Police Services (COPS) program was created to administer funds to local and state governments to increase the number of police officers in communities, develop new policing tactics, technologies, and equipment, and encourage "problem-solving oriented" policing and more interaction between police and communities.[45] However, for many of our community members, programs birthed from the 1994 Crime Bill, like the COPS program, also destabilized our communities because policing and surveillance supplanted what was desperately needed—community investments into programs like housing, job training, education, and health care.

For example, in 2022, President Biden released his Safer America Plan, which requested $35 billion to support law enforcement and crime prevention in his FY 2023 budget plan.[46] Imagine how $35 billion in additional funds invested into community programs would shift our communities' physical and mental well-being!

As part of The People's Process, community members coalesced around a core set of written values informed by the history of law-and-order in this country, the harms from the 1994 Crime Bill, what safety means to us, and restorative and liberatory practices. We adhered to these values throughout The People's Process and when identifying and building consensus on policy positions.

A core value and pervasive theme throughout Title III is the recommendation to redirect government resources away from all relevant punitive programs and interventions that require or prioritize policing. Again, lawmakers must understand that policing and law-and-order policies create unthinkable physical and emotional harm in our communities daily, including death, and often supplant investments in essential services and resources overdue to us.

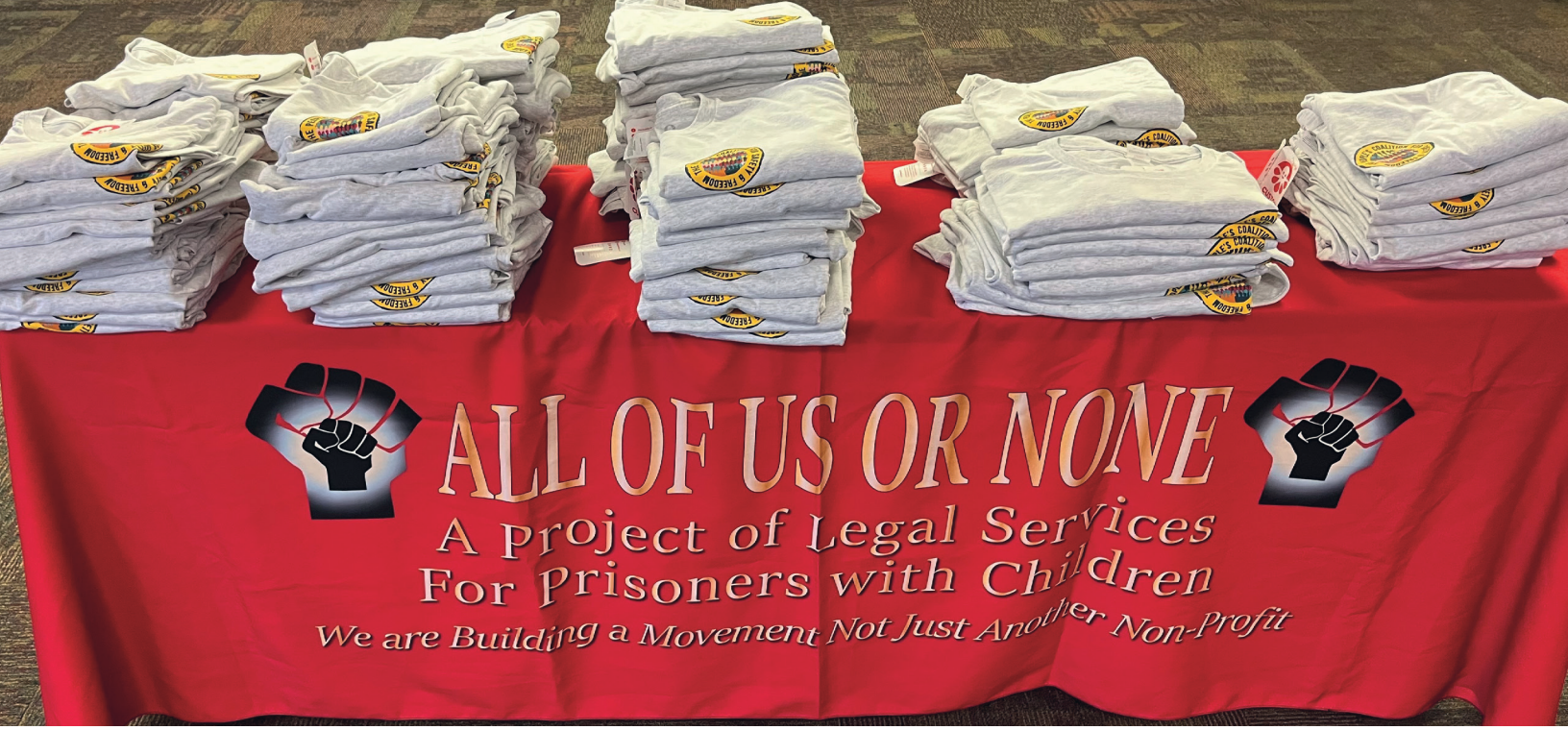
We call for lawmakers to:

- Divest federal law enforcement and support to states and localities, including eliminating the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program and removing all funding from the Community Oriented Police Services (COPS) program.
- Remove funding for the 1033 Program under the U.S. Department of Defense, which provides military equipment to state and local law enforcement.
- Abolish the Drug Enforcement Agency and establish an Office of Harm Reduction.
- Strike Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, which authorizes the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement under the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to have state and local law enforcement officers act on behalf of the department to enforce federal immigration law.
- Remove all funding for the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement under the Department of Homeland Security.
- Transfer the Federal Emergency Management Agency from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Transfer routine traffic enforcement functions and responsibilities from police to civilian traffic monitors.
- Provide incentives to retrain police officers seeking a career change.
- Incentivize community-led governance and oversight of police budgets to ensure greater transparency and accountability with local governments.

Our advocacy work is informed by the principles of abolition. At the same time, as we prioritize and push for our country to reimagine and realize safety for all communities—not just some, we understand that reforms may need to be enacted in the interim to reduce the continuous harm from police practices inflicted on our communities. These reforms should not be viewed as the endpoint to the solutions our communities need.

We call for lawmakers to:

- Eliminate the legal doctrine known as "qualified immunity" that prevents law enforcement officers from being sued for violating the civil rights of individuals.
- Ban federal law enforcement from using no-knock warrants under any circumstances.



- Require that force only be used by law enforcement when necessary to prevent imminent death or serious bodily injury.
- Set up a federal registry to ensure law enforcement officers who have engaged in misconduct, including behaviors such as excessive force, are easily identified across jurisdictions.
- Create a fund for survivors of police misconduct and brutality.

Community members consistently remarked that any interventions needed to cultivate and maintain safety should be community-tailored, community-driven, and community-focused.

We call for lawmakers to expand and fund comprehensive, evidence-based violence intervention and prevention programs like community-based violence intervention (CVI) programs. These programs allow community members to collaborate directly with governments to reduce gun violence and make our communities safer. Gun violence continues to impact Black and Brown communities disproportionately. Black people ages 15 to 34 suffer from the highest rates of gun homicides in our country,[47] and 60% of gun deaths among Latine people are homicides.[48] Further, Latine people ages 15 to 29 account for 8% of gun homicides, despite making up 4% of the population.[49]

CVI programs are tailored to specific communities and led by culturally competent community members who have shared experiences with violence in addition to social service providers. When implemented, these programs have proven successful, including reducing homicides by up to 60%.[50] They also actively address the victim-offender overlap, where those who have committed violent offenses have also often experienced violence themselves.

Additionally, our communities take a public health approach to cultivating safety. Community members discussed that one of the most devastating consequences to their communities and themselves has been the criminalization of addiction and substance use disorder and how impacted individuals spend more time incarcerated instead of receiving treatment.

The common practice of criminalizing substance use continues to undermine public safety outcomes and wastes billions of dollars of the federal budget annually to enforce drug laws (this is not including how much states, counties, and localities also spend).[51] Often, these punitive, law-and-order policies ignore the barriers to treatment. These punitive approaches also have lasting impacts by taking family members, including parents, out of the household and separating them from their children for years and even decades—destabilizing families rather than helping families to heal and break cycles.

Lawmakers should expand and adequately fund deflection programs that improve public health and safety responses. In doing so, there must be increased cross-system collaboration with community-based services before the point of arrest. These programs and the timing of their implementation shift the first line of response for people with substance use or mental health conditions from immediate criminalization to treatment. More than 1.5 million people were arrested in 2019 for drug charges, making up 1 in 10 arrests nationwide.[52] Of these arrests, a significantly limited number of people received treatment while incarcerated. As of 2019, of the 1.1 million people with past-year drug dependence or misuse who were arrested, 1 in 13 people reported receiving drug treatment while in jail or prison.[53] Studies also show that drug- or alcohol-related mortality rates in jails increased from 9 in 100,000 to 26 in 100,000 from 2009 to 2019.[54]

We call for lawmakers to:

- Provide resources to support community-based violence interruption and intervention programs from funds previously allocated to the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program and the Community Oriented Police Services (COPS) program.
- Expand resources for evidence-based deflection programs that seek to channel individuals out of the legal system prior to arrest.

TITLE IV
REFRAMING THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM

We, the People, call for lawmakers to repeal the 1994 Crime Bill and replace it with a law that transforms our legal system so it bends toward justice for our communities, too. This law must outline effective accountability measures, restorative practices, and other alternatives to incarceration for all individuals, including forgiveness.

This section concentrates on sentencing reform, prison reform, criminal statute reform, courtroom procedure reform, post-conviction reform, and pre-trial reform.

The complete framework is included in the Our Bill Framework section, which addresses Sentencing Commission reform, abolition of fines and fees, indigent defense, racial impact statements, prosecutorial reform, probation and supervised release reform, and juvenile justice reforms.

SENTENCING REFORMS

Through The People's Process, community members prioritized ending mandatory minimum sentencing laws, which continue to harm our communities severely and fail to reduce crime long-term.[55] While the First Step Act[56] was signed into law in 2018 and has made some reforms to our criminal legal system, its name suggests that it should be the first, not final, step to sentencing reform.

Mandatory minimums at the federal and state levels prevent defendants from having just due process because their individual circumstances are not fully considered or dismissed by courts. Instead, lawmakers predetermine minimum prison terms—constraining judicial discretion and giving discretion to prosecutors who have no such duty. Judges should make the final decision about what is a fact in a case. As a result, studies show that our legal system, more often than not, charges Black people under a mandatory minimum. And, despite the fact that drug use is at the same rate, our legal system convicts Black and Latine individuals at higher rates for drug-related charges, which are the most common federal charges subject to mandatory minimums.[57]

Repeatedly, community members expressed frustration and anger that people can be sentenced for first-time drug charges that judges who understand the facts of a case find harsh. Yet, the predetermined mandatory minimums set by lawmakers disempower judges from doing anything. This everyday occurrence in our legal system has had

a devastating impact on our communities. Community members discussed how mandatory minimums separate and destabilize families by caging loved ones for long periods, often denying them the health and medical treatments and resources needed because the prison system fails to offer quality healthcare services.

While wide adoption of mandatory minimums at the state and federal levels has led to mandatory prison sentences for drug-related crimes, violent crimes, and repeat charges, the 1994 Crime Bill was also the advent of mandatory minimum laws like "three strikes" and "truth-in-sentencing."

The 1994 Crime Bill hastily and wrongfully implemented new three-strikes laws. These laws imposed automatic life sentences without parole for people who committed a serious violent felony and had two prior felony charges, even if one was a serious drug charge. While a few states passed three strike laws in 1993, the 1994 Crime Bill helped accelerate the passage of these laws in dozens of states, including some states expanding qualifying convictions to include even misdemeanors[58], leading to the mass incarceration of Black people.[59]

Further, the 1994 Crime Bill used truth-in-sentencing laws, requiring individuals to serve at least 85% of their sentence, to intentionally accelerate the prison industry complex and put our community members in cages. The law authorized grants for states to build or expand prisons through the Violent Offender Program and Truth-in-Sentencing Incentive Grants Program if states adopted truth-in-sentencing laws. The law provided $12.5 billion for the grants and earmarked nearly 50% of the funds for those states that enacted truth-in-sentencing laws.[60] Between 1996 and 1999, 28 states received Truth-in-Sentencing Incentive Grants. By 1999, 42 states had truth-in-sentencing laws.[61] This resulted in the construction of new prisons and expanded the prison population due to the length of time increasing significantly.[62] By 2004, a decade after the 1994 Crime Bill became law, the number of prisons expanded by 20%, and the number of people incarcerated increased by 40%.[63]

In addition to eliminating mandatory minimums, many of our community members called for the elimination of the death penalty, a draconian punishment with a racially disparate impact. The 1994 Crime Bill authorized the death penalty for 60 additional federal charges. Five years after the law's enactment, 74% of the defendants receiving the death penalty recommendation were BIPOC.[64] Of these defendants, 44% were Black and 21% were Latine.[65] Today, Black and Latine people make up 53% of the people on death row—41.9% and 11.3%, respectively,[66] and the death penalty is more likely to be recommended when there is a white crime victim.[67] The death penalty is a modern-day lynching policy.

Our policy proposals seek to repeal the 1994 Crime Bill and replace it with proposals that establish a legal system that is fair and equitable and reflects the values of restorative justice and forgiveness. We look for future laws to be written in collaboration with directly impacted individuals from our communities, as the people closest to the problems are closest to the solutions.[68]

We call for lawmakers to:

- Strike any and all mandatory minimum sentences from the federal criminal code and incentivize states to do the same.
- Strike the recidivist sentencing enhancements under 21 U.S. Code §851 - Proceedings to Establish Prior Convictions for drug traffickers that doubles a mandatory minimum sentence for a second charge and requires a mandatory life sentence for a third charge.

- Strike 18 U.S. Code §924(c) - Firearms for sentencing enhancements for possessing, using, brandishing, or discharging a firearm that require consecutive 5, 7, or 10-year sentences.
- Decriminalize federal drug possession.
- Require a stakeholder-informed process to review, revise, and replace the federal sentencing guidelines with a less punitive and carceral-focused sentencing framework.
- Prohibit the current practice of judges enhancing sentences based on conduct for which the defendant was not charged.
- Strike the federal death penalty in all cases, including terrorism and hate crimes, and incentivize states to ban the death penalty.
- Strike statutory and guideline provisions that call for life without parole sentences, whether explicitly or by imposition of an excessively long sentence.
- Provide grants to jurisdictions that move away from law enforcement responses to intimate partner violence and toward restorative justice and healing for families.
- Incentivize states to end truth-in-sentencing laws.
- Strike all federal sentencing enhancements, including gang enhancements and recidivist sentencing, and provide incentives for states to do the same.
- Apply all proposed sentencing reforms retroactively.
- Create a position for a federal public defender to serve as a non-voting member of the U.S. Sentencing Commission, as a counterpart to the U.S. Department of Justice ex-officio member.
- Require the U.S. Sentencing Commission to have formerly incarcerated people as members.

CRIMINAL STATUTE REFORM

In addition to ending mandatory minimums, community members discussed the need to reform criminal statutes that currently lead to caging more people and keeping them there for longer periods.

Through The People's Process, community members vehemently opposed our government criminalizing unhoused people, which has become another prison pipeline. In 2023, more than 650,000 people suffered from homelessness, marking a 12% increase from 2022.[69] BIPOC communities suffer from homelessness at higher rates, with over 38% of the people suffering from homelessness identifying as Black and 28% identifying as Latine.[70] This is due to anti-camping laws, anti-loitering laws, and other laws that compel law enforcement to be the first and only responder instead of social service professionals.[71] Our country criminalizes homelessness instead of recognizing that our continued housing crisis is the wrongdoing and undoing of individuals, families, and communities.

Community members repeatedly shared that substance addiction is a public health issue and should not involve the carceral state. They called for striking criminal possession from the federal code. In 2019, more than 1.5 million people were arrested for drug charges, making up 1 in 10 arrests in the US. These arrest rates remained around the same over ten years, although arrests for property crime, drug sale or manufacturing, driving under the influence, simple assault, and violent crime declined. About 9 in 10 (87%) drug arrests were for possession, while approximately 1 out of 10 arrests were for sale or manufacturing. Yet, when people were arrested and identified as having a substance use disorder, only 1 in 13 people received treatment while in jail or prison.[72]

The criminalization of drug possession continues to impose severe, long-term harm that ravages our communities and makes recovery more challenging. When the carceral state is prioritized to address drug use and possession, people unnecessarily die from overdoses.[73] People are also denied healthcare, families are separated, and people lose their jobs and homes.

Another reform raised during The People's Process addresses prosecutorial abuse, including with the conspiracy statute. Some of our community members shared how they have unfairly been prosecuted and caged under conspiracy statutes because limited or no evidence is needed to hold accused individuals liable for their own actions. An accused co-conspirator is often liable for statements and actions they did not directly say or make because prosecutors are known to file conspiracy charges against all the defendants and use evidence to loosely connect them to a specific defendant.

We call for lawmakers to:

- Decriminalize status charges for people experiencing homelessness and remove law enforcement from unhoused interventions.
- Decriminalize federal drug possession by striking simple possession from the federal criminal code and incentivizing states and localities to do the same.
- Review and revise the federal conspiracy statute and relevant sentencing guidelines to require direct evidence of criminal involvement.

PRISON REFORM

Our Coalition takes a firm stance on eliminating the prison industrial complex, especially given that the 1994 Crime Bill has been a boon for the prison industry for 30 years. We expound on this stance in our Guiding Values. Therefore, while we offer prison reform proposals, our top priority is decarceration.

Lawmakers must expand and be consistent with government oversight of prisons. Community members were upfront about the abuse and misconduct they or people they know experienced in the prison system and the lack of accountability. They (or people they know) have been burdened with physical and mental health harm, and even the loss of life due to the prison system's practices. Many of their civil and human rights have been violated. Community members also raised concerns about the administrative remedy process and the need for more immediate court interventions for complaints on critical matters related to early release, place of confinement, conditions of confinement, and medical care.

Community members expressed the need to expand further compassionate release from prison. Older and elderly adults remain caged due to life without parole sentences. Nearly 25% of individuals sentenced to life without parole are over the age of 65, with almost 50% being over the age of 50. This is deeply troubling for our community because it perpetuates that people should remain separated from their families, especially due to the proliferation of mandatory minimums from the 1994 Crime Bill. As people age, they experience more health issues, including neurocognitive conditions like dementia, and when kept in cages, they often cannot receive proper care, given the prison's abysmal healthcare system.[74] The same remains true for people facing other complex health issues. No one should be subjected to the prison's healthcare system.

In addition to compassionate release, **community members strongly expressed the need to end solitary confinement**, as around half or more of incarcerated Black people–and significantly more than incarcerated white people–[75] and nearly all incarcerated LGBTQ+ people (one study found 85%)[76] are held in solitary confinement at some point. The overwhelming majority of people in solitary confinement (as many as 85% or more) are confined there by jail and prison staff because of minor violations, like taking an extra piece of fruit.[77] The COVID-19 pandemic and its ongoing challenges saw an increase in the use of solitary confinement as medical treatment.[78]

Community members also coalesced around the need for lawmakers to address healthcare for incarcerated individuals. In addition to treatment and resources for addiction and substance use disorders,[79] community members focused on maternal health, mental health services, dental care, food and nutrition, and at least a minimum level of recreation activity while in prison.

They raised concerns about the maternal health crisis in prisons, especially as Black women experience extreme stress while incarcerated and jail and prisons' poor healthcare systems and inhumane practices, like shackling pregnant people, put their and their babies' health at risk.[80] **Community members also discussed the disproportionate number of people with mental illnesses that this country cages**, making the profit-making prison system one of the largest providers of mental health care, especially for Black and Brown people.[81] While Congress passed the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Reauthorization Act of 2022,[82] which President Biden signed into law, community members continue to call for expanded and direct behavioral and mental health services for incarcerated individuals.

Community members also talked about eliminating all charges for phone calls and other forms of communication with family members and social support systems. While the Martha Wright-Reed Just and Reasonable Communications Act of 2022[83] now gives the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) the authority to cap how much private companies charge incarcerated individuals for phone calls, our community members pointed to states like California that have made prison calls free of charge.[84] Historically, prisons and jails have charged predatory rates, leaving some families with $400 to $500 monthly phone bills to talk with incarcerated loved ones and placing a financial and emotional strain on families.[85]

Further, community members were adamant about banning prison slavery and the exploitation of incarcerated individuals by profit-making prisons and other industries. Incarcerated individuals should be paid a living wage. The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that more than 76% of incarcerated workers must work or be confronted with harsh punishments like solitary confinement, denied opportunities to reduce their sentence, and the loss of family visitation.[86] Yet, 70% reported that they could not afford the basics with their prison wages and received no formal job training.[87] On average, incarcerated workers earn between 13 cents and 52 cents per hour nationwide.[88] And the government deducts up to 80% of their wages for "room and board," court costs, etc.[89] Compare this to the fact that incarcerated workers generate $2 billion in goods and $9 billion in prison maintenance services.[90]

In discussing how to create a path for social and economic independence, community members pointed to the need to improve and innovate prison education, as about half of incarcerated individuals do not have a high school diploma or GED.[91] The U.S. Sentencing Commission found that individuals

under the age of 21 who were released from federal prison and did not complete high school had the highest rearrest rate of 60.4% compared to a rearrest rate of 19.1% for individuals with a college degree.[92] Community members also explained that prison education programs, including educational materials and technology, must remain up-to-date and accessible to all incarcerated individuals regardless of the length of their sentences.

While reentry has its section (see Title V), throughout The People's Process, community members asserted that any successful reentry program must start at the first point of contact with the criminal legal system and no later than when a person is first incarcerated. For this reason, we also address reentry as part of reframing the legal system.

Community members called for the expansion of residential reentry centers that provide essential facilities and services, such as mental health support and addiction and substance use disorder resources, employment counseling, job placement, financial management assistance, and other services that allow individuals to stay out of or transition out of prison. To help with these processes, community members discussed the need to increase the use of allowing people to serve their entire term of imprisonment at residential reentry centers. They also talked about the need to expand and enhance requirements in the First Step Act that would mandate prison placements closer to an incarcerated person's home and provide incentives to states and localities to make work placements within a reasonable radius of an individual's home.

We call for lawmakers to:

- Provide incentives to states, counties, and local jurisdictions to close state prisons, jails, and other confinement institutions.
- End the privatization of prisons and prison services, including banning private contracts for phone services and commissary.
- Ban federal use of private prisons by strengthening the Executive Order on Reforming Our Incarceration System to Eliminate the Use of Privately Operated Criminal Detention Facilities and incentivize release from private prisons.
- Ban all charges on phone calls and other forms of communication with family members and social support systems while incarcerated.
- Expand prison oversight of the Federal Bureau of Prisons and state systems beyond the Office of the Inspector General and require enforcement of any violations.
- Expand compassionate release programs in all Federal Bureau of Prisons facilities.
- Expand earned time credit opportunities and remove all convictions and eligibility restrictions for accessing earned time programming. Calculate earned time credits in a way that provides the greatest benefit to incarcerated people under the law.
- Ban the use of solitary confinement in federal prisons and facilities, even under the guise of "protective custody" or "medical isolation," and incentivize states to do the same.
- Amend the administrative remedy process to give courts direct access to complaints related to early release, place of confinement, conditions of confinement, medical care, and other critical matters.
- Provide maternal health programs modeled after the nurse-family partnership program.
- Mandate provision of mental health services for incarcerated individuals consistent with industry best practices as outlined by the American Medical Association for incarcerated individuals.
- Mandate dental care for incarcerated individuals consistent with industry best practices as outlined by the American Dental Association.

- Ensure food security and federal nutrition standards are being met in federal prison facilities and incentivize states to do the same in state and local facilities.
- Require a minimum level of recreation for all incarcerated individuals, regardless of charge or conviction.
- Mandate incarcerated individuals to be paid a living wage and ban prison slavery.
- Allow incarcerated individuals access to banking outside the prison system and incentivize banks to serve incarcerated people.
- Expand education and vocational training opportunities in prison settings for on-demand access.
- Remove restrictions to educational materials mailed to federal and state prisons.
- Expand the use of residential reentry centers and provide employment counseling, job placement, financial management assistance, and other related programs and services.
- Address and enhance requirements set out in the First Step Act that mandate incarcerated people be placed within 500 miles of home to ensure that incarcerated individuals are placed as close to home as possible.
- Provide incentives to states and localities to make work placements within a reasonable radius of an individual's home.

PRETRIAL RELEASE REFORMS

Throughout The People's Process, community members repeatedly remarked that our country prioritizes keeping people detained in violation of their right to freedom. **The cash bail system is a clear example as it undermines our legal system's presumption of innocence and is a predatory, profit-making system.** Between 1970 and 2011, the pretrial jail population increased by 433%, primarily due to judges relying heavily on cash bail and setting them at unaffordable amounts.[93]

Judges are more likely to set higher amounts of cash bail for people of color and Black people, especially. Judges are 3.6 times more likely to assign bail to Black individuals and impose bail amounts that are, on average, $7,280 more.[94]

The longer people are detained pretrial, the more destabilized their lives become. They are separated from loved ones. They risk losing their jobs and homes. They experience trauma, raising the risk of mental health issues, including suicide. As a result, they are more likely to plead guilty and face higher conviction rates and more stringent punishments.[95]

Community members also believe that the blanket presumption of pretrial detention for many federal drug charges should be eliminated because it, too, undermines the Constitutional guarantee of due process, especially as white defendants are more likely to receive pretrial release than Black defendants.

We call for lawmakers to:

- Provide grants to jurisdictions that end the practice of cash bail.
- Provide grants to jurisdictions that mandate release in most criminal cases.
- Provide grants for pretrial release navigators with the goal of no entry.
- Strike the presumption of detention in drug trafficking cases under the Bail Reform Act.
- Require data collection on release orders and reporting by federal magistrates and district judges on 1) frequency of ordering a pretrial release, 2) frequency of setting bail, 3) demographics, and 4) conditions of bail that include requiring the posting of cash or real property as collateral.

COURTROOM PROCEDURE REFORM

Throughout The People's Process, community members raised concerns about courtroom procedures that have undermined their due process and should raise constitutional issues, including prosecutorial overreach. They called for reforms to the grand jury process, using law enforcement as experts, hearsay as admissible evidence, unlawful search and seizures using drug dogs, and punishments that result from "failure to appear" while incarcerated.

Community members discussed how prosecutors have too much power and abuse it. One way to reign this in is to reform the grand jury process.

Since 2023, the United States has been one of two countries left to maintain a grand jury system, as federal grand juries are enshrined in the Fifth Amendment.[96] Community members shared how the grand jury process has no true independence because prosecutors control it. Prosecutors determine what evidence to present and withhold, and can present illegally obtained evidence too, which can persuade many jurors who do not understand the nuances of legal proceedings.[97] The secretive nature of a grand jury protects the prosecutor more than anyone else.

Community members want grand juries to be independent and to prohibit the use of evidence and testimony known to be false by prosecutors, as many prosecutors manipulate the grand jury process to return indictments. In doing so, they use grand juries to shield themselves from their wrongdoings and political calculations that deny due process.[98] In addition to talking about their own cases, community members raised high-profile cases like the grand jury proceedings for the murders of Michael Brown and Eric Garner, where both grand juries failed to indict police officers for their murders.

In addition to curtailing prosecutorial overreach, community members pointed out that judges often view police and law enforcement as experts instead of witnesses who provide testimony related to specific facts in a case. This judicial discretion leads to bias and conflicts of interest, like when police become experts in resolving motions in cases involving alleged police misconduct.[99] Research on the subject bolster our community's perspective and point to political efforts by police departments and organizations like the International Association of Chiefs of Police that organized campaigns to advertise the professionalism of policing in the following critiques of corruption and incompetence.[100]

Further, throughout The People's Process, community members expressed concerns about hearsay and when it is admissible evidence through an exception, despite hearsay being an unreliable source that cannot be cross-examined because the statement was made out of court.

Community members also raised issues with law enforcement using drug dogs to meet the probable cause standard to conduct searches. They shared that police officers harass community members by using canines to initiate unreasonable searches and seizures at traffic stops and elsewhere, violating their Fourth Amendment rights. Community members explained that officers often use drug dogs in circumstances when there is no suspicious activity, and if a drug dog alerts them to anything, even when wrong, officers use that to establish probable cause to conduct a search.

Lastly, community members shared that people continue to be punished for failing to appear before the court while incarcerated because showing up at times is beyond their control.

We call for lawmakers to:

- Make the grand jury process independent and prohibit the use of knowingly false evidence and testimonies.
- Restrict the use of police officers and federal agents as "experts" in Rule 5 hearings based solely on their experience.
- Prohibit sole reliance on the use of canines in drug trafficking cases to meet the probable cause standard.
- Review and revise hearsay rules to prevent miscarriages of justice.
- Abolish "Failure to Appear" for individuals who cannot appear due to incarceration.

POST-CONVICTION REFORM

Community members also prioritized removing barriers for people returning home to better ensure that their dignity is recognized, they are placed on a path of stability, especially economic stability, and recidivism is reduced.

Throughout The People's Process, community members discussed the need for proper and effective legal representation for post-conviction matters and resources to defray or eliminate the high costs of representation, as these costs can easily place them in debt and immediately create economic instability upon release.

Community members also reported the need for ban the box policies. Nearly 80 million people in the U.S. have an arrest or conviction record. Because of long-standing discriminatory practices that rule them out from the candidate pools, nearly 60% struggle to secure a job.[101] When an individual discloses their record, they are 50% less likely to receive a callback.[102] However, when formerly incarcerated individuals are hired, they have a lower turnover rate than other employees and experience lower recidivism rates, meaning they are less likely to reenter the carceral system.[103]

In addition to ban the box policies, community members discussed the power of clemency to restore justice and honor individuals' dignity. However, the clemency process needs overdue structural reforms, as the Department of Justice has created a backlog of over 15,000 pending clemency petitions for review.[104]

The People's Process also built consensus around the need for reparations for the continuing harms imposed on our communities from the 1994 Crime Bill due to mass incarceration, surveillance, and further entrenching federal systems in discriminatory practices. For our country to satisfy its pledge for "liberty and justice for all," our government must acknowledge and repair the harm it has imposed on our community caused by the 30-year enactment of the 1994 Crime Bill.

We call for lawmakers to:

- Mandate legal representation for all post-conviction matters, expand the types of relief available, and extend filing deadlines for relief.
- Prevent prospective employers from inquiring about prior convictions.
- Reform procedure around federal pardons and clemency, including removing the Office of the Pardon Attorney from the Department of Justice.
- Provide compensation for those directly impacted by the carceral state.

TITLE V
EXPANDING COMMUNITY AND REENTRY PROGRAMS

We, the People, call for expanding community and reentry programs, with the expectation that reentry services start at the first point of contact with the criminal legal system and no later than when a person is first incarcerated.

Reentry programs remain crucial when formerly incarcerated community members return home. The People's Process reaffirmed that reentry programs require comprehensive community support—investments in healthcare, jobs, housing, education, safety, and restorative justice practices.

BAN THE BOX

Regardless of a reentry program's effectiveness, community members were clear that any program is thwarted when a community member cannot return home with a clean slate—meaning there is automatic expungement and record sealing. More than 1 in 3 adults have criminal records and about half of children in the U.S. have at least one parent with a record, which governments, companies, institutions, and people use to deny them economic opportunities such as finding housing, securing a job, and enrolling in college.[105] Nearly 9 in 10 employers, 4 in 5 landlords, and 3 in 5 colleges use background checks, which often results in denied life-changing opportunities that lead to stability and economic mobility for our community members.[106]

Along the same lines, community members talked about the need to expand post-conviction relief when a collateral appeal, a challenge to the legality of the conviction, is granted.

We call for lawmakers to:

- Require automatic sealing of all prior convictions, where the public will not have access to them, after an individual fulfills the sentence and expungements of all convictions. Prohibit access to sealed/expunged priors by law enforcement.
- Remove and restrict formerly incarcerated individuals and those with prior convictions from accessing federal resources, benefits, training, education, occupational licenses, and other resources. States and local governments should be incentivized to do the same.

COMPREHENSIVE AND COORDINATED REENTRY SERVICES

Throughout The People's Process, community members emphasized the critical need for comprehensive, centralized, and community-coordinated reentry services. Our community members returning home often face a patchwork of reentry services. These decentralized structures undermine the intentions and desired results of how we want people to return, belong, and stay in our communities. Reentry services must also provide life-affirming resources like housing, job training, mental health counseling, restorative justice practices, and other key services at one location. These services must be offered by organizations that have a history and unwavering trust in the communities to which our formerly incarcerated individuals are returning.

We call for lawmakers to:

- Provide grants to community-based organizations and other eligible entities to create Community Reentry Centers to support system-involved individuals. All should operate with a health and healing lens.
- Create reentry implementation committees to improve the corrections-to-community transition strategy that maximizes the impact of available resources and improves individual outcomes.

HOUSING

Our country must eliminate the prison-to-homelessness pipeline and upend laws, regulations, and policies that criminalize poverty, which is often the result of failed or absent government policies and the misallocation of resources by local, state, and federal governments. One 2018 study found that formerly incarcerated people are almost ten times more likely to be unhoused.[107] Having a place to live is imperative to creating economic stability and can contribute to better health outcomes, especially for many formerly incarcerated people who depend on shelters immediately after release and long term.[108]

Further, our government must remove all barriers to formerly incarcerated individuals accessing and maintaining housing, including barriers to accessing subsidized housing and direct discrimination by landlords who refuse to rent to them or evict them because of their legal record. This is especially true for Black and Brown formerly incarcerated individuals who confront the highest rates of housing denials.[109] Many community members called for addressing "one-strike," nuisance, and no-fault eviction policies that target them and are often used as excuses for eviction, in both public and private housing, especially when landlords want to cash in with gentrification. Community members emphasized that everyone needs housing that is accessible and affordable. It is a fundamental human right.

We call for lawmakers to:

- Create access to sustainable, safe, and deeply affordable housing for all formerly incarcerated individuals, no matter the charge or conviction.
  - Ban one-strike and no-fault eviction policies in housing, demand higher standards of proof and individualized review processes, and expand resources to providers actively seeking to house and provide critical services to system-involved individuals.
  - Provide incentives to landlords to offer safe, secure, and accessible housing to formerly incarcerated individuals.
  - Incentivize states to eliminate residency restrictions based on legal history.
  - Provide grants to support the establishment of safe houses for victims of domestic violence and their families.
  - Incentivize banks to offer home loans for formerly incarcerated individuals.

EDUCATION, JOB TRAINING, AND JOB PLACEMENT

Investing in education, including knowledge, skills development, and job opportunities, throughout the entire time of incarceration makes our community members better prepared to reenter society and gain employment. While about two-thirds of formerly incarcerated individuals are rearrested within three years,[110] incarcerated people engaged in educational prison programs had a 43% lower recidivism rate and a 13% higher employment rate than those who did not.[111]

We call for lawmakers to:

- Expand education opportunities in prison settings for on-demand access.
- Provide grants to states and localities to provide formerly incarcerated individuals with vocational training in high-demand industries.

HEALTHCARE

Access to high-quality healthcare is a basic human need, and it remains deeply concerning that upon release, formerly incarcerated individuals are 129 times more likely to die of a drug overdose during the first two weeks after release.[112] While overall health is a priority, our community members also expressed the specific need to have full access to high-quality resources that combat substance use disorder. One study finds that 52% of people arrested multiple times reported having a substance use disorder in the past year. Additionally, people arrested more than once were three times more likely to have a mental health condition. Further, people arrested more than once were also three times more likely to have no health insurance.[113]

We call for lawmakers to:

- Allow Medicaid payment for medical services furnished to incarcerated individuals during the 90-day period preceding release.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND THE TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES

Community members specifically talked about how safety net programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) were wielded against community members returning home as part of the disastrous and destructive War on Drugs policies in the 1990s. For example, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) banned formerly incarcerated individuals from receiving benefits—despite the status of food security as a baseline condition for achieving effective reentry.[114] As discussed in Title I, safety net programs like SNAP and TANF create economic and health stability and contribute to the safety of communities.

We call for lawmakers to:

- Reinstate all social services and require the removal of all barriers to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) for individuals with prior convictions.

VOTING RIGHTS

Felony disenfranchisement continues to undermine our democracy and has disproportionately affected Black citizens through antiquated laws that intend to exclude them from civic engagement and electoral representation. Our community calls for the restoration of voting rights as nearly 4.4 million citizens whose voting rights remain denied due to felony convictions.[115]

We call for lawmakers to:

- Secure the federal voting rights of all individuals and register them automatically when released from incarceration.

THE PEOPLE'S BILL FOR SAFETY AND FREEDOM: OUR FRAMEWORK

ABOUT THE BILL FRAMEWORK

The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, known as the 1994 Crime Bill, has invested billions of dollars in policing and prisons and is responsible for the harm of police brutality, criminalization, incarceration, and surveillance imposed on our communities, especially our Black and Brown communities. Our communities have suffered from the separation of families, criminalization for mental health conditions and regular child behavior in schools, being locked in cages, and the redirection of government investments in jobs, healthcare, education, food security, and other community resources. **The 1994 Crime Bill has failed to keep us safe.**

As we call for the repeal of the 1994 Crime Bill, our communities have created policy solutions that define and expand what safety and freedom must be in our and all communities. For us, safety and freedom mean that all people can live free from harm, surveillance, and coercion and have all of their needs met. All individuals and communities can exercise their agency and thrive in the fullness of our humanity, free from the burdens of oppression and subjugation.

Our communities envisioned and created policy solutions that contrast sharply with the current law. We identified investments in what creates safety, well-being, healing, and freedom: food security, safe and affordable housing, access to good jobs, supportive health and mental health care, youth programs, good, culturally competent schools, as well as restorative justice programs that address harm without police and increased access to democracy and policymaking.

Through the People's Coalition for Safety and Freedom, namely The People's Process, our communities have built consensus on The People's Bill for Safety and Freedom, a bill framework that consists of five titles: 1) Enhancing Community Investments; 2) Ending the School-to-Prison Pipeline; 3) Addressing Policing; 4) Reframing the Criminal Legal System; and 5) Expanding Community and Reentry Services.

In doing so, we seamlessly integrated our Guiding Values into creating, discussing, and consensus-building on our policy proposal. This means that every provision of our framework abides by our values.

As we work with lawmakers to enact our framework, we call for our communities to be centered in these policy conversations and engaged at all points of any relevant legislative and regulatory actions. We firmly believe that the people closest to the problem are closest to the solutions.[116]

TITLE I
ENHANCING COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS

We, the People, call for lawmakers to authorize and properly fund essential community services that are proven to address poverty, mental health conditions, substance use disorder, and inequities imposed on our communities and exacerbated by the 1994 Crime Bill. These investments improve safety in our communities.

This title proposes the following provisions for lawmakers to make law:

- **Sec. 101. Employment opportunities and thriveable wages.** Expands vocational training and job placement services for individuals in communities with high unemployment rates and that allow for a thriveable wage.
- **Sec. 102. Housing access.** Expands public housing, vouchers, and rental subsidies through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), addresses barriers to voucher acceptance, and expands affordable and low-income housing. *HUD is a federal agency that oversees federal housing laws.*
- **Sec. 103. Universal child care.** Provides subsidized child care for all, regardless of income status.
- **Sec. 104. Universal preschool.** Provides subsidized preschool for all, regardless of income status.
- **Sec. 105. Nationwide nurse-family partnerships.** Expands home-visiting programs that help pregnant people and parents of young children improve their health and well-being, especially in coordination with early learning programs and policies.
- **Sec. 106. Mental health services.** Provides robust and enhanced community-based mental health services in states and localities, and expands access to community-based mental health crisis support teams for the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. Current and future expansion of these services must prioritize behavioral health professionals and other resources that focus on the holistic well-being of each person and not involve interventions that rely on law enforcement.
- **Sec. 107. Substance use disorder prevention, early intervention, and treatment services.** Provides a continuum of substance use disorder prevention services in states and localities.
- **Sec. 108. Food security.** Protects and expands federal food safety net programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the Child Nutrition Programs, including eligibility requirements and benefits, to ensure access to nutritious and affordable food.

TITLE II
ELIMINATING THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE

We, the People, call for the elimination of the school-to-prison pipeline. We seek to shift our schools from a punitive discipline structure and make investments in alternative conflict resolution and restorative practices.

This title proposes the following provisions for lawmakers to make law:

- **Sec. 201. Discontinuation of School Resource Officer funding.** Prohibits federal funding for school resource officers (SROs). *SROS are law enforcement officers with arrest powers working in schools.*
- **Sec. 202. Restorative and transformative justice grants.** Provides grants to schools to implement restorative and transformative justice programs and other alternative conflict resolution models that improve the well-being of students and school climate. *Restorative and transformative justice are conflict resolution practices that repair harm through healing, health, and accountability for all involved, including communities. These conflict resolution practices also work toward systems change.*
- **Sec. 203. Counselors in schools.** Provides support to school districts to hire more school-based counselors, social workers, psychologists, and other trained mental health professionals.
- **Sec. 204. Ending mandatory expulsion/ suspension.** Prohibits zero-tolerance policies from schools receiving federal funding.
- **Sec. 205. Intervention strategies in school systems.** Provides resources to schools to increase evidence-based intervention programming for children at risk of discipline or at risk of becoming out-of-school youth, including after-school programs, community centers, Boys and Girls Clubs, and programs that promote imagination for children.
- **Sec. 206. Healthcare Screenings.** Requires schools to conduct healthcare screenings for children in K-12 and make appropriate referrals, including to mental health treatment providers.
- **Sec. 207. Investments in teacher training.** Provides grants to states for teacher training, continuing education, and professional development, especially for behavior management and supports.
- **Sec. 208. Prohibit the use of private police in schools.**
- **Sec. 209. Prohibit schools from allowing the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) on campus.** *ICE is a federal law enforcement agency under the U.S. Department of Homeland Security charged with enforcing immigration laws.*

TITLE III
ADDRESSING POLICING

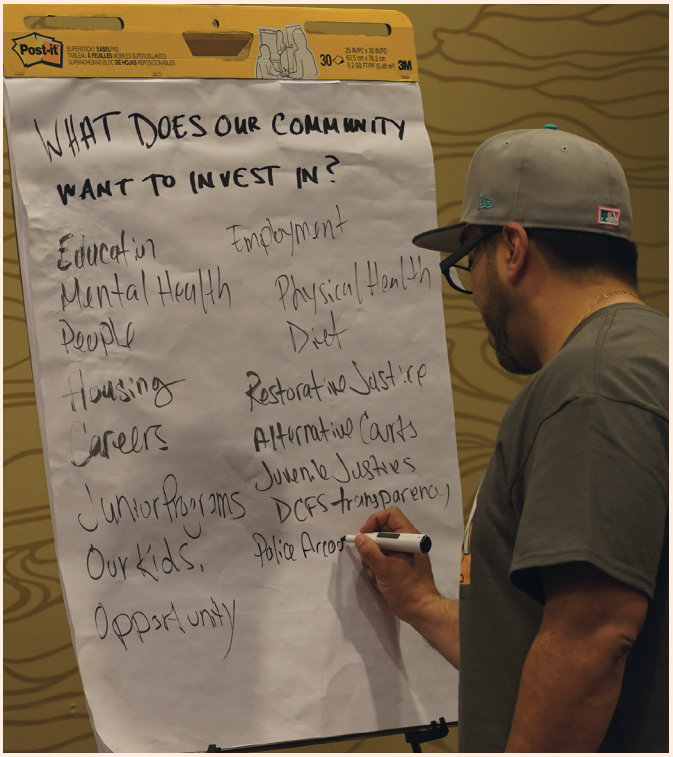
We, the People, call for ending law-and-order policies that prioritize and fund policing and reallocating such funds to community-driven, community-tailored, and community-focused resources that are proven to create harm reduction, safe havens, and violence intervention and prevention programs. Safety for our communities should focus on both physical and social well-being.

A core value and theme pervasive throughout Title III is redirecting government resources away from all relevant punitive programs and interventions that require or prioritize policing. Further, as we prioritize and push for our country to reimagine and realize safety for all communities—not just some, we understand that reforms may need to be enacted in the interim to reduce the continuous harm from police practices inflicted on our communities. These reforms should not be viewed as the endpoint to the solutions our communities need.

This title proposes the following provisions for lawmakers to make law:

- **Sec. 301. Divestment of federal law enforcement and support to states and localities.**
  - Elimination of the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program (Byrne-JAG). *Byrne-JAG is administered by the Office of Justice Programs under the U.S. Department of Justice. The program provides states and local governments with funding to support a range of program areas, including law enforcement.*
  - Elimination of COPS Office. Removes all funding for the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office, thereby eliminating this office. *COPS is housed in the U.S. Department of Justice and administers hundreds of millions of dollars in grants each year to state and local law enforcement.*
- **Sec. 302. Demilitarization of policing.** Removes funding for the 1033 Program under the U.S. Department of Defense, which provides military equipment to state and local law enforcement.
- **Sec. 303. Community violence intervention programs.** Provides resources to support community-based violence interruption and intervention programs from funds that were previously allocated to the Byrne-JAG program and COPS Office.
- **Sec. 304. Elimination of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).** Abolishes the DEA by removing all authorizing language and funding and establishes an Office of Harm Reduction in its place. *The DEA is an agency under the U.S. Department of Justice and is the primary federal law enforcement agency that investigates and enforces drug laws.*

- **Sec. 305. Immigration reform.**
  - **Prohibition of state enforcement.** Strikes Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act which authorizes the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement under the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to have state and local law enforcement officers act on behalf of the department to enforce federal immigration law.
  - **Elimination of the Office of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).** Removes all funding for ICE, thereby eliminating this office.
- **Sec. 306. Removal of traffic enforcement from policing.** Transfers routine traffic enforcement functions and responsibilities from police to civilian traffic monitors.
- **Sec. 307. Critical police reforms.**
  - **End qualified immunity.** Eliminates the legal doctrine known as "qualified immunity" that prevents law enforcement officers from being sued for violating the civil rights of individuals.
  - **Ban no-knock warrants.** Bans federal law enforcement from using no-knock warrants under any circumstances.
  - **Revise the standard on use of force by law enforcement.** Sets forth clearer federal guidelines on the use of deadly force by law enforcement and restricts it to imminent death or serious bodily injury.
  - **Federal Decertification Registry.** Sets up a federal registry of law enforcement officers who have had their certifications or licenses revoked because of misconduct to ensure police who have engaged in such, including behaviors such as excessive force, are easily identified across jurisdictions.
- **Sec. 308. Deflection.** Expands resources for evidence-based deflection programs that seek to channel individuals out of the criminal legal system prior to arrest.
- **Sec. 309. Abolition of private police.** Disincentivizes private funding of police in states and localities.
- **Sec. 310. Emergency management realignment.** Transfers the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).
- **Sec. 311. Participatory budgeting.** Incentivizes community-led governance and oversight of police budgets to ensure greater transparency and accountability with local governments.
- **Sec. 312. Compensation for victims.** Creates a fund for survivors of police misconduct and brutality.
- **Sec. 313. Alternative career training for law enforcement.** Provides incentives to retrain police officers seeking a career change.



TITLE IV
REFRAMING THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM

We, the People, call for lawmakers to repeal the 1994 Crime Bill and replace it with a law that transforms our legal system by shifting it from a punitive, carceral approach to one that supports true forms of accountability, restorative practices and other alternatives to incarceration for all individuals, and forgiveness.

This title proposes the following provisions for lawmakers to make law:

- **Sec. 401. Pretrial release reform.**
  - Elimination of cash bail. Provides grants to jurisdictions that end the practice of cash bail.
  - Incentivizing pretrial release.
    - Provides grants for jurisdictions that mandate release in the majority of criminal cases.
    - Provides grants for pretrial release navigators with the goal of no entry.
  - Federal bail reform.
    - Elimination of presumption of detention in federal drug cases. Strikes the presumption of detention in federal drug trafficking cases under the Bail Reform Act.
    - Data collection and reporting. Requires collection of data on release orders and reporting by federal magistrates and district judges on 1) frequency of ordering pretrial release; 2) frequency of setting bail; 3) demographics; and 4) conditions of bail that include requiring the posting of cash or real property as collateral.
- **Sec. 402. Sentencing reform.**
  - Ending all mandatory minimum sentences. Strikes any and all mandatory minimum sentences from the federal criminal code and incentivizes states to do the same. *Mandatory minimums are predetermined minimum prison terms that judges must use and cannot exercise judicial discretion.*
  - Ending 851 enhancements. Strikes the recidivist sentencing enhancements under 21 U.S. Code §851 - Proceedings to Establish Prior Convictions for drug traffickers that doubles a mandatory minimum sentence for a second charge and requires a mandatory life sentence for a third charge.
  - Ending 924c enhancements (firearms). 18 U.S. Code §924(c) - Firearms for sentencing enhancements for possessing, using, brandishing, or discharging a firearm that require consecutive 5, 7, or 10-year sentences.
  - Decriminalizing drug possession. Decriminalizes federal drug possession.
  - Reviewing and revising the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines. Requires a stakeholder-informed process to review, revise, and replace the federal sentencing guidelines with a less punitive and carceral-focused sentencing framework. *The U.S. Sentencing Commission is an independent agency of the federal government that articulates the sentencing guidelines for the federal courts.*

- Prohibiting enhancing sentences for acquitted conduct. Prohibits the current practice of judges enhancing sentences based on conduct for which the defendant was found not guilty.
- Ending the death penalty. Strikes the federal death penalty in all cases, including terrorism and hate crimes, and incentivizes states to ban the death penalty.
- Ending life without parole. Strikes statutory and guidelines provisions that call for life without parole sentences whether explicitly or by imposition of an excessively long sentence.
- Alternative responses to intimate partner conflict and violence. Provides grants to jurisdictions that move away from law enforcement responses to intimate partner violence and toward restorative justice and healing for families.
- Ending truth-in-sentencing. Incentivizes states to end truth-in-sentencing laws. *These laws require people to serve at least 85% of their sentence, regardless of good behavior or earned time.*
- Ending sentencing enhancements. Strikes all federal sentencing enhancements, including gang enhancements and recidivist sentencing, and provides incentives to states to do the same.
- Retroactivity. Applies all sentencing reforms made in this section retroactively.

- **Sec. 403. Sentencing Commission reform.** *The U.S. Sentencing Commission is an independent agency of the federal government that articulates the sentencing guidelines for the federal courts.*
  - Defender ex-officio. Creates a position for a federal public defender to serve as a non-voting member of the U.S. Sentencing Commission as a counterpart to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) ex-officio member.
  - System-impacted representation. Requires the U.S. Sentencing Commission to have formerly incarcerated persons as members.

- **Sec. 404. Abolition of fines/fees.** Eliminates the imposition of fees and fines in federal criminal proceedings and incentivizes states to do the same.

- **Sec. 405. Indigent Defense.** *Defense services for individuals who cannot afford to pay for a lawyer.*
  - Provides federal resources and incentives to states to support indigent defense, including public defenders, paralegals, investigators, social workers and mitigation specialists.
  - Requires parity between public defenders and prosecutor funding and student loan forgiveness programs.

- **Sec. 406. Racial impact statements.** Requires federal lawmakers to evaluate policy proposals, including legislation and regulations, to determine the potential disparities on racial and ethnic groups prior to enactment and implementation.

- **Sec. 407. Prosecutorial reform.**
  - Oversight. Creates an independent oversight entity for prosecutors outside of the Office of the Inspector General and the U.S. Department of Justice.
  - Open discovery. Requires federal prosecutors to provide defense counsel access to information in the prosecution case file, regardless of materiality.
  - Brady reform. Changes when prosecutors disclose information required by the Brady rule. Prosecutors should disclose all known evidence without delay to a defendant that negates guilt pretrial, after arraignment, or prior to entry of a guilty plea or as soon as possible upon evidence becoming known to the prosecutor.
  - Accountability for misconduct. Requires courts to order an appropriate remedy upon determining that the United States has violated its discovery obligations. *Discovery is when parties exchange information, materials, and evidence they intend to use at trial.*
  - Elimination of absolute immunity for prosecutors and judicial officers. Allows judges and prosecutors to be sued for violating an individual's rights.

- **Sec. 408. Probation and supervised release reform.**
  - Eliminates technical violations, requires graduated sanctions on non-technical violations, and removes mandatory revocation of probation and supervised release.
  - Invests cost-savings from reforms in social workers and reentry specialists.
  - Ends fees for supervision.
  - Requires automatic termination of supervision if no violations for one year.
  - Prohibits lifetime supervision in all cases.
  - Requires that Probation Officers submit motions to revoke probation to prosecutors for review before filing.
- **Sec. 409. Juvenile justice reforms.**
  - Reauthorizes the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant Program.
  - Ends juvenile life without parole.
  - Seals all federal juvenile records to ensure there is no public access and incentivizes states to do the same.
  - Incentivizes states to set a minimum age for filing a petition.
  - Incentivizes states to raise the age of adult prosecution to 25.
  - Eliminates juvenile incarceration in the federal system and incentivizes states to do the same.

- **Sec. 410 Prison reform.**
  - **Decarceration.** Provides incentives to states, counties, and local jurisdictions to close state prisons, jails, and other confinement institutions.
  - **Compassionate release and elderly release.** Expands compassionate release and elderly release programs in all Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) facilities.
  - **Early release from Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP).** Expands earned time credit opportunities to apply toward early release and removes all convictions and eligibility restrictions for accessing earned time programming.
  - **Prison oversight.** Expands prison oversight of the Federal Bureau of Prisons and state systems beyond the Office of the Inspector General and requires enforcement of any violations.
  - **Free prison phone calls.** Bans all charges on phone calls and other forms of communication with family members and social support systems while incarcerated.
  - **Ending solitary confinement.** Bans the use of solitary confinement in federal prisons and facilities, even under the guise of "protective custody" or "medical isolation" and incentivize states to do the same.
  - **Recreation.** Requires a minimum level of recreation for all incarcerated individuals, regardless of offense or conviction.
  - **Healthcare.**
    + Provides maternal health programs to incarcerated individuals modeled after the nurse-family partnership program.
    + Mandate dental care for incarcerated individuals consistent with industry best practices as outlined by the American Dental Association.
    + Mandate provision of mental health services for incarcerated individuals consistent with industry best practices as outlined by the American Medical Association for incarcerated individuals.

- **Food and nutrition.** Ensures food security and federal nutrition standards are being met in federal prison facilities and incentivizes states to do the same in state and local facilities.
- **Ending privatization of prisons and prison services.**
  - Bans private contracts for phone services and commissary.
  - Bans the federal use of private prisons by strengthening the Executive Order on Reforming Our Incarceration System to Eliminate the Use of Privately Operated Criminal Detention Facilities and incentivize release from private prisons.
  - Incentivizes release from private prisons.
- **Living wages.** Mandates incarcerated individuals to be paid a living wage and bans prison slavery.
- **Expansion of administrative remedies.** Amends the administrative remedy process for when an incarcerated individual seeks review of an issue related to confinement by giving direct access to courts regarding complaints related to early release, place of confinement, conditions of confinement, medical care, and other critical matters.
- **Financial independence.** Allows incarcerated individuals access to banking outside the prison system and incentivizes banks to serve incarcerated people.
- **Prison education and training expansion.**
  - Expands education and vocational training opportunities in prison settings for on-demand access.
  - Removes restrictions to educational materials mailed to federal and state prisons.
- **Supporting reentry.**
  - **Residential Reentry Centers.** Expands the use of residential reentry centers and provides employment counseling, job placement, financial management assistance, and other related programs and services.
  - **Mandates prison placements closer to incarcerated person's home.** Addresses and enhances requirements set out in the First Step Act that mandate incarcerated people be placed within 500 miles of home to ensure that incarcerated individuals are placed as close to home as possible.
  - **Requires work placements closer to incarcerated person's home.** Provides incentives to states and localities to make work placements within a reasonable radius of an individual's home.

- **Sec. 411. Criminal statute reform.**
  - **Status offense reform.** Decriminalize status charges for people experiencing homelessness and remove law enforcement from unhoused interventions.
  - **Conspiracy law reform.**
    - Review and revise the federal conspiracy statute that governs when people conspire to commit an act and relevant sentencing guidelines to require direct evidence of criminal involvement.
    - Strike the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization (RICO) Act as prosecutors abuse the law to prosecute alleged street gangs that have no substantial effect on interstate commerce, raising constitutional issues. RICO is a federal law that governs racketeering activity such as counterfeiting, embezzlement, and money laundering.
    - **Decriminalization of federal drug possession.** Strikes simple possession from federal criminal code and incentivizes states and localities to do the same.

- **Sec. 412. Courtroom procedure reform.**
  - **Grand jury process.** Makes the grand jury process independent and prohibits the use of knowingly false evidence and testimonies.
  - **Expert witnesses.** Restricts the use of police officers and federal agents as "experts" in Rule 5 hearings based solely on their experience.
  - **Probable cause standard.** Prohibits sole reliance on the use of canines in drug trafficking cases to meet the probable cause standard.
  - **Out-of-court statements.** Reviews and revises hearsay rules to prevent miscarriages of justice.
  - **"Failure To Appear" reform for incarcerated individuals.** Abolishes failure to appear for those who are unable to appear due to incarceration.
- **Sec. 413. Post-conviction reform.**
  - **Representation.** Mandates legal representation for all post-conviction matters, expands types of relief available, and extends filing deadlines for relief.
  - **Ban the Box.** Prevents prospective employers from inquiring about prior convictions.
  - **Reparations.** Provides compensation for those directly impacted by the carceral state.
  - **Pardon and clemency expansion.** Reforms procedures around federal pardons and clemency, including removing the Office of the Pardon Attorney from the U.S. Department of Justice.
- **Sec. 414. Other reforms.**
  - Limits police union contributions in political campaigns.

TITLE V
EXPANDING COMMUNITY AND REENTRY PROGRAMS

We, the People, call for expanding community and reentry programs, with the expectation that reentry services start at the first point of contact with the criminal legal system and no later than when a person is first incarcerated.

This title proposes the following provisions for lawmakers to make law:

- **Sec. 501. One-stop reentry centers nationwide.** Provides grants to community-based organizations and other eligible entities to create Community Reentry Centers to support system-involved people. All should operate with a health and healing lens.
- **Sec. 502. Restoration of benefits.** Reinstate all social services and require the removal of all barriers to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) for individuals with prior convictions.
- **Sec. 503. State Reentry Coordinating Committees.** Creates reentry implementation committees to improve the corrections-to-community transition strategy that maximizes the impact of available resources and improves individual outcomes.
- **Sec. 504. Housing access.**
  - Bans one-strike and no-fault policies in housing, demands higher standards of proof and individualized review processes, and expands resources to providers actively seeking to house and provide critical services to system-involved individuals.
  - Provides incentives to landlords to offer safe, secure, and accessible housing to returning citizens.
  - Incentivizes states to eliminate residency restrictions based on criminal history.
  - Provides grants to support the establishment of safe houses for victims of domestic violence and their families.
  - Incentivizes banks to offer home loans for formerly incarcerated individuals.
- **Sec. 505. Medicaid Reentry.** Allows Medicaid payment for medical services furnished to an incarcerated individual during the 90-day period preceding release.
- **Sec. 506. Clean Slate.**
  - Requires automatic sealing of all prior convictions after an individual fulfills the sentence and requires expungement of all convictions.
  - Prohibits access of sealed/expunged priors by law enforcement.
- **Sec. 507. Federal voting rights reform.** Restores the right to vote to incarcerated people and registers them automatically.
- **Sec. 508. Expansion of collateral consequences relief.**
  - Removes restrictions for formerly incarcerated individuals and those with prior convictions from accessing federal resources, benefits, training, education, occupational licenses, and other resources.
  - Provides incentives to state and local governments to do the same.
- **Sec. 509. Expands vocational training opportunities.** Provides grants to states and localities to provide formerly incarcerated individuals with vocational training in high-demand industries.

ENDNOTES

1 Public Law 103-322, https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-108/pdf/STATUTE-108-Pg1796.pdf.

2 Lauren-Brooke Eisen, "The 1994 Crime Bill and Beyond: How Federal Funding Shapes the Criminal Justice System," Brennan Center for Justice, September 9, 2019, https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/1994-crime-bill-and-beyond-how-federal-funding-shapes-criminal-justice; German Lopez, "the Conroversial 1994 Crime Law that Joe Biden Helped Write, Explained," *Vox*, September 29, 2020, https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/6/20/18677998/joe-biden-1994-crime-bill-law-mass-incarceration; "H.R. 3355 - Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994," Congress.gov, accessed June 10, 2024, https://www.congress.gov/bill/103rd-congress/house-bill/3355.

3 Richard Rosenfeld and Joel Wallman, "Did De-Policing Cause the Increase in Homicide Rates?" *Criminology and Public Policy* 18, no. 1 (2019), https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1745-9133.12414; *Cops Don't Stop Violence: Combating Narratives Used to Defend Police Instead of Defunding Them* (Community Resource Hub and Interrupting Criminalization, 2021), 11-12, https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ee39ec764dbd7179cf1243c/t/60ff3d8f0a0ef6473fbb6dbb/1627340186125/Cops+Don%27t+Stop+Violence; Lauren-Brooke Eisen, "The 1994 Crime Bill and Beyond: How Federal Funding Shapes the Criminal Justice System," Brennan Center for Justice, September 9, 2019, https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/1994-crime-bill-and-beyond-how-federal-funding-shapes-criminal-justice; Eli Vitulli, *Feeding the Beast: A Scope of Federal Funding for State and Local Law Enforcement* (The Center for Popular Democracy, December 2020), https://populardemocracy.org/sites/default/files/FeedingtheBeastFinalWEB%20%281%29.pdf.

4 "Black People More than Three Times as Likely as White People to be Killed During a Police Encounter," Harvard University School of Public Health News, 2020, https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/hsph-in-the-news/blacks-whites-police-deaths-disparity/; Doris A. Fuller, et al., *Overlooked in the Undercounted: The Role of Mental Illness in Fatal Law Enforcement Encounters* (Treatment Advocacy Center, December 2015), www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org/key-issues/criminalization-of-mental-illness/2976-people-with-untreated-mental-illness-16-times-more-likely-to-be-killed-by-law-enforcement-; Danielle Sered, *Accounting for Violence: How to Increase Safety and Break Our Failed Reliance on Mass Incarceration* (Vera Institute of Justice, 2017), https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/accounting-for-violence.pdf; *Education Under Arrest: The Case Against Police in Schools* (Washington, DC: Justice Policy Institute, November 2011), http://www.justicepolicy.org/uploads/justicepolicy/documents/educationunderarrest_fullreport.pdf; Denise C. Gottfredson, et al., "Effects of School Resource Officers on School Crime and Responses to School Crime," *Criminology and Public Policy* 19, no. 3 (2020), https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1745-9133.12512?utm_content=PublicationUpdate&utm_medium=e-mail&utm_source=govdelivery; Emily K. Weisburst, "Patrolling Public Schools: The Impact of Funding for School Police on Student Discipline and Long-Term Education Outcomes (A Sub-project of 'Building Pathways to College Access and Beyond')" (Education Research Center, November 2018), 3, https://texaserc.utexas.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/21-UTA034-Brief-BP-CAB-11.1.18.pdf; Eli Vitulli, *Feeding the Beast: A Scope of Federal Funding for State and Local Law Enforcement* (The Center for Popular Democracy, December 2020), https://populardemocracy.org/sites/default/files/FeedingtheBeastFinalWEB%20%281%29.pdf; Lauren-Brooke Eisen, "The 1994 Crime Bill and Beyond: How Federal Funding Shapes the Criminal Justice System," Brennan Center for Justice, September 9, 2019, https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/1994-crime-bill-and-beyond-how-federal-funding-shapes-criminal-justice.

5 Glenn E. Martin, "Those Closest to the Problem are Closest to the Solution," *The Appeal*, September 22, 2017, https://theappeal.org/those-closest-to-the-problem-are-closest-to-the-solution-555e04317b79/.

6 Glenn E. Martin, "Those Closest to the Problem are Closest to the Solution," *The Appeal*, September 22, 2017, https://theappeal.org/those-closest-to-the-problem-are-closest-to-the-solution-555e04317b79/.

7 See also, "What is the PIC? What is Abolition?" Critical Resistance, accessed June 10, 2024, https://criticalresistance.org/mission-vision/not-so-common-language.

8 "Treatment," Drug Policy Alliance, accessed June 10, 2024, https://drugpolicy.org/substance-use-disorder-treatment/.

9 "Raising the Minimum Wage Would be an Investment in Growing the Middle Class," Press Release, Center for American Progress, July 20, 2023, https://www.americanprogress.org/press/release-raising-the-minimum-wage-would-be-an-investment-in-growing-the-middle-class/#:~:text=A%20new%20Center%20for%20American,of%20the%20lowest%2Dwage%20earners.

10 Kathleen Bolter, "Job Training Programs as Crime Reduction Strategy? How Training people for Good Jobs Can Lead to Fewer Arrests," WE Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, accessed June 10, 2024, https://www.upjohn.org/research-highlights/job-training-programs-crime-reduction-strategy-how-training-people-good-jobs-can-lead-fewer-arrests; Grant Duwe and Makada Henry-Nickie, *A Better Path Forward for Criminal Justice: Training and Employment for Correctional Populations* (Brookings, April 2021), https://www.brookings.edu/articles/a-better-path-forward-for-criminal-justice-training-and-employment-for-correctional-populations/.

11 Kathleen Bolter, "Job Training Programs as Crime Reduction Strategy? How Training people for Good Jobs Can Lead to Fewer Arrests," WE Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, accessed June 10, 2024, https://www.upjohn.org/research-highlights/job-training-programs-crime-reduction-strategy-how-training-people-good-jobs-can-lead-fewer-arrests.

12 Douglas Rice, Stephanie Schmit, and Hannah Matthews, "Child Care and Housing: Big Expenses with Too Little Help Available," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, April 26, 2019, https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/child-care-and-housing-big-expenses-with-too-little-help-available.

13 *Child Care at a Standstill: Price and Landscape Analysis* (Child-Care Aware of America, 2023), https://www.childcareaware.org/thechildcarestandstill/; Douglas Rice, Stephanie Schmit, and Hannah Matthews, "Child Care and Housing: Big Expenses with Too Little Help Available," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, April 26, 2019, https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/child-care-and-housing-big-expenses-with-too-little-help-available.

14 Brian Nam-Sonenstein, "Seeking Shelter from Mass Incarceration: Fighting Criminalization with Housing First," Prison Policy Initiative, September 11, 2023, https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2023/09/11/housing-first. (2022 data is not available)

15 "Substance Abuse and Homelessness," the National Coalition for the Homeless, June 2017, https://www.nationalhomeless.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Substance-Abuse-and-Homelessness.pdf; "How Many Homeless People are in the US? What Does the Data Miss?" USAFacts, March 28, 2024, https://usafacts.org/articles/how-many-homeless-people-are-in-the-us-what-does-the-data-miss/.

16 Brian Nam-Sonenstein, "Seeking Shelter from Mass Incarceration: Fighting Criminalization with Housing First," Prison Policy Initiative, September 11, 2023, https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2023/09/11/housing-first.

17 Erik Gartland, "Funding Limitations Create Widespread Unmet Need for Rental Assistance," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, February 15, 2022, https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/funding-limitations-create-widespread-unmet-need-for-rental-assistance.

18 "Families with Children and Non-Elderly Adults Without Children Have the Greatest Unmet Need for Rental Assistance," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, accessed June 10, 2024, https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/three-out-of-four-low-income-at-risk-renters-do-not-receive-federal-rental-assistance.

19 "Housing First," National Alliance to End Homelessness, March 20, 2022, https://endhomelessness.org/resource/housing-first/; "Impact of Encampment Sweeps on People Experiencing Homelessness," National Health Care for the Homeless Council, December 2022, https://nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/NHCHC-encampment-sweeps-issue-brief-12-22.pdf; "Emergent Threats: State Level Homelessness Criminalization," Housing Not Handcuffs, May 10, 2024, accessed June 18, 2024, https://housingnothandcuffs.org/emergent-threats-homelessness-criminalization/.

20 Michael Casey and R.J. Rico, "Eviction Filings are 50% Higher than They Were Pre-Pandemic in Some Cities as rents Rise," *AP News*, June 16, 2023, https://apnews.com/article/evictions-homelessness-affordable-housing-landlords-rental-assistance-dc4a03864011334538f82d2f404d2afb.

21 Sonya Acosta, "Final 2023 Funding Bill Should Support, Expand Housing Vouchers," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, December 2, 2022, https://www.cbpp.org/blog/final-2023-funding-bill-should-support-expand-housing-vouchers.

22 Amelie A Hecht, et al., "Using a Trauma-Informed Policy Approach to Create a Resilient Urban Food System," *Public Health Nutrition* 21, no. 10 (July 2018), https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/public-health-nutrition/article/using-a-traumainformed-policy-approach-to-create-a-resilient-urban-food-system/940B1AEE368DE9AAA1D9B80C3B2915B4.

23 Arohi Pathak, Ryan Richards, and Marc Jarsulic, *The United States Can End Hunger and Food Insecurity for Millions of People* (Center for American Progress, August 11, 2022), https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-united-states-can-end-hunger-and-food-insecurity-for-millions-of-people/.

24 *A Quick Guide to SNAP Eligibility and Benefits* (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, October 2, 2023), https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/11-18-08fa.pdf; Steven Carlson, Joseph Llobrera, and Brynne Keith-Jennings, "More Adequate SNAP Benefits Would Help Millions of Participants Better Afford Food," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, July 15, 2021, https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/more-adequate-snap-benefits-would-help-millions-of-participants-better.

25 Arohi Pathak, Ryan Richards, and Marc Jarsulic, *The United States Can End Hunger and Food Insecurity for Millions of People* (Center for American Progress, August 11, 2022), https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-united-states-can-end-hunger-and-food-insecurity-for-millions-of-people/.

26 Amir Whitaker, et al., *Cops and No Counselors: How the Lack of School Mental Health Staff Is Harming Students* (American Civil Liberties Union, 2019), https://www.aclu.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/030419-acluschooldisciplinereport.pdf; *Contextualizing the Push for More School Resource Officer Funding* (Urban Institute, September 2023), https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/Contextualizing%20the%20Push%20for%20More%20School%20Resource%20Officer%20Funding.pdf; Nazish Dholakia, "We Spend Millions Policing Students. It Doesn't Make Our Schools Safer," Vera Institute for Justice, March 21, 2022, https://www.vera.org/news/we-spend-millions-policing-students-it-doesnt-make-our-schools-safer.

27 Corey Mitchell, Joe Yerardi, and Susan Ferriss, "When Schools Call Police on Kids," The Center for Public Integrity, September 8, 2021, https://publicintegrity.org/education/criminalizing-kids/police-in-schools-disparities/; Amir Whitaker, et al., *Cops and No Counselors: How the Lack of School Mental Health Staff Is Harming Students* (American Civil Liberties Union, 2019), https://www.aclu.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/030419-acluschooldisciplinereport.pdf.

28 "Mental Health Effects of Poverty, Hunger, and Homelessness on Children and Teens," American Psychological Association, accessed June 10, 2024, https://www.apa.org/topics/socioeconomic-status/poverty-hunger-homelessness-children; Lara Burt, "How Does Homelessness Impact Child Health and Development Outcomes?" National League of Cities, January 30, 2024; Andres J. Pumariega, et al., "Trauma and US Minority Children and Youth," *Current Psychiatry Reports* 24, no. 4 (2022), https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8918907/.

29 Nirmita Panchal, Cynthia Cox, and Robin Rudowitz, "The Landscape of School-Based Mental Health Services," Kaiser Family Foundation, September 6, 2022, https://www.kff.org/mental-health/issue-brief/the-landscape-of-school-based-mental-health-services/;

30 Mary Ellen Flannery, "the School-to-Prison Pipeline: Time to Shut It Down," NEAToday, January 5, 2015, https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/school-prison-pipeline-time-shut-it-down.

31 Amanda Williford, et al., *Teachers' Use of Soft Exclusionary Discipline in Kindergarten: Findings from Virginia* (School of Education and Human Development, University of Virginia, August 2021), https://ecevirginia.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/DisciplineBrief_FINAL_9_9.pdf.

32 Sara Novak, "Half of the 250 Kids Expelled from Preschool Each Day Are Black Boys," *Scientific American*, January 12, 2023, https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/half-of-the-250-kids-expelled-from-preschool-each-day-are-black-boys/; Cheryl Staats, *Implicit Racial Bias and School Discipline Disparities: Exploring the Connection* (Kirwan Institute, May 2014), https://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/sites/default/files/documents/ki-ib-argument-piece03.pdf.

33 Cheryl Staats, *Implicit Racial Bias and School Discipline Disparities: Exploring the Connection* (Kirwan Institute, May 2014), https://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/sites/default/files/documents/ki-ib-argument-piece03.pdf; Ajmel Quereshi and Jason Okonofua, *Locked Out of the Classroom: How Implicit Bias Contributes to Disparities in School Discipline* (LDF thurgood Marshall Institute, 2017), https://www.naacpldf.org/wp-content/uploads/LDF_Bias_Report_WEB-2.pdf.

34 "Race and Ethnicity of Public School Teachers and Their Students," National Center for Education Statistics, 2020, https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2020/2020103/index.asp; Veeko Lucas, "When Cultures Clash in the Classroom," TNTP, December 16, 2014, https://tntp.org/blog/when-cultures-clash-in-the-classroom/.

35 Sydney Ford, "Learning While Black: How 'Zero Tolerance' Policies Disproportionately Affect Black Students," *University of Florida Journal of Law and Public Policy* 32 (2021), https://scholarship.law.ufl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1387&context=jlpp.

36 "Qualified Immunity," Equal Justice Initiative, accessed June 10, 2024, https://eji.org/issues/qualified-immunity/.

37 Bill Hutchinson, "'It is Historic': US Poised to See Record Drop in Yearly Homicides Despite Public Concern Over Crime," *ABC News*, December 28, 2923, https://abcnews.go.com/US/homicide-numbers-poised-hit-record-decline-nationwide-americans/story?id=105556400; Sam Levin, "2023 Saw Record Killings by US Police. Who is Most Affected?" *The Guardian*, January 8, 2024, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2024/jan/08/2023-us-police-violence-increase-record-deadliest-year-decade.

38 Nicole Dungca and Jenn Abelson, "No-Knock Raids have Led to Fatal Encounters and Small Drug Seizures," *The Washington Post*, April 15, 2022, https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/interactive/2022/no-knock-warrants-judges/.

39 Kaity Baril, "A Brutal History: Slave Patrols and Building A Racist System with Political Power," Hampton Institute, November 21, 2020, https://www.hamptonthink.org/read/the-violent-evolution-of-police-and-imperialist-militarized-tactics-on-citizens.

40 Polly Mosendz and Jameelah D Robinson, "While Crime Fell, the Cost of Cops Soared," *Bloomberg*, June 4, 2020, https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-06-04/america-s-policing-budget-has-nearly-tripled-to-115-billion

41 "Criminal Justice Expenditures: Police, Corrections, and Courts," Urban Institute, Accessed June 10, 2024, https://www.urban.org/policy-centers/cross-center-initiatives/state-and-local-finance-initiative/state-and-local-backgrounders/criminal-justice-police-corrections-courts-expenditures.

42 "City Budgets Belong To Us. How Do America's 300 Biggest Cities Spend Our Tax Dollars?" Action Center on Race and the Economy, accessed June 12, 2024, https://acre-police-budgets.netlify.app/; "What Policing Costs: A Look at Spending in America's Biggest Cities," Vera Institute of Justice, accessed June 12, 2024, https://www.vera.org/publications/what-policing-costs-in-americas-biggest-cities; Kate Hamaji, et al., Freedom to Thrive: Reimagining Safety and Security in Our Communities (Center for Popular Democracy, 2017), https://www.populardemocracy.org/news/publications/freedom-thrive-reimagining-safety-security-our-communities.

43 Polly Mosendz and Jameelah D Robinson, "While Crime Fell, the Cost of Cops Soared," *Bloomberg*, June 4, 2020, https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-06-04/america-s-policing-budget-has-nearly-tripled-to-115-billion.

44 "President Clinton Announces New Crime Bill Grants to Put Police Officers on the Beat," Press Release, October 12, 1994, https://www.justice.gov/archive/opa/pr/Pre_96/October94/590.txt.html; "About the COPS Office," COPS, US Department of Justice, accessed June 11, 2024, https://cops.usdoj.gov/aboutcops.

45 "About the COPS Office," COPS, US Department of Justice, accessed June 11, 2024, https://cops.usdoj.gov/aboutcops.

46 "Fact Sheet: President Biden's Safer America Plan," Press Release, White House, August 1, 2022, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/08/01/fact-sheet-president-bidens-safer-america-plan-2/.

47 Ari Davis, et al., *A Year in Review: 2020 Gun Deaths in the US* (The Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions, April 28, 2022), 21, https://publichealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/2022-05/2020-gun-deaths-in-the-us-4-28-2022-b.pdf.

48 *The Impact of Gun Violence on Latinx Communities* (Everytown, August 2023), https://everytownresearch.org/report/the-impact-of-gun-violence-on-latinx-communities/.

49 *Frequently Asked Questions About Community-Based Violence Intervention Programs* (Center for American Progress, June 3, 2022), https://www.americanprogress.org/article/frequently-asked-questions-about-community-based-violence-intervention-programs/

50 *Healing Communities in Crisis: Lifesaving Solutions to the Urban Gun Violence Epidemic* (Giffords Law Center and PICO National Network, 2016), 16, https://giffords.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Healing-Communities-in-Crisis.pdf.

51 "Federal Drug Control Funding," Federal Budget FY23, https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/ap_20_drug_control_fy2023.pdf; Juhohn Lee, "America Has Spent Over a Trillion Dollars Fighting the War on Drugs. 50 Years Later, Drug Use in the US is Climbing Again," *CNBC*, June 17, 2021, https://www.cnbc.com/2021/06/17/the-us-has-spent-over-a-trillion-dollars-fighting-war-on-drugs.html.

52 "Drug Arrests Stayed High Even as Imprisonment Fell from 2009 to 2019," Pew Trusts, February 15, 2022, https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/issue-briefs/2022/02/drug-arrests-stayed-high-even-as-imprisonment-fell-from-2009-to-2019.

53 "Drug Arrests Stayed High Even as Imprisonment Fell from 2009 to 2019," Pew Trusts, February 15, 2022, https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/issue-briefs/2022/02/drug-arrests-stayed-high-even-as-imprisonment-fell-from-2009-to-2019.

54 "Drug Arrests Stayed High Even as Imprisonment Fell from 2009 to 2019," Pew Trusts, February 15, 2022, https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/issue-briefs/2022/02/drug-arrests-stayed-high-even-as-imprisonment-fell-from-2009-to-2019.

55 Erik Luna, "Mandatory Minimums," in *Reforming Criminal Justice: Volume 4: Punishment, Incarceration, and Release*, edited by Erik Luna, https://law.asu.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/academy_for_justice/7_Criminal_Justice_Reform_Vol_4_Mandatory-Minimums.pdf; Ashley Nellis, "How Mandatory Minimums Perpetuate Mass Incarceration and What to Do About It," The Sentencing Project, February 14, 2024, https://www.sentencingproject.org/fact-sheet/how-mandatory-minimums-perpetuate-mass-incarceration-and-what-to-do-about-it/.

56 Public Law 115-39, https://www.congress.gov/115/plaws/publ391/PLAW-115publ391.pdf.

57 *An Overview of Mandatory Minimum Penalties in the Federal Criminal Justice System* (United States Sentencing Commission, July 2017), https://www.ussc.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/research-and-publications/research-publications/2017/20170711_Mand-Min.pdf; Betsy Pearl, "Ending the War on Drugs: By the Numbers," Center for American Progress, June 27, 2018, https://www.americanprogress.org/article/ending-war-drugs-numbers/.

58 Alexis Kelly and Rebecca Pirius, "Three Strike Laws and Habitual Offenders," CriminalDefenseLawyer, accessed June 10, 2024, https://www.criminaldefenselawyer.com/resources/three-strikes-law.htm; Walter J. Dickey, *"Three Strikes" Laws: Five Years Later* (The Campaign for an Effective Crime Policy, November 1998), https://static.prisonpolicy.org/scans/sp/3strikes.pdf.

59 Walter J. Dickey, *"Three Strikes" Laws: Five Years Later* (The Campaign for an Effective Crime Policy, November 1998), https://static.prisonpolicy.org/scans/sp/3strikes.pdf.

60 Lauren-Brooke Eisen, "The 1994 Crime Bill and Beyond: How Federal Funding Shapes the Criminal Justice System," Brennan Center for Justice, September 9, 2019, https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/1994-crime-bill-and-beyond-how-federal-funding-shapes-criminal-justice.

61 William J. Sabol, *The Influences of Truth-in-Sentencies Reform on Changes in States' Sentencing Practices and Prison Populations* (Urban Institute, April 2002), 6-7, https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/60401/410470-The-Influences-of-Truth-in-Sentencing-Reforms-on-Changes-in-States-Sentencing-Practices-and-Prison-Populations.PDF.

62 Ed Chung, Betsy Pearl, and Lea Hunter, "The 1994 Crime Bill Continues to Undercut Justice Reform–Here's How to Stop It," Center for American Progress, March 26, 2019, https://www.americanprogress.org/article/1994-crime-bill-continues-undercut-justice-reform-heres-stop/.

63 Ed Chung, Betsy Pearl, and Lea Hunter, "The 1994 Crime Bill Continues to Undercut Justice Reform–Here's How to Stop It," Center for American Progress, March 26, 2019, https://www.americanprogress.org/article/1994-crime-bill-continues-undercut-justice-reform-heres-stop/.

64 Ranya Shannon, "3 Ways the 1994 Crime Bill Continues to Hurt Communities of Color," Center for American Progress, May 10, 2019, https://www.americanprogress.org/article/3-ways-1994-crime-bill-continues-hurt-communities-color/.

65 Ranya Shannon, "3 Ways the 1994 Crime Bill Continues to Hurt Communities of Color," Center for American Progress, May 10, 2019, https://www.americanprogress.org/article/3-ways-1994-crime-bill-continues-hurt-communities-color/.

66 Ranya Shannon, "3 Ways the 1994 Crime Bill Continues to Hurt Communities of Color," Center for American Progress, May 10, 2019, https://www.americanprogress.org/article/3-ways-1994-crime-bill-continues-hurt-communities-color/.

67 Ranya Shannon, "3 Ways the 1994 Crime Bill Continues to Hurt Communities of Color," Center for American Progress, May 10, 2019, https://www.americanprogress.org/article/3-ways-1994-crime-bill-continues-hurt-communities-color/.

68 Glenn E. Martin, "Those Closest to the Problem are Closest to the Solution," *The Appeal*, September 22, 2017, https://theappeal.org/those-closest-to-the-problem-are-closest-to-the-solution-555e04317b79/.

69 "HUD Releases January 2023 Point-In-Time Count Report," Press Release, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, December 15, 2023, https://www.hud.gov/press/press_releases_media_advisories/hud_no_23_278.

70 *The 2023 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress* (US Department of Housing and Urban Development, December 2023), https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2023-AHAR-Part-1.pdf

71 Lavena Staten and Sara Rankin, "Penny Wise but Pound Foolish: How Permanent Supportive Housing Can Prevent a World of Hurt," Homeless Rights Advocacy Project, Seattle University School of Law, 2019, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3419187; Eric S. Tars, "Criminalization of Homelessness," National Low Income Housing Coalition, 2021, https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/AG-2021/06-08_Criminalization-of-Homelessness.pdf.

72 "Drug Arrests Stayd High Even as Imprionment Fell from 2009 to 2019,"Pew, February 15, 2022, https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/issue-briefs/2022/02/drug-arrests-stayed-high-even-as-imprisonment-fell-from-2009-to-2019.

73 Elizabeth Needhan Waddell, et al, "Reducing Overdose after Release from Incarceration (ROAR): Study Protocol for an Intervention to Reduce Risk of Fata and Non-Fatal Opioid Overdose among Women after Release from Prison," *Health and Justice*, December 2020, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7349469/.

74 Megan Horner, "Broken and Underutilized: Understanding Compassionate Rleease Programs fro Older Adult Prisoners," American Bar Association, January 19, 2023, https://www.americanbar.org/groups/law_aging/publications/bifocal/vol44/bifocal-vol-44-issue3/broken-and-underutilized-understanding-compassionate-release/#:~:text=There%20are%20a%20significant%20number,over%2050%20(Nellis%202022).

75 *Reforming Restrictive Housing: The 2018 ASCA-Liman National Survey of Time-in Cell* (The Association of State Correctional Administrators and the Liman Center for Public Interest Law at Yale University, October 2018), https://law.yale.edu/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/Liman/asca_liman_2018_restrictive_housing_revised_sept_25_2018_-_embargoed_unt.pdf; Hannah Pullen-Blasnik, Jessica T. Simes, and Bruce Western, "The Population Prevalence of Solitary Confinement," *Science Advances* 7 (2021), https://justicelab.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/The%20Population%20Prevalence%20of%20Solitary%20Confinement.pdf.

76 Jason Lydon, et al., *Coming Out of Concrete Closets: A Report on Black & Pink's National LGBTQ Prisoner Survey* (October 2015), https://www.blackandpink.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Coming-Out-of-Concrete-Closets-incorcporated-Executive-summary102115.pdf.

77 *Solitary Confinement: Common Misconceptions and Emerging Safe Alternatives* (Vera Institute of Justice, May 2015), https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/solitary-confinement-misconceptions-safe-alternatives-report_1.pdf; Andreea Matei, *Solitary Confinement in US Prisons* (Urban Institute, August 2022), https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/Solitary%20Confinement%20in%20the%20US.pdf; "Cintron v. Bibeault," Roderick and Solange McArthur Justice Center, ND, https://www.macarthurjustice.org/case/cintron-v-bibeault/.

78 Erica Bryant, "Solitary Confinement is Torture, Not COVID Medical Care," Vera Institute of Justice, March 25, 2022, https://www.vera.org/news/solitary-confinement-is-torture-not-covid-medical-care#:~:text=In%20mid%2DApril%20of%202020,little%20to%20no%20medical%20care.

79 "Treatment," Drug Policy Alliance, accessed June 10, 2024, https://drugpolicy.org/substance-use-disorder-treatment/.

80 Connor Maxwell and Danyelle Solomon, *Mass Incarceration, Stress, and Black Infant Mortality: A Case Study in Structural Racism* (Center for American Progress, June 5, 2018), https://www.americanprogress.org/article/mass-incarceration-stress-black-infant-mortality/.

81 Anna G. Preston, et al., "'I was Reaching Out for Help and They Did Not Help Me': Mental Healthcare in the Carceral State," *Health & Justice* 10, no. 23 (2022), https://healthandjusticejournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40352-022-00183-9; David H. Cloud, et al., "Public Health and Prisons: Priorities in the Age of Mass Incarceration," *Annual Review of Public Health* 44 (April 2023), https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10128126/.

82 Public Law 117-323, https://www.congress.gov/117/plaws/publ323/PLAW-117publ323.pdf.

83 Public Law 117-338, https://www.congress.gov/117/plaws/publ338/PLAW-117publ338.pdf.

84 Christie Thompson, "Fighting the High Cost of Prison Phone Calls," The Marshall Project, February 25, 2023, https://www.themarshallproject.org/2023/02/25/prison-phone-calls-colorado-biden-securus.

85 Roby Chavez, "Incarcerated People Face Heightened Costs to Communicate with Family," *PBS News Hour*, April 7, 2023, https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/incarcerated-people-face-heightened-costs-to-communicate-with-families.

86 *Captive Labor: Exploitation of Incarcerated Workers* (American Civil Liberties Union and Global Health Clinic, University of Chicago Law School, 2022), 5, https://www.aclu.org/publications/captive-labor-exploitation-incarcerated-workers.

87 *Captive Labor: Exploitation of Incarcerated Workers* (American Civil Liberties Union and Global Health Clinic, University of Chicago Law School, 2022), 11, https://www.aclu.org/publications/captive-labor-exploitation-incarcerated-workers.

88 *Captive Labor: Exploitation of Incarcerated Workers* (American Civil Liberties Union and Global Health Clinic, University of Chicago Law School, 2022), 10, https://www.aclu.org/publications/captive-labor-exploitation-incarcerated-workers.

89 *Captive Labor: Exploitation of Incarcerated Workers* (American Civil Liberties Union and Global Health Clinic, University of Chicago Law School, 2022), 11 , https://www.aclu.org/publications/captive-labor-exploitation-incarcerated-workers.

90 *Captive Labor: Exploitation of Incarcerated Workers* (American Civil Liberties Union and Global Health Clinic, University of Chicago Law School, 2022), 6, https://www.aclu.org/publications/captive-labor-exploitation-incarcerated-workers.

91 Lucius Couloute, "Getting Back on Course: Education Exclusion and Attainment among Formerly Incarcerated People," Prison Policy Initiative, October 2018, https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/education.html.

92 *Recidivism Among Federal Offenders: A Comprhenenisve Overview* (US Sentencing Commission, March 2016), 24, https://www.ussc.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/research-and-publications/research-publications/2016/recidivism_overview.pdf.

93 Nicole Zayas Manzano, "the High Cost of Cash Bail," *Human Rights Magazine* 48, no 3 (April 2023), https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human_rights_magazine_home/economic-issues-in-criminal-justice/the-high-price-of-cash-bail/.

94 Nicole Zayas Manzano, "the High Cost of Cash Bail," *Human Rights Magazine* 48, no 3 (April 2023), https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human_rights_magazine_home/economic-issues-in-criminal-justice/the-high-price-of-cash-bail/.

95 Nicole Zayas Manzano, "the High Cost of Cash Bail," *Human Rights Magazine* 48, no 3 (April 2023), https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human_rights_magazine_home/economic-issues-in-criminal-justice/the-high-price-of-cash-bail/.

96 Cava Shapiro and James Clark, "It's Time to Abolish Grand Juries Once and for All," *The Nation*, September 27, 2023, https://www.thenation.com/article/activism/abolish-grand-juries-cop-city-trump/.

97 Cava Shapiro and James Clark, "It's Time to Abolish Grand Juries Once and for All," *The Nation*, September 27, 2023, https://www.thenation.com/article/activism/abolish-grand-juries-cop-city-trump/.

98 "Restoring Legitimacy: The Grand Jury as the Prosecutor's Administrative Agency," *Harvard Law Review* 130, no. 4 (February 2017), https://harvardlawreview.org/print/vol-130/restoring-legitimacy/; Ira P. Robbins, "Sham Suboenas and Prosecutorial Ethics," *American Criminal Law Review* 58, no. 1 (2021), https://www.law.georgetown.edu/american-criminal-law-review/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2021/01/Updated-58-1-Robbins-Sham-Subpoenas-and-Prosecutorial-Ethics.pdf.

99 Barry Friedman, "Why Do Courts Defer to Cops?: Responding to Anna Lvovsky, *The Judicial Presumption of Police Expertise*," *Harvard Law Review* 130, no. 8 (June 2017), https://harvardlawreview.org/forum/vol-130/why-do-courts-defer-to-cops/.

100 Barry Friedman, "Why Do Courts Defer to Cops?: Responding to Anna Lvovsky, *The Judicial Presumption of Police Expertise*," *Harvard Law Review* 130, no. 8 (June 2017), https://harvardlawreview.org/forum/vol-130/why-do-courts-defer-to-cops/.

101 "Criminal Records and Reentry Toolkit," National Conference of State Legislatures, March 31, 2023, ithttps://www.ncsl.org/civil-and-criminal-justice/criminal-records-and-reentry-toolkit#:~:text=Approximately%2077%20million%20Americans%2C%20or,adults%2C%20have%20a%20criminal%20record; E. Ann Carson, et al., *Employment of Persons Released from Federal Prison in 2010* (US Department of Justice, December 2021), https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/eprfp10.pdf.

102 Devah Pager, Bruce Western, and Naomi Sugie, "Sequencing Disadvantage: Barriers to Employment Facing Young Black and White Men with Criminal Records," *The Annals of the American Academy* 623 (May 2009), 199, https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/pager/files/annals_sequencingdisadvantage.pdf.

103 Collateral Consequences Center, "Michigan Set-Asides Found to Increase Wages and Reduce REcidivism," *Federal Sentencing Reporter* 30, no 4-5 (2018), https://online.ucpress.edu/fsr/article-abstract/30/4-5/361/96141/Michigan-Set-Asides-Found-to-Increase-Wages-and?redirectedFrom=fulltext; Rachel West, Rebecca Vallas, and Phil Hernandez, "News You Can Use: Research Roundup for Reentry Advocates," Center for American Progress, April 5 2018, https://www.americanprogress.org/article/news-can-use-research-roundup-reentry-advocates/

104 *United States Department of Justice General Legal Activities: Office of the Pardon Attorney, FY2023 President's Budget Submission* (US Department of Justice, 2023), 4-5, https://www.justice.gov/jmd/file/1217866/dl?inline=.

105 Rebecca Vallas, Milissa Boteach, and Rachel West, *Removing Barriers to Opportunity for Parents with Criminal Records and their Children* (Center for American Progress, December 10, 2015), https://www.americanprogress.org/article/removing-barriers-to-opportunity-for-parents-with-criminal-records-and-their-children/.

106 *Clean Slate Toolkit: Unlocking Opportunity through Automated Record-Clearing* (Center for American Progress, November 15, 2018), https://www.americanprogress.org/article/clean-slate-toolkit/.

107 Lucius Couloute, *Nowhere to Go: Homelessness among Formerly Incarcerated People* (Prison Policy Center, August 2018), https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/housing.html.

108 Lucius Couloute, *Nowhere to Go: Homelessness among Formerly Incarcerated People* (Prison Policy Center, August 2018), https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/housing.html;

109 Lauren Kirchner and Matthew Goldstein, "How Automated Background Checks Freeze Out Renters," *The New York Times*, May 28, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/28/business/renters-background-checks.html; "Five Charts that Explain the Homelessness-Jail Cycle–and How to Break It," Urban Institute, September 16, 2020, https://www.urban.org/features/five-charts-explain-homelessness-jail-cycle-and-how-break-it.

110 Liz Benecchi, "Recidivism Imprisons American Progress," *Harvard Political Review*, August 8, 2021, https://harvardpolitics.com/recidivism-american-progress/; "Recidivism and Reentry," Prison Policy Initiative, accessed June 10, 2024, https://www.prisonpolicy.org/research/recidivism_and_reentry/.

111 Lois Davis, et al., *Evaluating the Effectiveness of Correctional Education: A Meta-Analysis of Programs that Provide Education to Incarcerated Adults* (Rand, August 22, 2013), https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR266.html?mc_cid=4c422bef09&mc_eid=[d2d708ea9f].

112 Ingrid A. Binswanger, et al, "Release from Prison–A High Risk of Death for Former Inmates," *The New England Journal of Medicine* 356 (2007), https://perma.cc/L49X-7MZ7.

113 Alexi Jones and Wendy Sawyer, "Arrest, Release, Repeat: How Police and Jails are Misused to Respond to Social Problems," Prison Policy Initiative, August 2019, https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/repeatarrests.html.

114 *No More Double Punishments: Lifting the Ban on SNAP and TANF for People with Prior Felony Drug Convictions* (The Center for Law and Social {Policy, April 2022), https://www.clasp.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/2022Apr_No-More-Double-Punishments.pdf.

115 Christopher Uggen, et al., *Locked Out 2022: Estimates of People Denied Voting Rights* (The Sentencing Project, October 25, 2022), https://www.sentencingproject.org/reports/locked-out-2022-estimates-of-people-denied-voting-rights/; Erin Kelley, *Racism & Felony Disenfranchisement: An Intertwined History* (Brennan Center for Justice, May 9, 2017), https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/racism-felony-disenfranchisement-intertwined-history.

116 Glenn E. Martin, "Those Closest to the Problem are Closest to the Solution," *The Appeal*, September 22, 2017, https://theappeal.org/those-closest-to-the-problem-are-closest-to-the-solution-555e04317b79/.

Fri

WE CAN HAVE CONTRADICTIONS & still do the work

Community Agreements

Respect

COMMITMENT 2 LEARNING

- ask questions
- Take Ourselves seriously
- Agree to disagree
- Respecting someone elses opinion
- Respecting the space

Participation

- active listening
- respectful challenge
- engagement
- Knowing when to step back
- Being present
- NOT BEING AFRAID

LANGUAGE ASSESSIBILITY

Care

SUSPEND ALL JUDGEMENT

- grace w/ eachother
- care for self & others
- Public health protocols
- MAKE SPACE, TAKE SPACE
- AWARENESS of body language
- Supporting each other

CONFIDENCE & ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER

KNOWING NOT TO RESPOND BUT TO LISTEN JUST TO LISTEN TO LEARN & UNDERSTAND NOT 2 JUST HEAR & READY

GLITTER, NOT SHADE

TRUST: THE PROCESS & FACILITATORS