

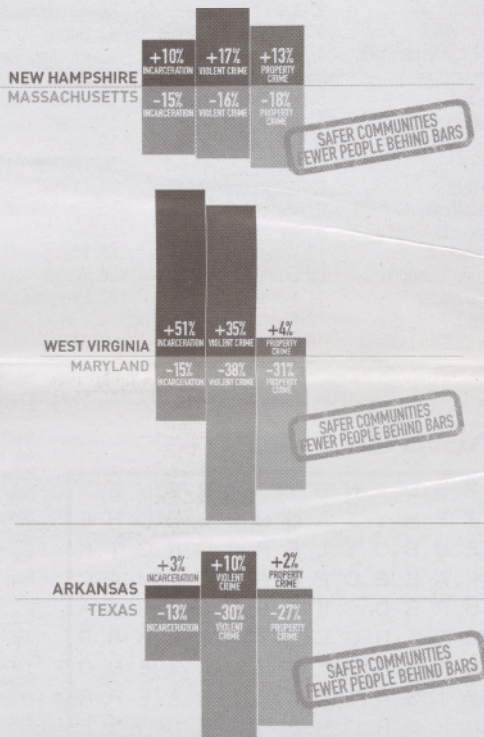
# WE CAN HAVE SAFER COMMUNITIES AND FEWER PEOPLE BEHIND BARS

Since 1990  
crime has declined  
**50%** nationwide<sup>1</sup>

Experts attribute 75%-90% of the decline to other factors like *economics, demographics, and policing.*<sup>2</sup>

There is no consistent and plausible evidence that harsher sentences deter crime.<sup>3</sup>

MANY STATES HAVE SUCCESSFULLY CUT BOTH CRIME AND INCARCERATION. IT'S TIME FOR OTHER STATES TO CATCH UP.



**IN FACT, MORE INCARCERATION CAN ACTUALLY CAUSE MORE CRIME.**

Probation  
Recidivism Rates

12%

vs

21%

Prison  
Recidivism Rates<sup>4</sup>

A review of 50 studies looking at over 336,000 people found that **longer prison sentences** were associated with a **3% increase in recidivism**, controlling for risk factors like substance abuse.<sup>5</sup>

We can make mass incarceration a thing of the past. For the last four decades, this country has relentlessly expanded the size of our criminal justice system, needlessly throwing away too many lives and wasting trillions of taxpayer dollars. But we are not stuck with a criminal justice system that is unproductive, wasteful, and dominated by racial disparities. Bad policies are made, and bad policies can be changed. Learn more at [www.aclu.org/smart-justice-fair-justice](http://www.aclu.org/smart-justice-fair-justice).



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