

FIGHTING JAIL EXPANSION: LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINES

Panelists:

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Hosted by:

Prison Policy Initiative

Welcome and Introductions

Overview

- In this Webinar, we will:
 - Identify common narratives used to drive jail expansion.
 - Discuss how jail expansion generally progresses and identify key players and points of intervention.
 - Deconstructing needs assessments
 - Panelist discussion.
 - Q & A.

Common Narratives

- Contemporary argument:
 - “Our jail is outdated and unsafe.”
 - Counterargument: New jails don’t mean new policies.
- Capacity argument:
 - “Our jail is not big enough to hold everyone we need to incarcerate.”
 - Counterargument: Jail expansion is an unsustainable response, not a rational solution.
- Compassionate argument:
 - Our current jail conditions won’t let us treat people humanely.”
 - Counterargument: Jails are places of harm, not healing.

Key Players

- Sheriffs
- Jail construction and needs assessment companies/firms
- County officials
- Outside officials

Jail Expansion: Progression and Points of Intervention

- Needs Assessment request for proposal (RFP)
- County Board meeting/ vote.
- Bond initiatives/jail tax votes.

Deconstructing jail needs assessments

- Population projection
 - Average Daily Jail Population
 - Average Length of Stay
 - Admissions/Bookings
 - Crime Trends/ charge Breakdowns
 - County Population trends.
- Staffing Level Assessment
- Facility Conditions Assessment
- Evaluation of pretrial diversion programs
- Demographic Data
- Cost Analysis

Discussion

Q&A

Get in Touch with our Panelists

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Resources for Fighting Jail Expansion

- **Does our county really need a bigger jail?**— contains important questions to ask when jail construction is being discussed in your area.
- **Jail expansion toolkit**—offers useful tips for opposing jail construction, including advice on reading jail needs assessments.
- **If They Build It: Organizing lessons and strategies against carceral infrastructure**—lessons learned and recommendations for opposing carceral infrastructure from Community Justice Exchange

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