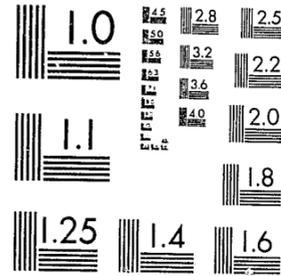


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National Institute of Justice
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D. C. 20531

14/21/86

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INFORMATION PACKAGE

OPTIONS TO REDUCE PRISON CROWDING

U. S. Department of Justice
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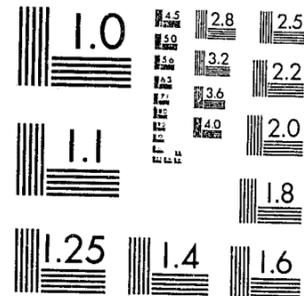
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INFORMATION PACKAGE

OPTIONS TO REDUCE PRISON CROWDING

Contents

Introduction..... 1

Prison Construction/Surplus Property..... 3

Selective Incapacitation..... 5

Population Reduction Strategies..... 5

 Front Door Options..... 5

 Community Corrections Acts..... 5

 Restitution..... 6

 Community Service..... 7

 Probation..... 7

 Back Door Options..... 8

 Emergency Release..... 9

 Parole..... 10

 Good Time..... 10

 Commutation..... 12

 Furloughs..... 12

Population-Sensitive Incarceration Strategies..... 13

 Sentencing Guidelines..... 13

 Parole Guidelines..... 14

 Forecasting Prison Populations..... 16

Conclusion..... 16

References..... 17

Appendix A: Pending Litigation..... 21

Appendix B: Selected Readings..... 25

Appendix C: Resource List..... 28

OPTIONS TO REDUCE PRISON CROWDING

Introduction

The most critical problem facing the criminal justice system today is that of crowded prisons. By midyear 1983, more than 30 States were under court order to alleviate prison crowding. The Nation's State and Federal prison population grew by 3.9 percent during the first 6 months of 1984 and reached 459,136 inmates.¹

Even though some States are already operating prison systems at as much as 30 percent over capacity, public pressure continues to mount for harsher prison sentences. Taxpayers' revolts brought passage of referendums like California's Proposition 13 and Massachusetts' Proposition 2-1/2 that put a limit on the funding available for prisons. In 1980, Michigan voters rejected a 5-year increase of just 0.1 percent in the State income tax to pay for additional prisons, although the year before, voters had overwhelmingly eliminated the practice of "good time" --early release for good behavior in prison.

Pressured correctional practitioners and government officials are seeking ways to respond to the prison crowding crisis at a time when State governments are under extreme fiscal stress. Because the effects of the prison crowding crisis are felt throughout the criminal justice system, the crisis is unlikely to be resolved without the active, aggressive, and coordinated involvement of the entire system.

The Task Force on Community Corrections Legislation of the American Correctional Association (ACA) states, "Corrections professionals alone cannot solve the problem of overcrowded, dangerous, unconstitutional and costly prisons, because the cause lies beyond corrections. It is a result of a tangled maze of uncoordinated decisions and policies that stretch from the statehouse to the stationhouse."²

In response to the strain on our Nation's prisons, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) has designated efforts to deal with prison crowding as its chief research priority.

This information package seeks to provide policymakers and practitioners with information on four broad strategies that States may find useful in formulating and implementing approaches to the prison crowding crisis. The first strategy involves increasing the amount of available prison space through the construction of new facilities or the acquisition of surplus Federal property. Construction, the traditional response to prison crowding, is not an attractive option when State budgets are under extreme stress. Also, the amount of time it takes to plan, design, construct, and staff a new facility makes construction a long-term strategy. Acquiring surplus Federal properties for use as a correctional facility is another method of increasing prison capacity. Ten Federal properties being used by States for correctional facilities are currently providing approximately 4,000 additional beds.

The second strategy, selective incapacitation, recommends dealing with the scarcity of prison space by identifying "career criminals," or offenders who are at high risk of committing additional violent crimes, and incarcerating them for long periods of time. Low-risk offenders would receive shorter sentences, thus using less prison space. This strategy responds to the public's demand for increased crime control, while at the same time reducing prison populations.

The third strategy involves reducing the prison population through "front door" and "back door" options. Front door options that reduce the number of offenders admitted to prison, include community corrections acts, restitution, community service orders, and probation. Back door options, mechanisms or programs to increase an inmate's progress through the system and back into the community, include emergency release laws, "good time," parole, commutation, and furloughs.

The final strategy to be discussed develops approaches to incarceration that formulate sentencing or release policies that are sensitive to changes in prison populations. Sentencing and parole guidelines matrixes will be discussed with an emphasis on the Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission. Techniques for projecting prison populations will also be mentioned.

This information package, while not a complete examination of all the options that have been developed to deal with the prison crowding crisis, presents some of the more promising approaches being implemented throughout the country. For readers seeking additional information, appendixes include pending litigation involving crowding, selected readings offering more information, and a resource list describing organizations that offer assistance with crowding problems.

Because the problems that lead to prison crowding are deep-rooted and widespread, solutions are not easy. "There is no one correct formula for attacking the prison crowding problem," according to a National Institute of Corrections report. "Whether any particular mechanism might prove valuable in a given jurisdiction depends on the characteristics of that jurisdiction--its current justice system practices, the dimensions of its crowding problem, the public climate concerning crime and punishment, fiscal constraints and the like."³ However, knowing that the greatest danger lies with inaction, concerned professionals and citizens are working to improve conditions in our Nation's prisons. The National Institute of Justice presents this information package as part of that combined effort.

Prison Construction/Surplus Property

Increasing prison capacity by constructing new facilities is traditionally seen as a logical solution to crowded prisons. The 1981 Attorney General's Task Force on Violent Crime recommended legislation to assist with prison construction. The recommendations called for \$2 billion over a 4-year period to be made available for construction of correctional facilities to States that would contribute 25 percent of construction costs.⁴

According to the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), all but a few States have either recently opened new facilities or are constructing or planning to construct them. Construction costs are high. The Criminal Justice Institute reports that 90 State prisons were under construction during 1982 at a cost of nearly \$800 million. According to the American Correctional Association, while building a maximum security prison costs an average of \$50,000 per inmate⁵, the cost of constructing correctional facilities varies considerably among jurisdictions.

Arkansas estimates construction of a maximum security facility on State-owned land to be \$30,000 per cell; in Missouri, a maximum security diagnostic center on State-owned land is estimated at \$72,000 per cell; a new \$65,000 per cell unit on State-owned land in New Hampshire has been built; a new maximum security facility in New Mexico is estimated at \$60,000 per cell; and two new 512-bed maximum security facilities in New York are estimated at \$100,000 per cell. An even larger number of medium security institutions are being constructed or planned at a typical cost per cell from \$50,000 to \$75,000. The wide variation of costs per cell is due to variations in costs of labor and materials and to the location of the facility within the State.

Most prison construction is being funded by legislative appropriation, but a number of States have put prison construction bond issues on the ballot with varying success. Voters in New Jersey and California approved prison and jail construction bonds totaling \$450 million in the November 1982 elections.⁶ Earlier that year, California also passed a \$495 million bond issue for building new prisons, passed by a vote of 56 percent to 44 percent.⁷ In 1981, Rhode Island defeated a \$3.7 million bond issue by a 3 to 1 margin.⁸ That same year, New York State narrowly defeated a \$500 million prison construction bond issue.⁹ In 1983, construction funded through bond issues was begun or planned in Alabama, Alaska, Georgia, Kentucky, Missouri, New Hampshire, Montana, South Carolina, Washington, and Wisconsin.¹⁰ The Mississippi legislature concluded the 1983 session by approving a \$51 million prison construction program.

Responding to the prison crowding crisis by constructing more prisons is not always a promising approach, because of the high costs and the length of time--often several years--involved in building prisons. Also, budget cutbacks have made additional construction a luxury that many jurisdictions cannot afford. Construction, that often takes years to complete, cannot always help the present crisis.

Another method of increasing prison capacity involves the use of surplus Federal property. In 1981, the Attorney General's Task Force on Violent Crime recommended legislation to allow surplus Federal properties to be transferred at no cost to States for use as maximum and medium security correctional facilities.¹¹ As of early 1984, the recommended legislation remains stalled on Capitol Hill¹² despite support by President Reagan, General Services Administra-

tion (GSA) officials, and more than 55 backers of the bill including the American Correctional Association, International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Association of Attorney Generals, and the National Governors Association.

However, in July 1982, the Attorney General did establish a surplus properties clearinghouse, located in the Bureau of Prisons, to assist State and local correctional agencies in identifying and acquiring suitable surplus property.¹³ Although surplus properties cannot be transferred cost-free, they can be granted, leased, or sold on the condition that the correctional facilities emphasize vocational or educational training, adult basic education, or public service work.

According to the United States Bureau of Prisons, Office of Planning, 10 Federal properties are now being used by State correctional facilities, including one 1961 donation. These properties are providing approximately 4,000 additional beds.

- In 1961, 67 acres of an Air Force Station in Charlestown, Maine, were donated for use as a medium security facility. Inmates there are participating in intensive vocational/educational programming.
- In Ohio, the State government purchased property at a cost of \$8.5 million to house 2,000 inmates in a medium security facility.
- McNeil Island, Washington, a century-old Federal prison, which had been leased to the State for use as a State prison for approximately \$36,000 per month, was recently granted to the State.
- The Department of the Army leased the stockade at Fort Dix, New Jersey, to help the State house more than 500 inmates.
- New York is leasing a Federal radar facility in Watertown for use as a medium security facility housing more than 200 inmates.
- In Minden, Nevada, the State was granted property to house 44 inmates in a medium security detention facility.
- In Dade County, Florida, a former Hawk Missile site was purchased by the State for \$85,000 to house 250 inmates in a work release facility.
- Branchville, Indiana, is the site of a 350-bed facility granted for use by inmates participating in adult basic education programs.
- In Opa-Locka, Florida, a 150-bed halfway house is being constructed on land the State purchased from the Federal Government.
- A work release center is under construction at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, on land leased from the Federal Government.

Requests to acquire Federal facilities are under consideration in Louisiana, Hawaii, and California.¹⁴

Although building more prisons and acquiring surplus Federal property will not alone solve the prison population problem, it does broaden the States' alternatives as they try to find ways to constitutionally and humanely deal with the increasing numbers of offenders.

Selective Incapacitation

Selective incapacitation is another alternative that, rather than increasing prison space, views the available space as a limited resource to be used more efficiently. Peter Greenwood's 6-year study of selective incapacitation, sponsored by the National Institute of Justice, has received both strong support and vigorous criticism.

Greenwood developed his concept in response to a criminal justice system he describes as "...deprived of rehabilitation as an organizing theme, pressed by a fearful and dissatisfied public to provide greater protection from violent crimes, saddled with dangerously overcrowded and decrepit prisons, and facing the prospect of severely limited resources to carry out its functions."¹⁵ The study uses inmate response to seven questions, ranging from previous criminal history to employment history and drug use, to divide offenders into groups with a low, medium, or high risk of recidivism.

Greenwood claims that lengthening the sentences of high-risk offenders would decrease crime by locking up more career criminals, while shortening the sentences of low-risk offenders would alleviate prison overcrowding, since most inmates fall into the low-risk category. Critics, and Greenwood himself, speak of the possibility of the system's high "false positive rates," which identify as "high risk" those who are not, and the questionable legality of using a scale that almost guarantees wide disparity in sentence lengths for persons convicted of identical crimes.

The Statistical Analysis Center for the Iowa Office of Planning and Programming has developed a prediction device similar to Greenwood's that exhibits a high percentage of accuracy in predicting violence and recidivism among inmates in the State. Iowa's research and experience support Greenwood's theory that a small group of highly active criminals account for most of the recidivism.¹⁶ The prediction device is currently being used by the Iowa Board of Parole to increase the number of parolees while simultaneously decreasing the incidence of new violent crime among them.

Population Reduction Strategies

Other strategies that recognize the scarcity of prison space involve reducing population by diverting offenders from prison or by moving offenders quickly through the prison system, just as selective incapacitation does with the low-risk offender. "Front door" strategies divert offenders from prison to alternative sanctions, while "back door" mechanisms accelerate the inmate's progress through the prison system and back into the community.

Front Door Options

After offenders are convicted, but before they are sentenced, options exist for prescribing penalties other than incarceration. Although most of these options have been used for some time, there is increased emphasis on them today because of crowded prisons and limited budgets. Options for keeping offenders in the community range from community corrections acts to the more established practice of probation.

Community Corrections Acts. Community corrections legislation is one option receiving attention in many States where prison crowding is a problem.

Community corrections acts encourage the development of locally operated corrections programs for nonviolent offenders. According to the American Correctional Association Task Force on Community Corrections Legislation, a community corrections act is a "statewide mechanism included in legislation whereby funds are granted to local units of government and community agencies to develop and deliver front end alternative sanctions in lieu of State incarceration."¹⁷

The goals of community-based programs include establishing local sentencing for certain offenders, increasing opportunities for offenders to make restitution or perform community service, encouraging local involvement in program development, and reducing costs below the annual per-inmate cost of incarceration.

While many States now have programs that provide State subsidies for a variety of local correctional needs, four States--Minnesota, Oregon, Virginia, and Kansas--have developed comprehensive community corrections acts. Minnesota has done extensive research on its community corrections program, which, enacted in 1973, is the oldest in the country. An evaluation concluded that the community corrections act had increased the number of offenders treated in their own communities, had encouraged judges to use local programs, and had improved the quality of these programs, without increasing risk to community safety.¹⁸

The Oregon Community Corrections Act was the product of a task force representing legislators, the Governor, judges, and correctional officials. An evaluation of Oregon's Act revealed that it held down commitments to State institutions. Under the Act, community-based alternatives were developed and expanded, including probation services, alcohol and drug counseling, community services programs, and restitution.¹⁹

A 1982 evaluation of Virginia's Community Diversion Incentive Act, passed in 1980, found that it made available 200 beds at an annual savings of \$865,000 for the State.²⁰ The National Center for State Courts has recently received a grant from the National Institute of Corrections to study the appropriate role of community corrections in Kansas.²¹

In Missouri, a bill establishing community-based treatment projects as sentencing alternatives for offenders who would otherwise go to prison was signed into law recently. Modeled after the Minnesota community corrections legislation, the programs will be administered by the Missouri Board of Probation and Parole.²²

Community corrections legislation offers States the option of establishing reasonable, safe, and productive local alternatives to prison crowding or construction, which can be an integral part of a States' broader strategy to utilize limited prison resources.

Restitution. Recent legislation has also made restitution a more available option to incarceration. Prior to the adoption of the Victim and Witness Protection Act of 1982, Federal courts could impose restitution orders only when the sentencing court included them as a condition of probation. The 1982 Act requires the Federal Courts to seriously consider restitution as an additional sanction to any authorized disposition.²³ If the Act is successful, it will serve as an impetus for States to adopt similar legislation. However, if diversion programs like restitution are to be effective mechanisms for alleviating the prison crowding crisis, restitution must be used as an alternative to incarceration rather than just as a supplement to existing sanctions.²⁴

The State of Texas is encouraging the use of restitution as an alternative to incarceration in an effort to deal with its prison crowding problem. The Texas Adult Probation Commission recently awarded more than \$1.6 million in funding to 11 local adult probation departments interested in restitution centers. Because preparation for a restitution center is complex, the Commission has separated its funding into planning and implementation phases.²⁵ The State's first restitution center was recently opened in Fort Worth with 45 beds and estimated daily costs of approximately \$28 per resident. Residents pay room and board on a sliding scale.²⁶

Georgia currently has 12 restitution/diversion centers that serve as alternatives to imprisonment. The program began in 1975 with one small restitution center and has expanded as the State's prison population continues to grow.²⁷

The National Institute of Justice has sponsored research to learn more about restitution. The Michael J. Hindelang Criminal Justice Research Center at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Albany, developed for the Institute an experimental design to determine at what stages of the criminal justice process restitution could be an effective tool.²⁸ The University of Minnesota has synthesized evaluation research on the use of restitution and community service as a sanction for adult offenders.²⁹ The use of restitution as a sanction is gaining in importance as all levels of the criminal justice system cope with crowded prisons.

Community Service. While restitution is a court-imposed sanction requiring the offender to make a payment of money or service to the crime victim, community service is symbolic restitution paid to the community by the offender in the form of nonsalaried service for a specified time. During the past decade, stimulated by Britain's successful experience, community service sentencing programs have been developing throughout this country. The National Institute of Corrections has issued a report describing more than 130 programs using community service orders as an alternative criminal justice sanction.³⁰

As with restitution, the challenge in planning and implementing community service programs is to use them as true alternatives to incarceration, rather than just as additional sanctions. In Mississippi, the restitution and community service order programs accept only those offenders who have already been sentenced to prison, ensuring that the programs are used as alternatives to incarceration.³¹ With limited fiscal resources available to correctional officials, it is understandable that legislators, judges, and other criminal justice officials are considering community-based sanctions for those offenders who can safely remain in the community.

Probation. A more traditional method of keeping offenders in the community is probation. In 1983, 62.6 percent of the adults under correctional supervision were on probation, by far the most widely used form of correctional supervision.³²

Probation costs are just a fraction of incarceration costs, according to figures recently released by the Texas Adult Probation Commission. Texas' 1982 daily operational costs for probation were \$.98 per person as opposed to \$12.11 for an inmate. These figures, based on expenditures for personnel, facilities, utilities, and equipment, underscore the economy of this alternative to incarceration.³³

Although courts generally use probation as an alternative to prison, some courts have been given discretion to combine probation with a prison term. Some combinations are:

- Split sentences, where the court specifies a period of incarceration to be followed by a period of probation.
- Shock probation, where an offender sentenced to prison is released after a period of confinement (the shock) and then resentenced to probation.³⁴ (Although the judge is aware that the prisoner will be resentenced, the offender is not.)

Another option involving probation that is receiving attention is the use of intensive supervised probation. While such programs are not new, the expectation of the programs has changed over the years. Today, the aim of most intensive supervision programs is to reduce prison crowding without endangering the safety of the community.³⁵ Therefore, they are structured to make probation a more serious sanction and a true alternative to incarceration.

In Georgia, the Intensive Probation Supervision (IPS) program is an important part of the State's effort to address the problem of prison crowding. The program provides the courts with alternatives, short of incarceration, for those offenders they feel can be safely supervised in the community. A team of two probation officers supervises a caseload of no more than 25 probationers, ensuring near-daily contact with the offenders. Program elements include:

- Weekly staff/probationer contacts, ranging from a minimum of five times per week in the initial 3-month phase to twice per week in the final 6- to 12-month phase;
- A minimum of 132 hours of community service;
- Mandatory curfew;
- Weekly check of local arrest records; and
- Routine drug/alcohol screening.

The daily cost of this program is \$4.75 per offender, compared to prison costs of \$24.61. The program's operating costs are supported fully by probation fees of \$10 to \$50, which the probationer is charged to offset the cost of supervision.

The primary appeal of the Georgia program is that it presents an opportunity to keep some offenders in the community under conditions that are strict and punitive, but that do not compromise public safety. In an effort to learn more about IPS, the National Institute of Justice has funded an advisory board to evaluate Georgia's program. New York, New Jersey, Texas, and Washington also have operational intensive supervised probation programs.³⁶ Even though probation programs do result in some reduction of populations, they are just one of the components in the systemwide planning needed to reduce crowding.

Back Door Options

Many of the back door options that move offenders more quickly through the prison system to the community have been in use for some time, with the exception of

emergency release. However, because of the scarcity of space, these options are being used more frequently and innovatively.

Emergency Release. As crowding becomes more severe and State governments are less able to appropriate funds for prison construction, many States are adopting emergency early release mechanisms. Debate on emergency release procedures has centered on the potential risk to the public safety by releasing offenders before the end of their terms.

The emergency mechanisms through which States release prisoners generally involve the legislature setting capacity limits that, when reached, set in motion mechanisms for the early release of prisoners. Oklahoma and Michigan are both operating under such legislative directives. The Oklahoma legislature passed a joint resolution in April 1980 that fixed the maximum capacity of facilities at 50 square feet per cell per inmate and 75 square feet per inmate for dormitory space. When capacity reaches these space limitations, the Pardon and Parole Board is required to consider for parole all nonviolent offenders within 6 months of their scheduled releases.³⁷

In 1981, the Michigan legislature passed the Prison Overcrowding Emergency Powers Act, which provided a four-step approach to bring prison population to rated capacity:

- The Corrections Commissioner must notify the Governor when the prison population exceeds capacity for 30 consecutive days.
- The Governor must declare a state of emergency whereby all minimum sentences are reduced by 90 days, creating a pool of inmates eligible for review, on a case-by-case basis, for early release through parole.
- If the 90-day reduction in sentence does not reduce the prison population to 95 percent of the rated capacity within 90 days of the declared state of emergency, minimum sentences are again reduced by 90 days.
- The Governor is required to rescind the state of emergency at any point during the process if the Corrections Commission certifies that the population has been reduced to 95 percent of rated capacity.³⁸

A "prison overcrowding emergency" has been declared six times since the Act was passed in 1981, releasing over 2,500 inmates. Variations on the Michigan Act are in effect in Georgia, Iowa, Ohio, Connecticut, Illinois, and Oklahoma.³⁹ Many other States are considering similar legislation.

In a recent study financed by the National Institute of Justice, researchers at Johns Hopkins University have developed a short-term strategy that provides another method to determine who is eligible for emergency release.⁴⁰ The plan relies on cooperation between the judiciary, correctional officials, and paroling agencies. It requires the assessment of the probable (or actual) intent of the incarcerative sanction and the statistical risk of recidivism on an inmate-by-inmate basis by a panel of experts, including judges, psychologists, and classification personnel. The authors maintain that if intent and risk are considered simultaneously, it is possible to build and monitor a flexible early release decisionmaking matrix that identifies offenders according to their potential for early release, while also serving to maintain the public safety. The strategy

can be monitored and evaluated so modifications can be made as necessary to meet the requirements of court-ordered population reductions.

Although emergency early release policies have periodically returned some States' prison populations to designed capacities, continuous long-term use of emergency early release may exhaust the pool of inmates who can be released without detriment to the public safety. Each time the release mechanism is triggered, the number of inmates eligible for release becomes smaller. However, while not panaceas, emergency early release policies are useful mechanisms for providing immediate relief from the crowding crisis while long-term alternatives are developed.

Parole. Parole, a traditional form of early release and the most common form of correctional supervision after probation, is being used in new ways. Even though some States no longer use parole, during 1982 the adult parole population rose from approximately 18,000 to 243,880.⁴¹ American Prisons and Jails, the 1980 5-volume landmark study sponsored by the National Institute of Justice, noted this practice: "...while the explicit criteria for parole release are cast in terms of individual rehabilitation and community safety, the discretionary authority to parole is frequently used as a mechanism to control population by reducing time served when crowding occurs...."⁴² In order to accelerate release, many States are holding parole hearings more frequently. Officials are also preparing release papers before the inmates' departure dates in order not to delay parole when the inmate becomes eligible.

Good Time. The use of good time, another traditional form of prisoner release, is assuming new importance as prison populations increase and some States abolish parole. The needs of correctional officials to control prisoners for the efficient management of an institution, to have a safety valve to relieve prison crowding, and to enhance the rehabilitative prospects of inmates were all contributing factors that led to the development of good time in 1817.⁴³

Today, one type of good time program rewards inmates by taking days off their sentences for good conduct, while another rewards them for good conduct plus participation in either work or education programs. The following table presents a summary of good time provisions nationwide.⁴⁴ (See table on page 11.)

In States with indeterminate sentencing structures, good time credit may be subtracted either from maximum terms to provide early mandatory release or from minimum terms to accelerate parole eligibility. In determinate sentencing structures, credit is deducted from the term imposed at sentencing.⁴⁵ Good time is typically awarded and administered by a State's department of corrections or by individual prison wardens, but some good time policies are written into State statutes. The amount of good time that can be accrued varies among States from 5 to 45 days per month.⁴⁶

Variations in the formula used for calculating good time and its application have substantial effects on the extent to which the use of good time actually reduces sentences. Inmates in Indiana can earn good time credits on a one-to-one basis for every day served, reducing sentences in some cases by as much as one-half. The Illinois Department of Corrections has applied good time as a direct response to crowding by administratively lowering their behavior standards for granting good time credit. When the population exceeds system capacity, 30 days of meritorious good time are awarded to eligible inmates who are within 30 days of mandatory release, if they have no negative disciplinary infraction in the previous

Good Time Provisions Nationwide

All but four jurisdictions have provisions for the administrative reduction of the length of time spent in prison

KEY
B Reductions for good behavior
P Reductions for program participation

	B	P		B	P
Federal system	B	P	Montana	B	P
District of Columbia	B	-	Nebraska	B	P
Alabama	B	P	Nevada	B	P
Alaska	B	-	New Hampshire	-	P
Arizona	B	-	New Jersey	B	P
Arkansas	-	P	New Mexico	B	P
California	-	P	New York	B	-
Colorado	B	P	North Carolina	B	P
Connecticut	B	P	North Dakota	B	P
Delaware	B	P	Ohio	B	-
Florida	B	P	Oklahoma	-	P
Georgia	B	-	Oregon	B	P
Hawaii	-	-	Pennsylvania	-	-
Idaho	B	P	Rhode Island	B	P
Illinois	B	P	South Carolina	B	P
Indiana	B	-	South Dakota	B	-
Iowa	B	P	Tennessee	-	-
Kansas	B	P	Texas	B	P
Kentucky	B	P	Utah	-	-
Louisiana	-	P	Vermont	B	P
Maine	B	P	Virginia	B	P
Maryland	B	P	Washington	B	-
Massachusetts	B	P	West Virginia	B	P
Michigan	B	P	Wisconsin	B	P
Minnesota	B	-	Wyoming	B	P
Mississippi	B	P			
Missouri	B	P			

As of January 1983

6-month period. If that does not bring the population below capacity, the procedure is applied to those within 60 days of release and, then 90 days if necessary.⁴⁷

California recently abolished good time for meritorious conduct alone. All prisoners sentenced after January 1983 must earn good time through participation in a work or education program. A new law allows a half-time cut in sentencing while the old law gave inmates a one-third time cut regardless of how they spent their time. Through this innovation, State officials hope to ease the severe crowding that has plagued the California prison system.⁴⁸

Commutation. Prison crowding has also led to the use of commutation to reduce prison populations in Georgia, Maryland, Oklahoma, Utah, and Wyoming. When a sentence is commuted, a prisoner is released earlier than anticipated, usually to parole supervision. In most States, the power of commutation is reserved for the governor, who, in many cases relies on an advisory board for case review and recommendations. In other States, authority to commute rests with a special board.⁴⁹

Commutation can involve substantial numbers of inmates. In 1970, the Governor of Maryland commuted the sentences of 1,209 inmates to alleviate overcrowding.⁵⁰ In Georgia, the Bureau of Pardons and Paroles has commuted the sentences of more than 8,000 inmates since 1979 in an effort to keep the prison population under control. Mississippi utilizes a variation of executive clemency, called executive suspension, which frees inmates for 90 days at a time. The suspension may be renewed repeatedly until a prisoner's term expires.

While not a particularly efficient population control mechanism, commutation as a safety valve may relieve the symptoms of crowding by permitting a trickle, rather than a flow, of inmates out of prison earlier than would otherwise be permissible.⁵¹

Furloughs. Phased reentry programs, such as furloughs, ease the offender's transition from prison at the same time that they ease crowding in prisons. Furloughs are authorized as unescorted leaves from confinement granted for designated time periods to reintegrate the offender into the community before the formal sentence expires.

States are utilizing furloughs in a number of ways. Connecticut authorized furloughs in 1976 to facilitate community reintegration and to reduce prison population. The law authorizing the release of approved prisoners for 15-day periods has resulted in the Department of Corrections granting back-to-back furloughs to a maximum of 120 days.⁵²

The Delaware Supervised Custody Program, a comprehensive phased reentry program that combines elements of prerelease, work release, and extended furloughs, was implemented in February 1980. The program represents a systems approach to offender reintegration and to overcrowding and provides for supervision to safeguard public safety. Since its implementation in February 1980 through January 1982, 1,090 inmates have been released to supervised custody.⁵³ Before the program began, the prison population had been increasing at a rate of 16 inmates per month. From February 1980 to January 1982, the prison population increased by only 26 prisoners. Although the small size of Delaware's prison system may account for the effectiveness of the Supervised Custody Program as a population

control mechanism, the fact remains that many inmates are being successfully controlled under long-term supervision in the community.

South Carolina initiated a supervised furlough program that is similar in many respects to the Delaware Supervised Custody Program. The program is part of a comprehensive Parole and Community Corrections Act, which took effect on July 1, 1981. In July 1983, 125 prisoners were released under this program. Eligibility is restricted to prisoners committed for nonviolent offenses, sentenced 5 years or less, who are within 6 months of completing their sentence. The prisoner must also have a clean disciplinary record for 6 months.⁵⁴ Under South Carolina's program, inmates must meet all parole requirements with the exception of employment. When employment is secured, they are transferred into the regular parole program. Furloughs are one of many options the criminal justice system is exercising to decrease prison populations in response to severe prison crowding.

Population-Sensitive Incarceration Strategies

The final strategies to be discussed involve the establishment of sentencing and parole guidelines that most effectively utilize existing prison capacity and the development of prison population forecasting techniques. The use of these strategies assumes that the allocation of scarce resources through the establishment of prison capacity and population levels are policy choices to be made by criminal justice decisionmakers.

Sentencing Guidelines

The Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines⁵⁵ are a good example of a planned population-sensitive incarceration policy, developed by a legislatively established commission, that provides specific guidance on who should be imprisoned and for how long. The Commission's mandate was to determine the circumstances under which imprisonment would be proper and to establish presumptive fixed sentences for such offenders based on reasonable offense and offender characteristics. The Commission was directed to provide guidelines that would reduce sentencing disparity, and that would do it within a manner consistent with available correctional resources.

In determining presumptive sentences, the Commission was to "take into substantial consideration current sentencing and releasing practices and correctional resources, including but not limited to the capacities of local and state correctional facilities." The Commission's greatest concern was that sentence lengths not be set that would increase the size of the prison population. There is widespread feeling that the success of the Minnesota Commission in producing feasible guidelines was its decision to interpret the mandate to consider correctional resources as a directive to establish an absolute limit on future prison populations.

Because the severity of the current conviction offense and criminal history of the offender were the most important factors in establishing sanctions, the Commission determined that appropriate sanctions should be proportioned to a combination of those two factors.

Accordingly, the Commission determined presumptive sentences using a two-way grid where criminal offenses are divided into 10 severity levels on the vertical dimension of the grid, while the horizontal axis displays a 7-category criminal history score based on prior felony record, custody status at time of offense,

prior misdemeanor record, and prior juvenile record for young adult felons. (See table on page 15.)

The heavy black line running across the grid represents the dispositional policy of the Commission. The presumptive disposition for cases falling above the line is a stayed or probationary sentence, while the disposition for cases falling below the line is imprisonment. The sentencing judge may deviate from a sentence within that presumptive range only when the circumstances are "substantial and compelling." In such a case, the judge must provide written reasons for the sentence deviation.

The State of Florida is also developing sentencing guidelines. The National Institute of Justice awarded a grant to the Florida office of the State Courts Administrator in 1979 to test the feasibility of developing and implementing sentencing guidelines and to evaluate the effectiveness of sentencing guidelines as a mechanism for enhancing sentencing consistency across different jurisdictions within the State. In April 1982, Florida Governor Graham created a sentencing guidelines commission charged with the development and implementation of uniform sentencing guidelines.⁵⁶

Florida's sentencing guidelines were completed in July 1983, following a period of development and monitoring by a 15-member sentencing commission. Five factors approved for the guidelines were primary conviction offense, additional conviction offense, prior offenses, legal status at time of offense, and victim injury.⁵⁷

The California and New York sentencing guideline bills, introduced in 1982 and 1983, respectively, are variants of Minnesota's Sentencing Guidelines Act. As in Minnesota, these bills would create State sentencing commissions to establish sentencing ranges for offenses based on both the type of offense and the seriousness of the offender's criminal record. The California bill requires the commission to reserve whatever excess prison capacity is created by the guidelines for increased sentences for dangerous offenders.⁵⁸

Six other court systems--Maryland, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin--have sentencing guidelines that currently apply only in certain jurisdictions or to a limited range of offenses. In some cases, these selectively applied guidelines represent the pilot phase of a study that may eventually lead to the establishment of a statewide sentencing guidelines policy.⁵⁹

Parole Guidelines

The use of parole guidelines to formally establish parole release dates is another example of a population-sensitive approach to crowded prisons that determines release policies based on current population levels. Parole guidelines use a matrix that factors in current offense, prior convictions, substance abuse history, and prison behavior to prescribe a sentence range that is then used by the parole board to determine release dates. According to a recent Bureau of Justice Statistics report, 14 States, the District of Columbia, and the Federal system have systemwide parole guidelines.⁶⁰ Guidelines for paroling decisions are written into statutes in the Federal system (1973), Florida (1978), and New York (1977). Guidelines for paroling decisions have been made systemwide policy but are not written into statutes in Alaska (1981), California (CYA, 1978), the District of Columbia (1982), Georgia (1980), Maryland (1979), Missouri (1982), New

SENTENCING GUIDELINES GRID

Presumptive Sentence Lengths in Months

Italicized numbers within the grid denote the range within which a judge may sentence without the sentence being deemed a departure.

SEVERITY LEVELS OF CONVICTION OFFENSE		CRIMINAL HISTORY SCORE						
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6 or more
<i>Unauthorized Use of Motor Vehicle</i>	I	12*	12*	12*	15	18	21	24
<i>Theft Related Crimes (\$150-\$2500)</i>	II	12*	12*	14	17	20	23	27 25-29
<i>Theft Crimes (\$150-\$2500)</i>	III	12*	13	16	19	22 21-23	27 25-29	32 30-34
<i>Burglary - Felony Intent Receiving Stolen Goods (\$150-\$2500)</i>	IV	12*	15	18	21	25 24-26	32 30-34	41 37-45
<i>Simple Robbery</i>	V	18	23	27	30 29-31	38 36-40	46 43-49	54 50-58
<i>Assault, 2nd Degree</i>	VI	21	26	30	34 33-35	44 42-46	54 50-58	65 60-70
<i>Aggravated Robbery</i>	VII	24 23-25	32 30-34	41 38-44	49 45-53	65 60-70	81 75-87	97 90-104
<i>Assault, 1st Degree</i>	VIII	43 41-45	54 50-58	65 60-70	76 71-81	95 89-101	113 106-120	132 124-140
<i>Criminal Sexual Conduct, 1st Degree</i>								
<i>Murder, 3rd Degree</i>	IX	97 94-100	119 116-122	127 124-130	149 143-155	176 168-184	205 195-215	230 218-242
<i>Murder, 2nd Degree</i>	X	116 111-121	140 133-147	162 153-171	203 192-214	243 231-255	284 270-298	324 309-339

1st Degree Murder is excluded from the guidelines by law and continues to have a mandatory life sentence.

*one year and one day

Jersey (1980), Oklahoma (1980), Oregon (1979), Pennsylvania (1980), Utah (1979), and Washington (1979). Guidelines for paroling decisions are selectively applied in California (1977) and Minnesota (1976). While the effect of parole guidelines on reducing prison crowding is unclear, they do increase the predictability of prison terms, thereby allowing correctional officials to have a more reliable basis for projecting capacity requirements.

Forecasting Prison Populations

Efforts are also being made to develop methods to predict future prison populations. Population projections are a useful planning tool not only for determining numbers of additional cells to build, but also for developing sentencing guidelines and other population control policies. The need to develop accurate methods that will produce reliable forecasts of the composition and size of prison populations has become critical as the demand for correctional facilities and programs increases at the same time that available resources decrease.

In January 1982, the Bureau of Justice Statistics funded a national workshop on forecasting prison population. The purpose of the workshop was to bring together correctional administrators who were seeking to develop procedures for predicting prison populations with individuals who had developed successful procedures. The workshop provided a forum for technology exchange and an opportunity to discuss various policy and administrative issues inherent in forecasting prison populations. The proceedings describe technical approaches to projecting future prison populations. Some of the techniques described are simple while others involve sophisticated statistical techniques useful to departments with advanced automated information systems.⁶¹ Also discussed are administrative and policy issues in population forecasting, as well as basic information to help the prison administrator begin the involved process of forecasting.

Conclusion

Options to alleviate the prison crowding crisis are subject to many constraints, including the lack of economic resources and the social and political milieu within which the criminal justice system must operate. An enlightened public policy is needed to implement the many innovative strategies available to alleviate crowding.

A National Institute of Justice study, The Correctional Crisis: Prison Populations and Public Policy, reported on reasons why correctional reform efforts vigorously undertaken in the late seventies in the State of Maryland failed by the early eighties. The final report, which has implications for all correctional systems, stressed that, "Little in the way of effective change is likely to occur if we continue to view prison crowding as a crisis in corrections. Prison crowding is a crisis in the entire criminal justice system, and the active, aggressive, and coordinated efforts of the entire system are needed for its resolution."⁶²

The many strategies discussed in this information package are indicative of the creative efforts being exerted by researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to find answers to the problem of prison crowding.

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Appendix A

PENDING LITIGATION

A report on prison conditions, released in December 1983 by the National Prison Project of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), shows the following legal activity for the respective States. The report includes court decrees or pending litigation, involving the entire State prison system or the major institutions in the State that deal with overcrowding and/or the total conditions of confinement. It does not include jails except for the District of Columbia.

1. Alabama: The entire State prison system is under court order dealing with total conditions and overcrowding. To relieve overcrowding and back-up of State prisoners in county jails, 400 State prisoners (number later modified) were ordered released. A second prisoner release order was issued; a stay was granted; the order was thereafter vacated. The district court entered an order establishing a four-person committee to monitor compliance with previous orders. A further release order was entered by the district court in November 1983, and applications for a stay were denied by the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court.
2. Arizona: The State penitentiary is being operated under a series of court orders and consent decrees dealing with overcrowding, classification, and other conditions.
3. California: The State penitentiary at San Quentin is under court order on overcrowding and conditions. Order includes requirement that a special master be appointed.
4. Colorado: The State maximum security penitentiary is under court order on total conditions and overcrowding. The prison was declared unconstitutional and ordered to be ultimately closed.
5. Connecticut: The Hartford Correctional Center operated by the State is under court order dealing with overcrowding and some conditions.
6. Delaware: The State penitentiary is under court order dealing primarily with overcrowding and some conditions.
7. Florida: The entire State prison system is under court order dealing with overcrowding. A settlement on overcrowding has been approved.
8. Georgia: The State penitentiary at Reidsville is under court order on total conditions and overcrowding. A special master was appointed in June 1979.
9. Hawaii: The State penitentiary in Honolulu is being challenged in a totality of conditions suit.
10. Idaho: The women's prison is being challenged on total conditions.
11. Illinois: The State penitentiary at Menard is under court order on total conditions and overcrowding. The State penitentiary at Pontiac was under a court order enjoining double-celling and dealing with overcrowding. Litigation is pending at other institutions.

12. Indiana: The State prison at Pendleton was found unconstitutional on total conditions and overcrowding. The State penitentiary at Michigan City is under a court order on overcrowding and other conditions.
13. Iowa: The State penitentiary is under court order on overcrowding and a variety of conditions.
14. Kansas: The State penitentiary is under a consent decree on total conditions.
15. Kentucky: The State penitentiary and reformatory are under court order by virtue of a consent decree on overcrowding and some conditions. The women's State prison is under court order on a variety of conditions.
16. Louisiana: The State penitentiary is under court order dealing with overcrowding and a variety of conditions.
17. Maine: The State penitentiary was challenged on overcrowding and a variety of conditions. The trial court granted relief only as to restraint cells and otherwise dismissed the complaint, appeal pending.
18. Maryland: The two State penitentiaries were declared unconstitutional on overcrowding.
19. Massachusetts: The maximum security unit at the State prison in Walpole is being challenged on total conditions. A decision for the prison officials was affirmed in part and reversed in part and remanded.
20. Michigan: The women's prison is under court order. The entire men's prison system is under court order on overcrowding, and the State prison at Jackson is being challenged on other conditions.
21. Mississippi: The entire State prison system is under court order dealing with overcrowding and total conditions.
22. Missouri: The State penitentiary is under court order on overcrowding and some conditions.
23. Nevada: The State penitentiary is under court order on overcrowding and total conditions. New addition to State penitentiary under court order on total conditions.
24. New Hampshire: The State penitentiary is under court order dealing with total conditions and overcrowding.
25. New Mexico: The State penitentiary is under court order on overcrowding and total conditions. A special master was appointed in June 1983.
26. North Carolina: A lawsuit was filed in 1978 at Central Prison in Raleigh on overcrowding and conditions and a similar lawsuit is pending involving the women's prison.

27. Ohio: The State prison at Lucasville was under court order on overcrowding. The State prison at Columbus was under court order resulting from a consent decree on total conditions and overcrowding and was required to be closed in 1983, actually closing in September 1984. The State prison at Mansfield is being challenged on total conditions.
28. Oklahoma: The State penitentiary is under court order on total conditions, and the entire State prison system is under court order on overcrowding. The district court's decision to retain jurisdiction to insure continued compliance was upheld.
29. Oregon: The State penitentiary was under court order on overcrowding. Appeal pending; stay granted; stay vacated. On remand, the district court determined there was no 8th amendment violation.
30. Pennsylvania: The women's prison is being challenged on conditions and practices.
31. Rhode Island: The entire State system is under court order on overcrowding and total conditions. A special master was appointed in September 1977.
32. South Carolina: The State penitentiary is being challenged on overcrowding and conditions. The entire prison system is being challenged on overcrowding and conditions.
33. South Dakota: The State penitentiary at Sioux Falls is being challenged on a variety of conditions.
34. Tennessee: The entire State prison system declared unconstitutional on total conditions. Decision in August 1978 with preliminary order closing one unit by State court judge. The entire system was held unconstitutional in the Federal court. Population ordered reduced and a special master appointed.
35. Texas: The entire State prison system has been declared unconstitutional on overcrowding and conditions. A special master was appointed. On appeal, the district court order was affirmed in part, vacated in part, and vacated without prejudice in part for further hearings.
36. Utah: The State penitentiary is being operated under a consent decree on overcrowding and some conditions.
37. Vermont: State prison closed.
38. Virginia: The State prison at Powhatan is under a consent decree dealing with overcrowding and conditions. The maximum security prison at Mecklenburg is under court order dealing with various practices and conditions. The State penitentiary at Richmond is being challenged on the totality of conditions. Trial court decision dismissed the complaint. Appeal pending.
39. Washington: The State reformatory is being challenged on overcrowding and conditions. The State penitentiary at Walla Walla has been declared unconstitutional on overcrowding and conditions. A special master has been appointed.

40. West Virginia: The State penitentiary at Moundsville is under court order on overcrowding and conditions.
41. Wisconsin: The State prison at Waupun is being challenged on overcrowding.
42. Wyoming: The State penitentiary is being operated under terms of a stipulation and consent decree. The Federal court relinquished jurisdiction in early 1983.
43. District of Columbia: The District jails are under court order on overcrowding and conditions. On remand, court ordered limit on period of double-celling and increase in staff. New trial held on overcrowding and conditions in November 1983. District Prison at Lorton is under a court order on overcrowding and conditions.
44. Puerto Rico: The Commonwealth Penitentiary is under court order on overcrowding and conditions. The entire commonwealth prison system is under court order dealing with overcrowding and conditions.
45. Virgin Islands: Territorial prison is under court order dealing with conditions and overcrowding.

Appendix B

SELECTED READINGS

Most of the documents listed below are available from the National Institute of Justice's information center, the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS). To avoid search charges, please include title and NCJ number, which is noted below for the document. There are several possible ways of ordering.

All documents are available for 4 weeks through interlibrary loan. Ask your public, organizational, or academic library to send a standard interlibrary loan form to:

Document Loan Program
National Institute of Justice/NCJRS
Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20850

Most documents bearing NCJ numbers are available in microfiche at no cost. You may order up to 10 titles at a time from:

Microfiche Program
National Institute of Justice/NCJRS
Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20850

Finally, some documents are available free in paper copy from NCJRS. To learn whether a specific title is still available, telephone 301/251-5500 and ask to speak with a corrections specialist.

If you are near a member library of the Criminal Justice Information Exchange Group, you may be able to get your document more quickly through it. To learn more of CJIE and whether there is a member library near you, write to:

Library Services
National Institute of Justice/NCJRS
Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20850

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Appendix C

RESOURCE LIST

Some of the national organizations with a special interest in corrections are listed below. The names of additional national organizations, as well as international and statewide groups, are available by calling a corrections specialist at NCJRS at (301) 251-5500.

American Correctional Association
4321 Hartwick Road, Suite L-208
College Park, MD 20740
301-699-7600

Offers education, training, and technical assistance to promote professional development and improved practices in correctional standards including personnel selection, employment, treatment, post-release adjustment, and methods of crime control and prevention. Publishes bimonthly magazine, Corrections Today and bimonthly newsletter, On the Line, as well as a number of publications related to probation, parole, juvenile justice, and adult and juvenile facilities.

Center for Effective Public Policy, Inc.
National Prison & Jail Overcrowding Project (NPJOP)
1411 Walnut Street, Suite 925
Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-569-0347

In 1982, the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) together with the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation (see separate entry) sponsored the Center for Effective Public Policy, Inc., to house the NPJOP. This project works with key decisionmakers in a State's criminal justice system to examine the factors responsible for prison and jail overcrowding and to develop and implement strategies to control the size of the prison population. Following are the addresses of the individual State projects:

Colorado Prison Overcrowding Project
Division of Criminal Justice
1325 South Colorado Boulevard, B-700
Denver, CO 80222
303-691-8131

Louisiana Governor's Task Force on Prison Overcrowding
1885 Wooddale Boulevard, Suite 610
Baton Rouge, LA 70806
504-925-4440

Michigan Prison Overcrowding Project, Inc.
MCCD
300 North Washington
G-52
Lansing, MI 48933
517-482-4162

Ohio Governor's Committee on Crowding
65 East State Street, Suite 312
Columbus, OH 43215
614-466-7686

Oregon Jail Overcrowding Project
1201 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-585-8351

Oregon Prison Overcrowding Project
718 West Burnside, Room 208
Portland, OR 97209
503-222-9546

South Carolina Prison & Jail Overcrowding Project
State Reorganization Commission
1105 Pendleton Street, Suite 231
Columbia, SC 29201
803-758-8743

Tennessee Population Management Project
Tennessee State Planning Office
1800 James K. Polk State Office Building
505 Deadrick Street
Nashville, TN 37219
615-741-1676

Edna McConnell Clark Foundation
250 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10017
212-986-7050

The purpose of the foundation's justice program is to reduce the country's reliance on prisons by funding research and services in all areas of criminal justice.

Commission on Accreditation for Corrections
6110 Executive Boulevard, Suite 600
Rockville, MD 20852
301-770-3097

In conjunction with the American Correctional Association, develops the only comprehensive set of standards to measure corrections programs. Sets standards on such issues as health care, hygiene, lighting, space, and staff-inmate ratios. Accredits prison facilities.

Contact, Inc.
Box 81826
Lincoln, NE 68501-1826
402-464-0602

This criminal justice information service collects and disseminates information. It publishes Corrections Compendium, which features up-to-date national surveys in correction topics.

Institute for Economic and Policy Studies
1018 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-549-7686

Provides information for public agencies on implementation of correctional standards, evaluation of prison industries, staffing, community treatment centers, and impact of sentencing legislation.

International Halfway House Association
Box 2337
Reston, VA 22090-1592
703-435-8221

Works with community-based treatment programs throughout the United States, Canada, and other countries. Programs include public information on crime, substance abuse, delinquency, and related social problems. Publishes monthly newsletter and directory of residential treatment centers; also, operates national workshop and institutes.

National Center for Institutions and Alternatives
814 North St. Asaph Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-684-0373

Goals include finding alternatives to institutionalization. Sponsors comprehensive alternative-to-prison sentencing plan. Publishes monthly newsletter--Institutions.

National Coalition for Jail Reform
1828 L Street NW.
Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20036
202-296-8630

National organization working to reform the nation's jails by educating the public concerning the unnecessary incarceration of selected individuals.

National Conference of State Legislatures
1125 17th Street, Suite 1500
Denver, CO 80202
303-292-6600

Acts as a clearinghouse to improve the effectiveness of State legislatures in the areas of criminal justice. Fosters interstate communication.

National Council on Crime and Delinquency
West Coast:
Research Center West
77 Maiden Lane
San Francisco, CA 94108
415-956-5651

Provides technical assistance for prison overcrowding problems as well as training and research in every phase of the criminal justice system including community-based corrections and juvenile delinquency.

National Institute of Corrections/Information Center
1790 30th Street, Suite 130
Boulder, CO 80301
303-444-1101

Serves as a national clearinghouse for collection and dissemination of information on corrections.

National Moratorium on Prison Construction
309 Pennsylvania Avenue SE.
Washington, DC 20003
202-547-3633

This group's goal is to coordinate efforts in the United States to reduce incarceration and to seek systematic alternatives to imprisonment. Works to halt all prison and jail expansion until all alternatives to incarceration are fully implemented. Publishes Jericho newsletter which includes data on new prison construction as well as on overcrowding. Distributes bibliographies, pamphlets, and monographs.

National Prison Project
1346 Connecticut Avenue NW.
Suite 1031
Washington, DC 20036
202-331-0500

Project of the American Civil Liberties Union established to protect prisoners' rights, to improve overall conditions in prisons, and to develop alternatives to incarceration. Provides materials, bibliographies, and legal briefs.

U.S. Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Prisons
National Institute of Corrections
320 First Street, NW.
Washington, DC 20534
202-724-3106

Provides training, technical assistance, information services, research, and assistance in evaluation and policy formation to improve prisons, jails, and community corrections.

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice/NCJRS
Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20850
301-251-5500
800-851-3420

The National Institute of Justice sponsors the National Criminal Justice Reference Service, which is an information center offering a variety of products and services in all areas of criminal justice. The center maintains a library and data base, disseminates information to practitioners and the public nationally and internationally, and provides a staff of reference specialists for individual inquiries in areas of juvenile justice, corrections, courts, police, victim dispute resolution, criminology and crime prevention.

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