



Realigning Justice Resources

A Review of Population and Spending Shifts in Prison and Community Corrections

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Executive Summary

Ongoing state budget deficits have placed the centerpiece of U.S. penal policy—incarceration—under intense scrutiny. Although crime rates have been on the decline since 1992, prison populations and spending continue to grow, spurring state policymakers to question whether resources can be better used to enhance public safety. State officials are beginning to rethink long-held tough-on-crime policies and turn their attention to decades of research showing that many offenders are dealt with more effectively in the community. To control rising costs, many states have adopted policies that aim to lower prison populations by moving people who are incarcerated to less-expensive supervision in the community, though there is recognition that for such a shift to be successful further investment in community supervision is often required. In these states, policymakers and corrections administrators hope not only to reduce correctional costs but also improve public safety outcomes.

In this study, the Vera Institute of Justice, in partnership with the Pew Center on the States' Public Safety Performance Project, set out to determine whether—in light of recent state-level policy changes and the economic recession—there have been observable shifts from prisons to community corrections between 2006 and 2010 by examining changes in 1) prison populations, 2) prison spending, 3) community corrections populations, and 4) community corrections spending. Staff from Vera's Center on Sentencing and Corrections surveyed state corrections agencies, reviewed recent sentencing and corrections legislation, and conducted interviews with criminal justice officials knowledgeable about their states' corrections policies and budgets.

Although approaches to corrections and responses to budget shortfalls varied widely across responding states, for most states the overall trend between 2006 and 2010, in both prison and community corrections, was one of growth. However, when the findings from just the last two years of the study period are considered, a different story emerges. Between 2009 and 2010, Vera observed a stark downward shift in expenditures across many states and systems of prison and community corrections despite variations in population change—a consequence, perhaps, of shrinking state budgets and the contraction in correctional spending as a whole.

Vera's study demonstrated that there is not always a discernible relationship between population and spending shifts from one part of the system to another. Policy changes that aim to cut spending on prisons do not necessarily have the expected impact on community corrections populations or spending. Larger fiscal realities, other legislative changes, and factors outside of policymakers' control can upset predictions of a policy's impact. However, several states—such as, Michigan, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Wisconsin, and Virginia—have successfully implemented policies that curb both prison populations and spending. These states demonstrate that cost-savings can be realized through sentencing reform that addresses the number of people entering prison or placed on community supervision and the dedication of appropriate resources to support research-driven community supervision practices and programs. It remains to be seen, however, whether more states will achieve this type of outcome from similar policy efforts, given current fiscal pressures and external factors. Continuing efforts by states to reduce their prison populations and expenditures, strengthen their community corrections systems, and improve public safety suggest that further research may be needed.

FROM THE CENTER DIRECTOR

The Center on Sentencing and Corrections produced two previous reports on the impact of the fiscal crisis on corrections, looking specifically at steps states were taking to reduce their spending in this costly area of their budgets.* Many of these steps involved legislative and administrative policy changes aimed at slowing prison population growth or moving those already in prison to community supervision more expeditiously.

Three years into the fiscal crisis, this report takes a different look: given recent state-level policy reforms, have the expected shifts in offender populations and spending from prisons to community corrections taken place?

The findings here are complicated—not the easy movement of either people or dollars that many policymakers were hoping to see—and point to the difficulty of viewing any proposed change in a vacuum. There are many stakeholders whose decisions affect the criminal justice system and numerous external factors over which policymakers have little or no control. As a result, plotting a line between enacted policies and their intended outcomes is rarely simple or straightforward. There is some reason for optimism; several states have seen the desired outcomes of their policy reform efforts. Perhaps, as the report suggests, it is simply too soon to see clear outcomes from policies enacted recently and in the midst of strained budgets and spending. What is needed is continuing observation of these trends into the future.



Peggy McGarry
Director, Center on Sentencing and Corrections

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*Vera Institute of Justice, *The Fiscal Crisis in Corrections* (New York, NY: 2009); Vera Institute of Justice, *The Continuing Fiscal Crisis in Corrections* (New York, NY: 2010).

Introduction

Over the past four decades, state sentencing and corrections policies in the United States have relied heavily on the use of prisons to combat crime. These tough-on-crime policies often lowered rates of parole release and introduced mandatory minimum sentencing regimes, penalty enhancements (including three-strikes provisions), longer judicially imposed sentences, and truth-in-sentencing policies that require people convicted of crimes to serve 85 percent of their sentences in prison. The result has been the striking growth of the prison population nationwide: between 1972 and 2010, the state prison population increased 705 percent, from 174,379 state inmates in 1972 to 1,404,053 as of January 1, 2010.¹ Today, more than one in every 104 American adults was in prison or jail.²

The rapid growth of state prison populations has been accompanied by a corresponding explosion in state spending on corrections. More prisoners serving longer sentences have meant higher costs for basic necessities, such as food, healthcare, and prison programming. It has also led to the costly construction of more prisons nationwide and, in turn, to expanded expenditures on staffing, maintenance, and operations. Between 1985 and 2009, annual correctional expenditures from state general funds increased 700 percent, from \$6.7 billion to more than \$47 billion.³ Currently, state correctional costs nationally are estimated at \$52 billion annually.⁴

SHIFTING STRATEGIES

The fiscal crisis of the past several years has put the reliance on prisons under scrutiny. In an effort to control costs, states have implemented short-term measures that have centered on operational efficiencies, including staff layoffs, wage or hiring freezes, program cuts, consolidation of facilities and operations, and halts to planned facility construction or expansion.⁵ Even if these measures boost efficiency, they can produce only a modicum of financial relief. States have begun to reexamine their sentencing and correctional policies as a way to decrease prison costs immediately and over the long-term.⁶

To reduce costs and improve public safety, policymakers are focusing on several decades of research showing that many offenders can be effectively dealt with in the community using evidence-based practices. Not only are these measures often less expensive than incarceration, research has shown that their use can also improve public safety.⁷ These practices are based on an individualized assessment leading to targeted interventions that address an offender's criminogenic risks and needs. This may mean tailoring specific supervision practices to the offender's individual risk level and connecting the offender to key services, ranging from drug and mental health treatment to employment, educational, and vocational services.

Through legislation and policy change, states hope to reduce or contain prison populations and costs using two primary mechanisms:

1. Expanding the offenses eligible for non-prison sentences or sanctions. This strategy may include broadening offense types—particularly drug offenses—eligible for sentencing to community supervision rather than prison; increasing eligibility for referrals to problem-solving courts rather than a custodial sentence; and replacing prison with community-based sanctions or short jail terms for probation and parole violations.⁸

2. Reducing the length of custodial sentences. This strategy may include redefining and reclassifying crimes to reduce their severity and the length of sentences they carry; repealing mandatory minimum sentences; increasing opportunities for inmates to earn time off their sentence through “good time credit”; and advancing parole eligibility dates or increasing parole release rates.⁹

These new policies and practices aim to reduce the prison population and increase the number of people under the supervision of community corrections agencies. Assuming a consistent number of convictions, a decrease in the prison population should result in an increase in the community corrections population, since the most common way to reduce the prison population is to increase use of probation and parole. Expanding the use of probation can reduce admissions to prison, while increasing rates of parole release or accelerating eligibility for parole can reduce the number of offenders in prison. As the number of people serving sentences under community supervision increases, so, too, should investments in those agencies.

In light of the lean budgets caused by the recent fiscal crisis, however, are states providing the necessary resources to community corrections agencies that have experienced—or anticipate—an influx of offenders into their care? Capacity deficits within community corrections, due to insufficient resources, risk endangering the success and sustainability of new legislative and policy changes. Indeed, states that are increasing the use of community corrections to reduce system-wide costs over the long-term may have to invest further resources today to achieve those long-term returns.

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

To determine whether, in light of recent state-level policy changes and the economic recession, the desired shifts in population and spending from prisons to the community have occurred, the Vera Institute of Justice (Vera), in partnership with the Pew Center on the States’ Public Safety Performance Project, examined changes in 1) prison populations, 2) prison spending, 3) community corrections populations, and 4) community corrections spending between 2006 and 2010.

Vera’s research found that, for most states, prison and community corrections populations and spending grew between 2006 and 2010, even though approaches to corrections and responses to budget shortfalls varied widely across responding states. Despite this larger trend, many states experienced a stark downward shift in correctional spending between 2009 and 2010.

A number of states—such as Michigan, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Wisconsin, and Virginia—managed to implement policies that reduced both prison populations and spending. But many states encountered challenges—economic, political, and structural—that may have stymied the ambitions of recent legislative and policy changes; in many cases, expected or desired outcomes were only partially realized, if at all. However, recent accelerated efforts at sentencing and corrections reform suggest that it may be too soon to see the promise of a more efficient, less costly correctional system fulfilled. Understanding the full impact of these policy changes will likely require further study.

Methodology

With support from the Pew Center on the States, Vera researchers examined changes in correctional populations and expenditures from 2006 through 2010, a period encompassing the most recent recession.¹⁰ Three sources of data inform this report: (1) results from a survey developed by Vera and follow-up interviews on reported data; (2) review of recent relevant legislation; and (3) an analysis of population counts from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) at the United States Department of Justice.

Vera developed and disseminated surveys to each state prison, probation, and parole authority, requesting information on agency expenditures, revenues, and staffing for fiscal years 2006 through 2011. The survey also asked about the effects of state budget crises and agencies' responses to them. Vera received 36 prison questionnaire responses (a 72 percent response rate) and 35 parole and probation questionnaire responses (a 70 percent response rate).¹¹ Where respondents listed specific policy changes in response to open-ended questions on the survey, Vera conducted follow-up interviews. See Appendix B for the 24 states that received follow-up interviews.

All reported expenditure figures have been adjusted to 2010 dollars using the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index for all Urban Areas. Adjusting economic indicators for inflation allows for an examination of changes over time in real spending versus changes in nominal spending. All costs, budgets and expenditures discussed in this report are inflation-adjusted.

Vera researchers completed a review of state legislative efforts and an analysis of BJS data on year-end correctional population counts for state prison, probation, and parole populations from 2006 through 2010.¹²

A more detailed explanation of the study's methodology is found in Appendix A. Data tables outlining raw figures are in Appendix D.

Summary of Findings

In this study, Vera set out to examine whether there have been observable shifts from prison to community corrections populations and expenditures between 2006 and 2010. Although approaches to corrections and responses to budget shortfalls varied widely, for most states the overall trend between 2006 and 2010, in both prison and community corrections, was one of growth. However, looking at just the years 2009 and 2010 (the most recent for which data is available), a different trend begins to emerge. Across many states and systems of prison and community corrections, there was a stark downward shift in expenditures despite variations in population change—a consequence, perhaps, of shrinking state budgets and the contraction in correctional spending as a whole.

Vera's analysis found no discernable relationship between populations and spending shifts from one part of the system to another. A state that decreased its prison population was just as likely to report an increase as it was to report a decrease in its community corrections population. Similarly, a state that decreased its prison spending was just as likely to report an increase as it was to report a decrease in its community corrections spending. While a small number of states, such as Michigan and Rhode Island, were able to increase investments in community corrections and still achieve an overall reduction in correctional costs, the majority of responding states were unable to report similar outcomes. Clearly, detecting a relationship between correctional reform, population changes, and cost-savings is difficult: many factors influence the corrections system, some of which will be discussed below.¹³ As a result, population or spending shifts may not necessarily follow predicted or hoped-for patterns.

PRISON POPULATIONS AND EXPENDITURES

This section discusses shifts in prison population and spending covering two time periods—broadly over the five-year period between 2006 and 2010, and more closely at the end of the recession, from 2009 to 2010. Next, the report examines specific state successes and shortcomings in controlling booming prison populations and costs.

FIVE-YEAR TREND: 2006-2010. From 2006 through 2010, the number of sentenced prisoners under state correctional authority grew by an average of 2.8 percent among responding states.¹⁴ Change varied widely state-to-state: 24 states saw growth in their prison populations, nine states saw a decrease, and three state populations remained relatively stable over the five-year period. Since 2006, Arkansas, Arizona, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Alabama have seen

KEY FINDINGS—PRISON

From 2006 through 2010:

- > one-third of states that responded to Vera's survey reported that their prison populations generally decreased or remained steady;
- > two-thirds reported increases in their prison population; and
- > 83 percent reported increases in prison expenditures, with an average increase of 6.9 percent.

However, examining only the shorter period from 2009 to 2010:

- > nearly two-thirds of responding states saw a decline in prison expenditures;
- > nearly half witnessed a decline in prison populations; and
- > one-third witnessed a decline in both prison population and expenditures.

the largest increases in inmate populations, between 12 and 18 percent; while Rhode Island, Michigan, New Jersey, and Delaware have had the greatest decreases, reducing their prison populations between 8 and 16 percent.

As prison populations rose across the majority of responding states, so too did prison expenditures; after adjusting for inflation, spending on prisons increased an average of 6.9 percent from 2006 through 2010, although change varied state-to-state and year-to-year. Eighty-three percent of responding states registered total growth in expenditures on prisons, meaning that 2010 total expenditures were higher than 2006 expenditures despite variations in overall spending in the intervening years. Only 17 percent of states saw spending decreases. Figure 1 shows the percent change in prison populations and adjusted expenditures from 2006 through 2010.

Average cost per inmate per day, like annual expenditures, also inched upward across responding states. After adjusting for inflation, states spent an average of \$76.03 per inmate per day in 2010,¹⁵ compared to \$73.95 in 2006.¹⁶ This translates into an increase of 4 percent in average daily expenditures per inmate since fiscal year 2006.¹⁷ There was wide variation among responding states. For example, in 2010, Georgia reported the lowest average cost per inmate per day, at just \$36.32, while Hawaii spent the most, on average, at \$137.00.

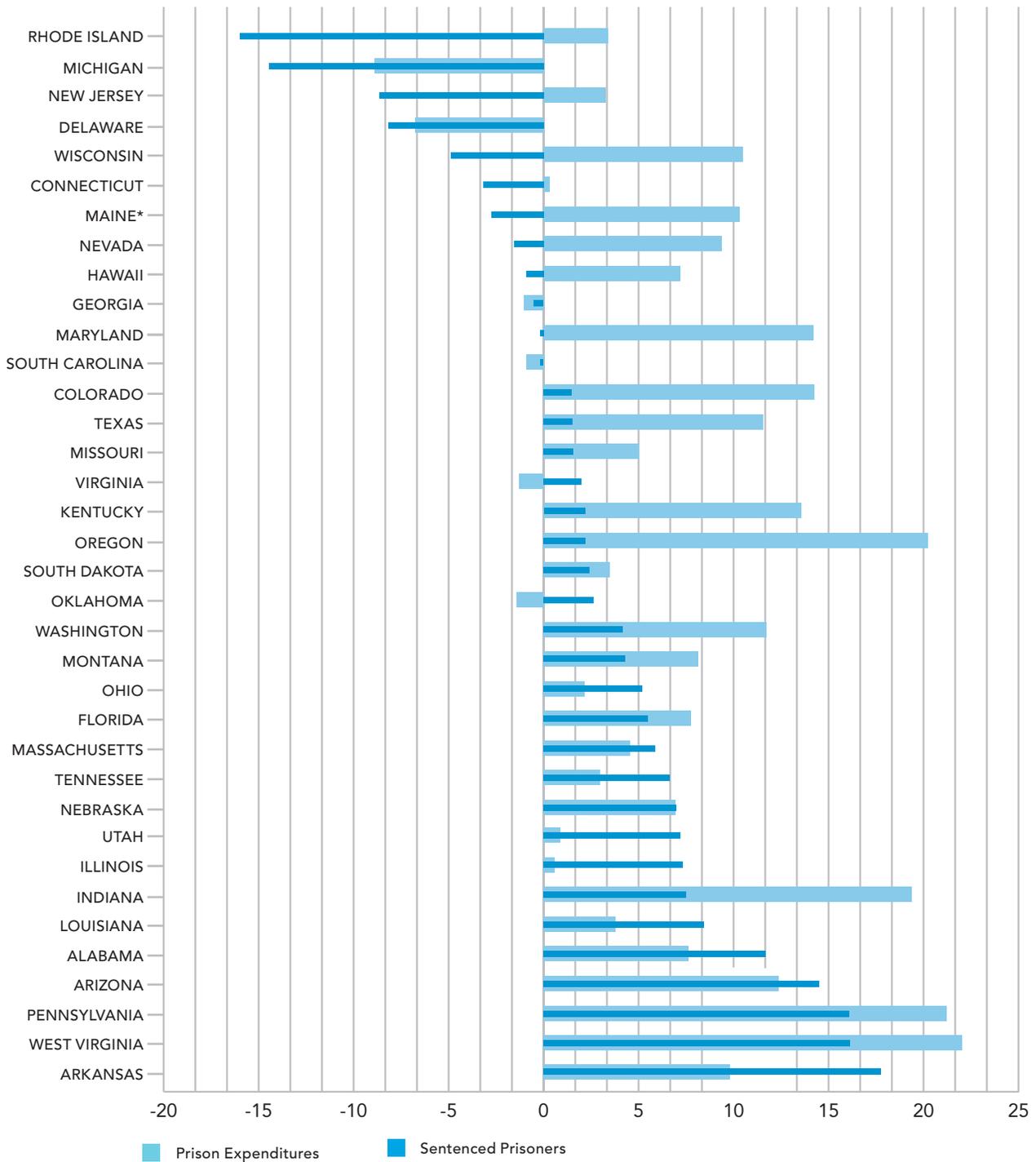
A CHANGING STORY, 2009-2010. Over the five-year study period, a majority of states saw increases in both prison expenditures and populations. However, looking at just the years 2009 and 2010 (the most recent for which data is available), a different trend begins to emerge. Prison expenditures declined in two-thirds of responding states, decreasing an average of 2.4 percent between fiscal year 2009 and 2010.¹⁸ Seventeen of the responding states reported decreases in prison populations, and the number of inmates in 10 states held steady or increased by less than 1 percent. This is a significant shift for the five-year study period, as overall growth was seen earlier in populations and expenditures. Additionally, from 2009 to 2010, one-third of responding states registered decreases in *both* prison populations and expenditures.

Figure 2 shows the percent change in prison populations and adjusted expenditures between 2009 and 2010.

WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE THE NUMBERS? The data analysis demonstrated that a change in prison expenditures is not always related to a shift in the prison population. Many factors—both within and outside the control of policymakers and administrators—contribute to the number of people in prison and the amount of money spent on prisons. This section discusses the factors that emerged from Vera’s interviews with state policymakers and corrections administrators, including:

- > the success of policy decisions;
- > the costly impact of increasing correctional capacity;
- > labor unions; and
- > public sentiment.

FIGURE 1. PERCENT CHANGE IN PRISON POPULATION AND ADJUSTED EXPENDITURES, 2006-2010



*All prisoners under state jurisdiction

FIGURE 2. PERCENT CHANGE IN PRISON POPULATIONS AND ADJUSTED EXPENDITURES, 2009-2010



*All prisoners under state jurisdiction

The success of policy decisions. Over the past several years, many states made policy decisions to reduce prison populations and expenditures.¹⁹

Michigan's landmark decrease in prison population and expenditures was the result of policy reforms undertaken almost a decade ago. In the early 2000's, Michigan began an effort to move prison populations to community supervision in an attempt to reduce spending and improve public safety. The state repealed mandatory minimum sentencing laws for drug offenses (with retroactive application to sentences already imposed); implemented a comprehensive reentry program (the Michigan Prisoner Re-entry Initiative) aimed at reducing recidivism and the number of parolees sent back to prison; and changed the structure of the paroling authority to expand the number of hearings held, thus increasing the rate of release.²⁰

Michigan appears to be accomplishing its goals: its prison population dropped by 14.5 percent from 2006 through 2010, and the state closed more than 20 prison facilities.²¹ It also lowered spending on prisons by 8.9 percent. Interestingly, from 2009 through 2010, Michigan's violent crime rate dropped by 2.7 percent and its property crime rate dropped by 5.6 percent.²²

To accommodate the actual or expected growth in probation and parole populations, the state increased its spending on community corrections by nearly 20 percent. Because Michigan's reduction in spending on prison far outpaced its investments in community corrections during this period, the state achieved overall corrections savings. Michigan reduced its prison expenditures by \$148 million from the 2006 through 2010 and increased its spending on community corrections by \$36.5 million during that same period.

In 2010, **South Carolina** passed legislation that increases the availability of community supervision alternatives to prison; mandates risk-reduction strategies; eliminates mandatory minimum sentences for drug possession; provides non-prison alternatives for certain drug sale offenses; expands parole and work-release eligibility for certain offenses; and creates an earned-credit program for probation.²³ The state saw the changes immediately: by year-end 2010, there was a modest reduction in South Carolina's prison population (-2.8 percent) and a drop in expenditures of nearly \$10 million (-2.3 percent).²⁴ The state intends to reinvest \$1 million of these savings into its community corrections agencies.²⁵

In **Virginia**, prison expenditures declined modestly from 2006 through 2010 overall, and by 8.1 percent between 2009 and 2010. Its prison population increased slightly over the five-year period, but experienced a modest decline from 2009 to 2010. The Virginia Department of Corrections was able to reduce its spending on prisons by closing nine facilities since 2008, reducing staff levels by 10 percent, double-bunking inmates in certain state facilities, and housing more inmates in local jails.²⁶

The change in the prison population in Virginia may be partly explained by the use of an empirically based risk assessment instrument that helps judges to identify and divert the lowest-risk, incarceration-bound drug and property offenders to non-prison sanctions.²⁷ The instrument was implemented state-

wide in 2002. In fiscal year 2010, 50 percent of the more than 6,000 people for whom a risk assessment was completed were recommended for a non-prison sanction and 43 percent of those were granted some form of community-based sanction.²⁸

The costly impact of increasing correctional capacity. Despite the economic downturn, some states continue to make increasing correctional capacity a priority. **Oregon's** significant uptick in correctional spending since 2006 (more than 20 percent) is, to some extent, explained by residual capital construction costs incurred to finance its need for increased correctional capacity over the past 20 years—with more than 60 percent of the state's prison capacity added since 1990. This has resulted in ongoing debt service obligations for construction.²⁹ The state is still paying for facilities constructed more than a decade ago. In Oregon, debt service adds more than \$11 per day to the average cost of incarcerating an inmate.³⁰

Pennsylvania undertook a strategy to expand the state's correctional capacity and has experienced a 21.2 percent increase in expenditures and a 16 percent growth in prison population over the past five years.³¹ Pennsylvania has built new facilities to replace old ones scheduled for closure and to provide the capacity needed to transfer inmates back from county jails and out-of-state facilities. The state has already brought back all 1,111 of its prisoners housed in Michigan, and plans to do the same for 970 others who are currently housed in Virginia.³²

Labor unions. Strong labor unions representing correctional staff also have an impact on the costs of prisons. In many states, unions have negotiated increases in wages or benefits or avoided layoffs despite facility closures. Such actions can neutralize or even reverse the impact of cost-saving measures undertaken in past years.

Despite significant decreases in the prison populations in Rhode Island (-16.0 percent) and **New Jersey** (- 8.6 percent), during the five-year study period, agreements with correctional unions may have offset potential cost-savings.³³ The decline in population in **Rhode Island** is attributed in part to legislation passed in 2008 that increased the amount of time inmates can earn off their sentences for good behavior.³⁴ As a result of this policy change the average length of stay in prison decreased, which, coupled with fewer admissions, produced a 639-person decline in Rhode Island's prison population.³⁵ However, projected cost-savings were not realized: from 2006 through 2010, Rhode Island saw a 3.4 percent increase in expenditures.³⁶ Recent compensation agreements between Rhode Island and unions representing correctional officers may be partly responsible. In 2008, binding arbitration awarded a significant retroactive wage increase for members of the Rhode Island Brotherhood of Correctional Officers, as well as further wage awards in 2009 and 2010.³⁷

By increasing parole release rates and reducing parole revocations for technical violations,³⁸ **New Jersey** reduced its prison population by 8.6 percent from

2006 through 2010.³⁹ However, its prison expenditures increased by more than 3 percent over the same period. New Jersey officials report that savings were not realized in part because of the strength of correctional labor unions: in 2007 and 2010, retroactive salary payments for contract settlements increased annual expenditures in 2010 by 4.3 percent. Additionally, no correctional officers were laid off following the closing of Riverfront State Prison in 2010; instead, the prison's 117 employees were transferred to other facilities.⁴⁰

As noted earlier, although **Oregon** saw only a slight uptick in its prison population since 2006, prison expenditures increased more than 20 percent. While debt service may be partly responsible, labor agreements that increased the costs of salaries, benefits, and other payroll expenses of correctional officers may have also contributed to the increased spending. Oregon is one of a few states to pay the entire cost of an employee's retirement plan and health insurance premium, making sharp payroll increases a possibility as healthcare costs rise year to year.⁴¹

Public sentiment. Political and public reaction to a well-publicized crime committed by a released prisoner can sometimes sideline policy changes that aim to promote correctional cost-saving or cost-containment, such as good time credit and early-release. In both **Connecticut** and **Pennsylvania**, headline-grabbing incidents of violent crime committed by parolees, in 2007 and 2008 respectively, caused a fierce public debate over parole and policies that allow prisoners to reduce time spent behind bars.⁴² In response to public outrage, both states ordered a brief moratorium on parole that resulted in immediate jumps in prison populations and spending. The repercussions of this response were particularly acute in Pennsylvania: after parole was reinstated, the parole release rate remained largely suppressed.⁴³ Connecticut experienced record incarceration levels in 2008 and 2009 despite lifting the moratorium in early 2008. The state recorded parallel spending increases in 2008 and 2009.⁴⁴

Bad publicity also plagued a good time credit program in **Illinois** and resulted in its eventual cancellation. In September 2009, to relieve prison overcrowding and overall state budgetary pressures, Illinois implemented the "Meritorious Good Time Push" (MGTP) program that allowed eligible prisoners to accumulate irrevocable good time credit upon entry into jail rather than waiting until they had served 60 days in state prison. Not every inmate was eligible to receive this credit; the program excluded those convicted of the most serious violent and sexual offenses.⁴⁵ The measure was designed to save the state \$3.4 million a year. However, because of negative publicity, the state was compelled to abandon not only the new, jail-based MGTP, but to dismantle the 30-year-old prison program the MGTP had been designed to augment.⁴⁶ Between 2009 and 2010, the cancellation of these programs resulted in growth in Illinois' prison population (7.2 percent) as well as a concurrent decline in its parole population (-22 percent).⁴⁷

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS POPULATIONS AND EXPENDITURES

This section discusses shifts in community corrections population and spending covering two time periods—broadly over the five-year period between 2006 and 2010, and more closely at the end of the recession, from 2009 to 2010. Next, the report examines how and why states have been expanding or contracting capacity in their community corrections systems while trying to manage ongoing budget shortfalls.

FIVE-YEAR TREND: 2006-2010. As prison populations rose across the majority of responding states, community corrections populations also underwent significant growth: sixteen of the responding states (46 percent) saw increases in their parole and probation populations. Eleven of these states saw increases greater than 10 percent.

For those states whose populations remained steady or registered decreases (11 states registered a drop in the number of people in community supervision), recent policy decisions may be at work. For example, the decrease in Washington’s state-supervised probation and parole populations (nearly 30 percent) resulted from legislation that changed sentencing and supervision laws to focus resources on high-risk, violent offenders and reduce supervision lengths for low-risk, non-violent offenders. As a result, many low-risk offenders were removed from community supervision altogether.⁴⁸ Hawaii’s parole population dropped by 21 percent as a result of early discharges from supervision in 2007 and a decline in prison admissions.⁴⁹

Meanwhile, over the five-year study period, expenditures on probation and parole saw an average increase of 13.3 percent. More than three-quarters of responding states reported an increase in spending on community supervision between fiscal year 2006 and fiscal year 2010, meaning that 2010 total expenditures were higher than 2006 expenditures despite variations in overall spending in the intervening years. Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, and Nebraska saw significant increases in spending on parole over the study period, ranging from 29 to 62 percent.

Figure 3 shows the percent change in spending and population on aggregate community corrections from 2006 through 2010.

A CHANGING STORY, 2009-2010. For many states, the five-year story for community corrections is one of growth. However, from fiscal year 2009 to 2010, just as prison expenditures were scaled back, community corrections expenditures also declined—with more than half of responding states reporting a decrease in community corrections expenditures. During this period, Illinois, Alabama, and Utah reported decreases in spending of more than 10 percent.

KEY FINDINGS—COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

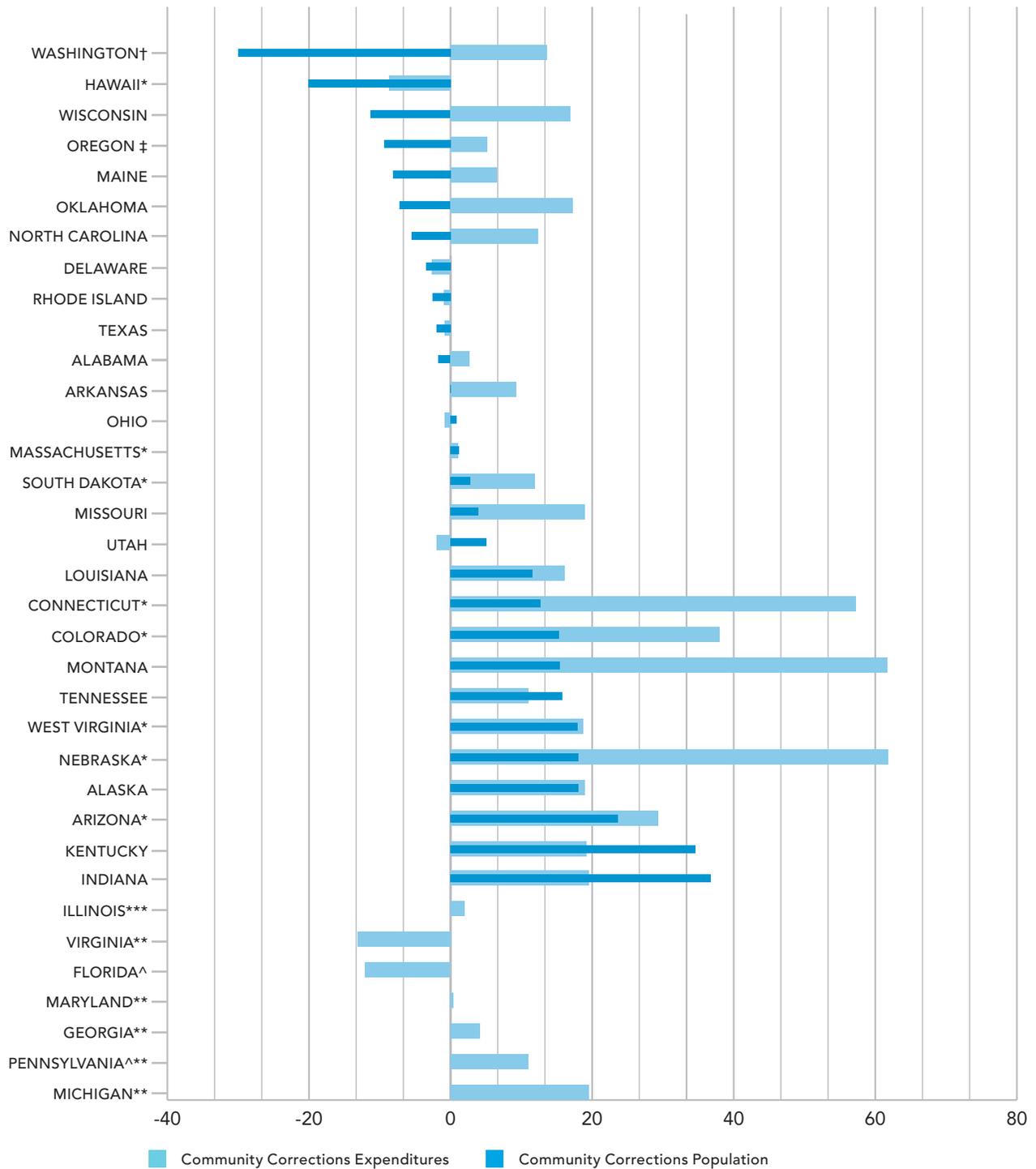
From 2006 through 2010:

- > nearly half of states that responded to Vera’s survey (46 percent) reported increases in their community corrections populations; and
- > three-quarters saw overall increases in spending on community corrections.

However, examining only the shorter period from 2009 to 2010:

- > a little more than half of responding states witnessed a decrease in their community corrections populations; and
- > nearly two-thirds of states reported decreases in community corrections spending.

FIGURE 3. PERCENT CHANGE IN COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS POPULATIONS AND ADJUSTED EXPENDITURES, 2006-2010



*Parole only

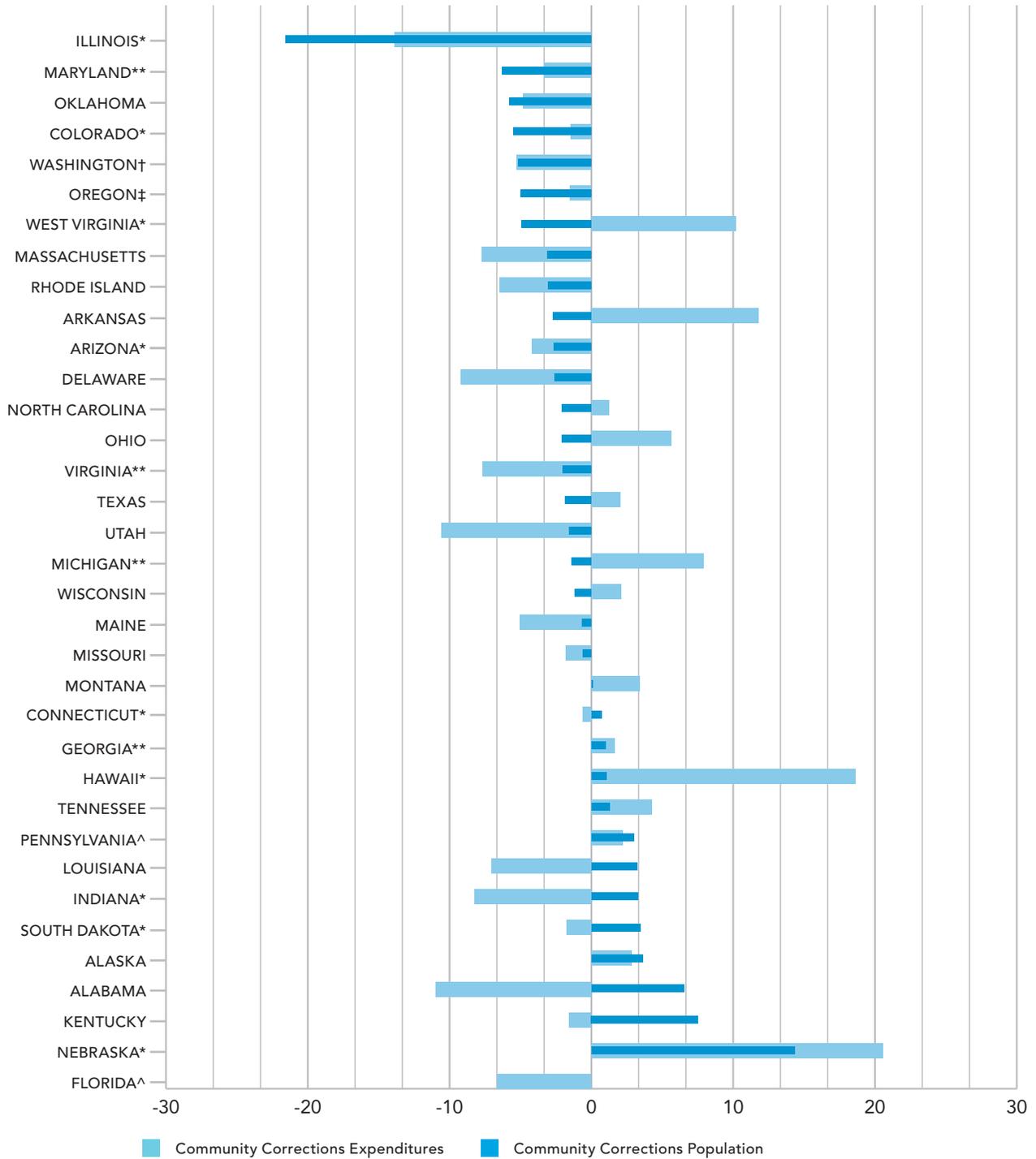
^Population figures for Florida obtained from BJS were not comparable to expenditures provided to Vera.

† Community corrections population reported for Washington includes only offenders supervised by the Washington State Department of Correction.

‡ Community correction population figures were obtained directly from the Oregon Department of Correction.

**Due to changes in reporting methods, 2010 probation and/or parole populations may not be comparable to figures reported in previous years.

FIGURE 4. PERCENT CHANGE IN COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS POPULATION AND ADJUSTED EXPENDITURES, 2009-2010



*Parole only

^Population figures for Florida obtained from BJS were not comparable to expenditures provided to Vera.

†Community corrections population reported for Washington includes only offenders supervised by the Washington State Department of Correction.

‡Community correction population figures were obtained directly from the Oregon Department of Correction.

**Due to changes in reporting methods, 2010 probation and/or parole populations may not be comparable to figures reported in previous years. Change reported from FY2009-FY2010.

Just five states saw significant increases in community corrections spending: Michigan, West Virginia, Arkansas, Hawaii, and Nebraska all increased spending between 8 and 21 percent.⁵⁰ Even among those states that invested in their community corrections infrastructure, several—Colorado, Oklahoma, and Washington—reported a declining investment in 2010.

Figure 4 shows the percent change in community corrections population and adjusted expenditures between 2009 and 2010.

WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE THE NUMBERS? Community corrections populations and expenditures grew between 2006 and 2010, but witnessed a considerable decline between 2009 and 2010. Vera staff conducted interviews with state policymakers and corrections administrators to lend context to these broader trends. This section discusses many of the factors states took into consideration as they attempted to expand community corrections, while lowering overall correctional costs.

Expanding Community Corrections. Increasing numbers of offenders on community supervision and a corresponding increase in expenditures—the trend from 2006 through 2010—is exactly what many states engaging in criminal justice reform hoped to see. Indeed, a number of the states that saw increasing community corrections populations had adopted policies that expanded opportunities for offenders to be supervised in community settings rather than prison.⁵¹ In their open-ended survey responses, nine states noted expansions of community-based residential housing options, including pre-release centers for inmates nearing their release dates, sanction centers for parole and probation violators, and halfway houses or residential aftercare facilities with substance abuse treatment programs. These types of housing options are often less expensive than prison beds and expand the offender populations that agencies are equipped to supervise in the community.⁵² At the same time, six states enhanced parole, whether through expanded parole eligibility for certain groups of offenders or increased earned-credit rates. These actions seem to have resulted in a greater number of people on supervision; 40 percent of states noted growth in their parole and probation caseloads and 46 percent reported increases in parole and probation staff.

Many states purposefully invested in their community corrections agencies. For example, in **Colorado**—although the prison population remained unchanged from 2006 through 2010 and prison expenditures decreased slightly—expenditures for parole increased by 38 percent. Legislators directed additional funds to community corrections for treatment and wraparound services.⁵³ Colorado also received a \$740,000 federal grant under the Second Chance Act to provide treatment and housing to sex offenders.⁵⁴

Montana increased its community corrections expenditures by more than 60 percent and invested in non-prison programs and alternative housing options. The state developed assessment centers, created sanction and revocation centers, increased the number of treatment programs and beds for metham-

phetamine and drunk-driving offenders, and developed pre-release centers for individuals transitioning from prison to the community.⁵⁵ These investments in its community corrections infrastructure were accompanied by a 15.5 percent increase, over the five-year study period, in its community corrections population.⁵⁶

In 2006, **Nebraska** sought to reverse growth in its prison populations by enhancing the availability of less costly, community-based options for nonviolent offenders. Policymakers created the Community Corrections Council and launched new day and night reporting centers.⁵⁷ In addition, the legislature instituted Specialized Substance Abuse Supervision (SSAS) aimed at drug offenders, who make up a large proportion of offenders in the state. SSAS centers provide extensive drug testing and drug treatment services as well as educational, occupational, and behavioral courses aimed at keeping offenders out of prison.⁵⁸ Over the five-year study period, the legislature supported these efforts with a 62 percent increase in its parole expenditures; over the same period, the parole population increased by 18 percent. However, because parole remains a very small proportion of the state's community corrections population—with only 941 parolees at year end 2010—it has not been enough to curb prison growth in Nebraska; both prison populations and costs increased 7 percent from 2006 through 2010.

Oklahoma and **Connecticut** significantly increased their community corrections expenditures to support state efforts to shift certain inmates into more cost-effective supervision in the community. Over the five-year study period, **Oklahoma** decreased its prison expenditures by slightly more than 1 percent, but increased its community corrections costs by 17 percent in order to make more beds available in community work release centers for inmates transferred from more expensive medium-custody beds.⁵⁹ In **Connecticut**, spending on parole increased by more than 57 percent (\$9 million) from 2006 through 2010 to support two criminal justice reform bills, passed in 2008, that increased the number of parole officers, the amount of electronic monitoring equipment, and the number of community beds.⁶⁰ During the same period, the parole population in Connecticut increased by 12.7 percent; the prison population dropped by nearly 4 percent in 2011; and, in 2012, the state is on-track to reach an 11-year low in its prison population.⁶¹ Of note, from 2009 to 2010, the state's violent and property crime rates decreased by 5 percent.⁶²

Over the five-year study period, in some states the number of people on state-supervised community supervision dropped, even though each state invested more resources in services and programs. Although the community corrections population dropped by more than 11 percent in **Wisconsin**, expenditures for community corrections increased by 17 percent to pay for day reporting centers, alcohol and drug treatment, and expanded employment training and placement services. Also, legislation was passed that expanded the use of a global positioning system to track certain offenders released to the community.⁶³ At least one official from the state's department of corrections believes that the increased availability of community-based alternatives has

contributed to a decrease in technical violation revocations, which, in turn, has contributed to a declining prison population.⁶⁴ Wisconsin's prison population declined by nearly 7 percent and expenditures decreased by slightly more than 1 percent between 2009 and 2010; during the same period, the state's violent and property crime rates dropped by more than 3 percent.⁶⁵

From 2006 through 2010, while the state-supervised community corrections population dropped by 30 percent, **Washington** increased its community corrections expenditures by 13.6 percent.⁶⁶ In 2007, the state instituted a reentry initiative that increased programming for offenders in prison and in the community, including chemical dependency treatment, education, job training, job search skills, cognitive behavioral change, and family-based reentry programs. A key aspect of the initiative was that programs that inmates started in prisons would be continued under community supervision through work release, Community Justice Centers, and other resources.⁶⁷ From 2009 through 2010, Washington's prison population remained steady, and its expenditures decreased by almost 7 percent by year end 2010.

Shrinking Community Corrections. Over half of responding states reported a decrease in expenditures on community corrections between 2009 and 2010. In response to open-ended survey questions on how community corrections agencies have been affected by the recent recession, more than one-third reported staffing cuts, hiring freezes, salary reductions, or furlough days. Other cost-saving strategies included program cuts and the consolidation of services.

In **Delaware**, mandatory cutbacks required the state to reduce its community corrections budget by more than 9 percent in 2010. The state was forced to maintain job vacancies, reduce the number of authorized positions, turn in vehicles, reduce overtime and staff salaries, and cut service contracts with treatment vendors. The budget squeeze has forced Delaware's community corrections agency to serve the same size population with shrinking resources.⁶⁸

Virginia saw an 8 percent decline in spending on community corrections from 2009 to 2010. Revenue shortfalls have resulted in cuts across all of its services and programs. The department of corrections has been forced to close all of its day reporting, diversion, and detention centers; cease operation of its Therapeutic Transition Community program; and cut back on drug testing, substance abuse funding, and drug court positions.⁶⁹

In 2009, the **Washington** state legislature enacted a bill removing many medium- and low-risk offenders from community supervision, both retroactively and prospectively.⁷⁰ From June through December 2009, the state-supervised community supervision caseload dropped from approximately 29,000 offenders to 19,000 offenders. The bill was passed in response to legislative demand for a reduction in the department of corrections's budget, and is a primary driver behind the 5 percent drop in spending on community corrections between 2009 and 2010. Funding for reentry programs, including job training and employment services, was also cut by more than \$1 million during this period.⁷¹

Conclusion: Policy Implications and Fiscal Realities

For four decades, states pursued tough-on-crime policies and enacted laws designed to put more offenders in prison for longer periods of time. Today, however, states faced with ballooning deficits, the lowest crime rate in decades, and research demonstrating that community corrections can achieve better public safety outcomes, are reexamining their criminal justice systems to craft more effective, less expensive “smart-on-crime” policies.⁷² In 2011 and 2012, Arkansas, Delaware, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Vermont passed legislation aimed at rebalancing the use of incarceration—reserving prison sentences for the most serious offenders and expanding the availability of community-based sanctions.⁷³ These states joined many others that have enacted similar policy changes in recent years.⁷⁴

While decreasing prison populations and costs and improving public safety outcomes are the primary goals behind these legislative reforms, policymakers also seek to reallocate a portion of the actual savings or averted costs to community corrections, where a larger proportion of the offenders are expected to be placed.

Have the goals of recent policy changes been realized in the study’s responding states? Though a descriptive study, Vera’s analysis found no discernable relationship between population and spending changes across the responding states. Of the 17 states that registered a decline in their prison populations between 2009 and 2010, only six states registered a corresponding increase in their community corrections populations. In four of these six states, community corrections expenditures actually declined. While Michigan and Wisconsin demonstrate that actual savings or averted prison costs can be reinvested into community corrections, for an overall reduction in correctional costs, the majority of responding states were unable to report similarly favorable outcomes. Of the 24 states that spent less on prison between 2009 and 2010, only eight increased investments in their community corrections systems. Figures 5 and 6 show population and spending shifts in prison and community corrections between 2006 and 2010 and between 2009 and 2010, in selected states, respectively.

While, in theory, populations and spending changes in one part of the corrections system might be expected to have a direct impact on another part of the system, states’ corrections budgets are not separate from other fiscal realities. Factors beyond budgetary constraints also affect the movement of populations and expenditures, including the expansion or construction of facilities; pressure from labor unions; and unexpected growth in prison populations because of a public response to crime or other public attitudes regarding correctional policy. Moreover, with revenues plummeting, state policymakers are wrestling with the seemingly intractable dilemma of how to balance state budgets and

FIGURE 6. PERCENT CHANGE IN PRISON AND COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS POPULATIONS AND ADJUSTED EXPENDITURES, 2006-2010, SELECTED STATES

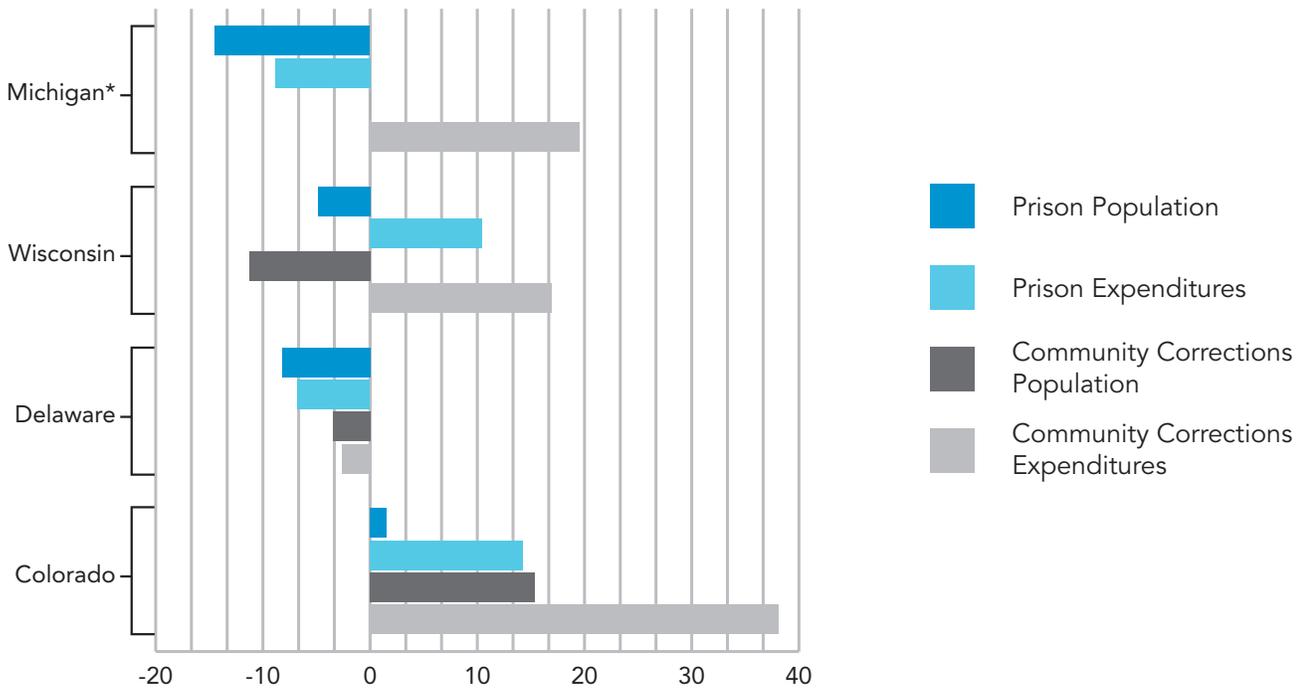
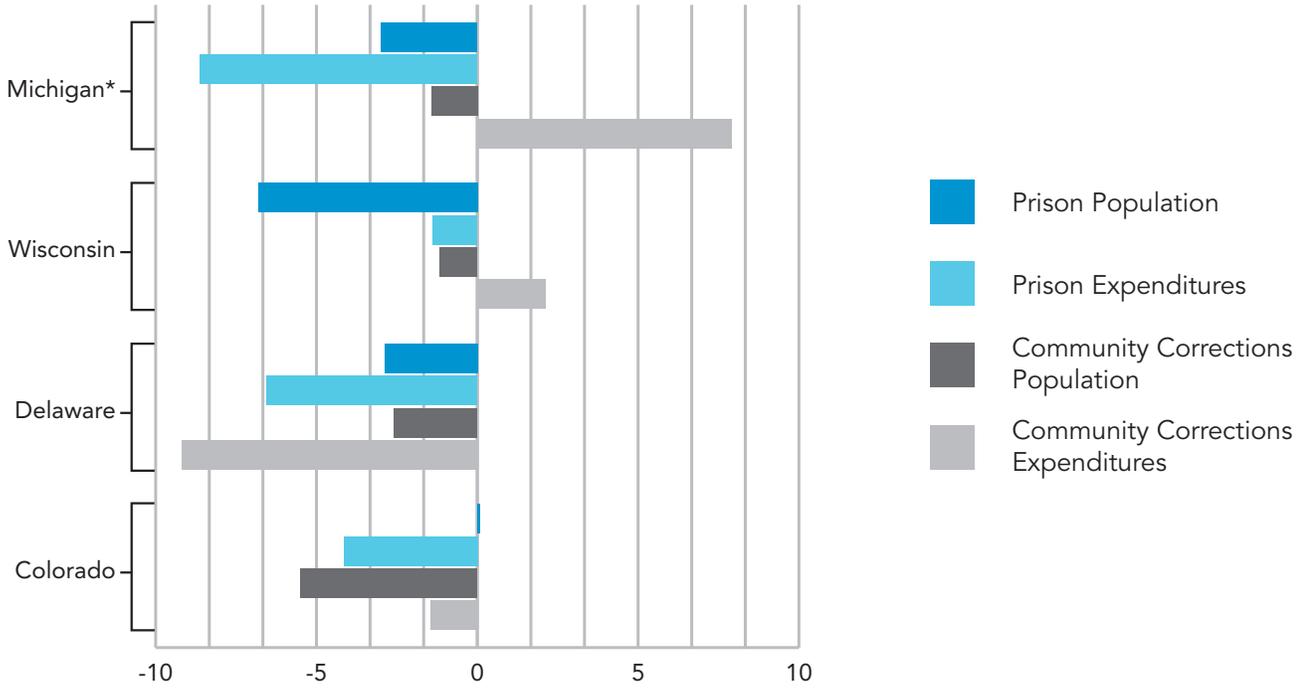


FIGURE 5. PERCENT CHANGE IN PRISON AND COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS POPULATIONS AND ADJUSTED EXPENDITURES, 2009-2010, SELECTED STATES



*Community corrections population for Michigan is 1/1/2010–12/31/2010. Changes made in previous years incomparable to 2010.

maintain or improve services that people need and want. With crime dropping and the public's interest in tough-on-crime policies waning, policymakers in many states may be willing to make wholesale, absolute cuts to correctional budgets rather than reinvest actual savings or averted prison costs in community corrections. Diverting these funds to other areas deemed more urgent—such as health care and education—may be the reason why two-thirds of the responding states have decreased their prison expenditures between 2009 and 2010, and more than half also decreased their community corrections spending.

The good news is that the majority of responding states reported significant increases in spending on community corrections between 2006 and 2010. In this period, resources and money have been funneled into more treatment services, alternative sentencing initiatives, community-based residential housing options, and other community-based corrections centers, such as day reporting and assessment centers.

However, given the depth and longevity of the current economic crisis, it may be unavoidable that systemic reforms will be necessarily tempered by present-day fiscal exigencies, which prevent full realization of their cost-saving potential. Continued economic contraction may signal that additional cuts to community corrections—as demonstrated in 2009 and 2010—could be in store for the future. The implications of this may be significant. The cost of not investing in community corrections, at a time when the community corrections population is increasing, could be high: ever larger caseloads and fewer resources for services and programs may lead to poor public safety outcomes.

Despite the study's mixed findings, it is important to note that policy decisions that target the drivers of correctional populations and spending can be successful. The outcomes in Michigan, for example, demonstrate that policies and practices can produce desired effects. Cost-savings can be realized through sentencing reform that decreases the number of people entering prison or increases the people placed on community supervision, when matched with appropriate resources.

The next several years are critical for criminal justice systems in this country. Increasingly, states are embarking on efforts that aim to reduce their prison populations and expenditures, strengthen their community corrections systems, and improve public safety. It may be too soon to see the true impact of these policies. A longitudinal study may be necessary to observe more accurately whether these policy changes shift correctional populations and spending in the ways intended.

ENDNOTES

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- 3 Compare figures noted in National Association of State Budget Officers, *The State Expenditure Report* (Washington, DC: 1987) 8, table 2 and National Association of State Budget Officers, *The State Expenditure Report* (Washington, DC: 2009) 54.
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- 9 For legislation that redefines and reclassifies crimes to reduce their severity and the length of sentences they carry see, e.g., South Carolina SB 1154 (2010), Iowa HF 2377, 2372 (2010), Colorado HB 1352 (2010), Iowa HF 2377, 2372 (2010), Delaware HB 113 (2009), Montana SB 476 (2009), Oregon HB 2323 (2009), California SBX3 18 (2009), Washington SB 6167 (2009), Massachusetts Ballot Question 2 (2008), Colorado SB 318 (2003), Iowa SF 543 (2001). For legislation that repeals mandatory minimum sentences see, e.g., New Jersey SB 1866 (2009), Minnesota SB 802 (2009), Rhode Island SB 39aa (2009), New York S 56-B (2009), Nevada AB 239 (2009), Delaware HB 210 (2003), Michigan PA 665,666,670 (2002). For legislation that increases opportunities for inmates to earn time off their sentence through "good time credit" see, e.g., Oregon SB 1007 (2010), Mississippi SB 2039 (2009) and HB 1136 (2010), Louisiana HB 62 (2009) and SB 312 (2010), Colorado HB 1351 (2009), Wisconsin AB 500 (2009), Pennsylvania HB 4 (2008), Wyoming SF 32 (2008), Arizona SB 1476 (2008), Nevada AB 510 (2007), Kansas SB 14 (2007). For legislation that advances parole eligibility dates or increasing parole release rates see, e.g., Kentucky HB 372 (2009), Indiana SB 415 (2010), Kentucky HB 564 (2010), South Carolina SB 1154 (2010), New Hampshire SB500 (2010), Louisiana HB 195 (2010), West Virginia SB 218 (2010), Vermont HB 792 (2009), Georgia SB 193 (2009), Mississippi SB 2136 (2008), Pennsylvania HB 4 (2008).
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- 12 Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Probation and Parole in the United States, 2010* (Washington, DC: BJS, 2011).
- 13 Agency population figures are based on calendar year, while budget expenditure and revenue figures are based on fiscal year. Budgetary questions were posed through fiscal year 2011; however, at the time of the survey, many fiscal year 2011 budgets were not yet finalized and were not widely reported in the survey responses. For this reason, all fiscal year 2011 data was excluded from this study.
- 14 This figure does not include some non-responding states with large prison populations, including California and New York, the latter of which saw a decrease in prison population from 2006-2009. P. Guerino, P. Harrison, and W. Sabol, *Prisoners in 2010* (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011). Available online at: <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=2230> (accessed April 3, 2012).
- 15 The average, weighted by the share of state inmates in 2010 out of the total number of inmates across the 36 states that responded to Vera's survey, is \$64.60.
- 16 In 2009, the Pew Center on the States reported an average per-inmate cost of \$79 for its sample of 34 states surveyed. Vera's average per-inmate cost is based on a different sample of responding states, which accounts for the difference in reported per-inmate cost. Twelve states included in Vera's sample were not found in Pew's sample: Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Jersey, Ohio, West Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. Further, 10 states in Pew's sample were not captured in Vera's sample, including: Idaho, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, North Dakota, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, and Wyoming. The Pew Center on the States, *One in 31: The Long Reach of American Corrections* (Washington, DC: The Pew Charitable Trusts, March 2009).
- 17 Comparing per-inmate costs across states is difficult. The per-inmate cost is a measure of the cost of services, and is variable according to the price of services in different regions. Also, some states measure prison costs more comprehensively than some other states do, depending on how many of their prison costs are outside the corrections budgets. Christian Henrichson and Ruth Delaney, *The Price of Prisons: What Incarceration Costs Taxpayers* (New York, NY: Vera Institute of Justice, 2012). Additionally, per-inmate cost is not a reflection of quality or outcomes, such as inmate safety or recidivism, and may instead reflect policy choices made in those states.

- 18 The National Association of State Budget Officers reported in their most recent state expenditure report that total corrections spending declined by 3.2 percent in fiscal year 2010. See the National Association of State Budget Officers, *State Expenditure Report: Examining Fiscal 2009-2010 State Spending* (Washington, DC: NASBO, 2011).
- 19 For states to reduce expenditures in a significant way, the population must decline enough to close a wing of a prison or an entire facility. This reduces the staffing costs, the principal driver of prison expenditures. Simple reductions in population only eliminate associated marginal costs (e.g., food, clothing, and health care) while still maintaining fixed costs (e.g., facilities, vehicles, and personnel). Because fixed costs are so much greater than marginal costs, in order to achieve major cost reductions, population decreases must be significant enough to close a wing of a prison or an entire facility. The most significant and successful cost-saving measures combine prison closures and reductions in correctional staff and operations—the downsizing of a state’s prison system.
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- 21 The Sentencing Project, *On the Chopping Block: State Prison Closings* (Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project, 2011).
- 22 Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2010* (Washington DC: September 2011).
- 23 South Carolina SB 1154 (2010).
- 24 The difference in nominal, or unadjusted, expenditures over the five-year study period is greater, at \$27.1 million.
- 25 Shaunita Grase, director, Evidence-Based Practices, South Carolina Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services, interview by Vera Institute of Justice, February 10, 2012.
- 26 Richard Kern, director, Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission, interview by Vera Institute of Justice, November 10, 2011.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission, *2010 Annual Report* (Richmond, VA: 2010), 40.
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- 34 Rhode Island SB 2322 (2008). The bill established additional sentence credits for successful rehabilitative program participation and program completion.
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- 37 Joanne Hill, interview by Vera Institute of Justice, November 9, 2011.
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- 40 New Jersey Department of Corrections, *Department of Corrections FY 2009-2010 Discussion Points* (2009), http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/legislativepub/budget_2010/Department_Response/DOC_responses10.pdf (accessed November 10, 2011).
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- 44 After reaching a peak in February 2008, the prison population in Connecticut is now reaching an 11-year low. Keith M. Phaneuf, “Prison Population Headed for an 11-year-low in 2012,” *The Connecticut Mirror*, December 29, 2011. This dramatic change results, in part from a risk reduction credit program adopted in 2011, through which certain types of low-level offenders can shorten their sentences by participating in reentry services.
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- 49 A new review process was implemented in 2007, in which all parolees—who had been on supervision for at least five years—paid all court fees, fines, and/or restitution, maintained stable employment and family relationships were reconsidered for and granted early discharge. Prison admissions declined as a result of a deliberate effort to sentence more non-violent offenders to probation than prison. Tommy Johnson, branch administrator, Hawaii Paroling Authority, interview by Vera Institute of Justice, December 12, 2011.
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- 51 Successes in Michigan, South Carolina, and Virginia are discussed above.
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- 53 Colorado HB 1360 (2010) and HB 1352 (2010). The dollars were marked for diverse needs such as psychotropic medication, increased options in community residential housing, mental health treatment, sex offender treatment, and substance abuse treatment.
- 54 Barry Pardus, financial associate director, Colorado Department of Corrections, Division of Adult Parole, Community Corrections and Youthful Offender System, interview by Vera Institute of Justice, November 7, 2011.
- 55 Bob Anez, communications director, Montana Department of Corrections, interview by Vera Institute of Justice, October 28, 2011. Since 2005, the population in drug and alcohol treatment, and sanction and assessment programs in Montana increased by more than 130 percent and the population in pre-release centers grew by 40 percent.
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- 64 Anthony Streveler, interview by Vera Institute of Justice, November 30, 2011.
- 65 Anthony Streveler, interview by Vera Institute of Justice, November 30, 2011. The decrease in population has not yet reached a point where a facility or wing can be closed; therefore, cost savings are minimal. However, the decline in population has improved the system's overcrowding conditions. For Wisconsin crime statistics see, e.g., Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2010* (Washington DC: September 2011).
- 66 The state supervises only 14 percent of the total number of people on community supervision in Washington. However, the downward trend seen in this specific population is mirrored in the statewide community corrections population. Using total community corrections population numbers as reported to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the community corrections population has declined by more than 13 percent between 2006 and 2010.
- 67 Terri Greaves and Alan Haskins, Washington Department of Corrections, interviews by Vera Institute of Justice, December 6, 2011; Washington ESSB 6157 (2007).
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- 69 Kim Scifres, agency management lead analyst, Virginia Department of Corrections - Budget Unit, interview by Vera Institute of Justice, December 2, 2011.
- 70 Washington SB 5288 (2009).
- 71 Alan Haskins, budget officer, Washington State Department of Corrections, interview by Vera Institute of Justice, February 7, 2012.
- 72 See Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Preliminary Semiannual Uniform Crime Report*, December 19, 2011.
- 73 Nicole D. Porter, *The State of Sentencing: Developments in Policy and Practice* (New York, NY: The Sentencing Project, 2012); Delaware SB 226 (2012).
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Appendix A: Methodology

In this study, Vera examined changes in correctional expenditures and populations from 2006 through 2010, a period encompassing the most recent recession, which officially began in December 2007 and ended in the summer of 2009.¹ To answer the overarching policy question—*are prison and community corrections populations and expenditures decreasing or increasing in accordance with states’ policy reform efforts?*—Vera structured the study around two main research questions:

- > How have prison populations and spending changed over the five-year study period?
- > How have community corrections populations and spending on community supervision changed over the same period?

DATA ON BUDGET, REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

Vera developed three survey instruments targeted to state prison, probation, and parole agencies. The instruments included closed-ended questions on agency budgets, including expenditures and revenue sources for each fiscal year 2006 through 2011.² Agency population figures are based on calendar year, while budget expenditure and revenue figures are based on fiscal year. Budgetary questions were posed through fiscal year 2011; however, at the time of the survey, many fiscal year 2011 budgets were not yet finalized and were not widely reported in the survey responses. For this reason, all fiscal year 2011 data was excluded from this study.

The questionnaires also asked for staffing levels and offender-to-officer caseload ratio, supervision fees (for probation and parole agencies), and average daily costs per offender. The surveys also included open-ended questions; for example, respondents were asked about factors contributing to shifts in expenditures and populations, as well as the impact of the recent recession and attendant budget crises on correctional agencies. Each survey instrument was reviewed and approved by an advisory group comprising current and former corrections and community corrections agency heads from New Jersey, Kansas, and Georgia.

Vera disseminated the surveys via email to senior administrators from state prison, probation, and parole agencies across all 50 states. Survey recipients were chosen for their knowledge of their agency’s budget and population. Vera received 36 prison questionnaire responses (a 72 percent response rate) and 35

¹ National Governors Association and National Association of State Budget Officers, *Fiscal Survey of the States: Fall 2010* (Washington, DC: NASBO, 2010); Elizabeth McNichol, Phil Oliff, and Nicholas Johnson, *States Continue to Feel Recession’s Impact* (Washington, DC: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, June 2011).

² The expenditures data collected by this survey differs from the data collected by the National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO) in that NASBO aggregates state totals and co-mingles prison and community corrections spending.

parole and probation questionnaire responses (a 70 percent response rate).³ Upon receipt of completed surveys, Vera staff followed up with 24 states to verify responses and solicit clarifications or additional information. (See Appendix B.)

All expenditure figures reported here have been adjusted to 2010 dollars, using the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index for all Urban Areas. Adjusting economic indicators for inflation allows for an examination of changes in real rather than nominal spending.

DATA ON CORRECTIONAL POPULATIONS

To compare changes in population over the five-year study period, Vera researchers used data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) year-end correctional population counts for state prison, probation, and parole populations.⁴ For some states, BJS noted that population data for either probation or parole was not comparable to the previous year(s) because of changes in reporting methods; these states were excluded from the population analysis.⁵

The structure of community supervision varies widely across states, posing difficulties for obtaining and analyzing statewide available data that is comparable across states and over time. Thirty-five states have centralized statewide probation agencies, and 41 states have centralized statewide parole agencies; these states were included in

BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS DEFINITIONS OF CORRECTIONAL POPULATIONS

INMATES OR PRISONERS are defined as offenders under the legal jurisdiction of a state correction agency, regardless of where the inmate is held, with a total maximum sentence of more than one year. Such inmates held in prison facilities; boot camps; reception, diagnostic and classification centers; vocational training facilities; drug and alcohol treatment centers; and those held in local jails or private facilities are included. Inmates held in facilities for another jurisdiction are excluded, unless otherwise noted.

PROBATIONERS are defined as people placed under the supervision of a probation authority, including those under the legal authority of the agency but supervised by a private agency or other jurisdiction. Active, inactive and absconding probationers are included. Juveniles, interstate compact cases, and those supervised by the agency but under the legal authority of another jurisdiction are excluded, unless otherwise noted.*

PAROLEES include all adults sentenced and conditionally released to parole supervision, including those on active and inactive supervision, as well as absconders who have not been discharged from parole. Juveniles, interstate compact cases, and those supervised by the agency but under the legal authority of another jurisdiction are excluded, unless otherwise noted.

*Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision (ICAOS) rules allow for the transfer of correctional supervision of offenders from the jurisdiction of one state to another. Such cases allow offenders on probation or parole supervision in one state to move to another state, while remaining under correctional supervision.

³ The average, weighted by the share of state inmates in 2010 out of the total number of inmates across the 36 states that responded to Vera's survey, is \$64.60.

⁴ Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Probation and Parole in the United States, 2010* (Washington, DC: BJS, 2011).

⁵ This was the case in eight states: Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. See Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Probation and Parole in the United States, 2010* (Washington, DC: BJS, 2011) and Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Probation and Parole in the United States, 2009* (Washington, DC: BJS, 2010).

the analysis. In 15 states, probation is operated at a local or judiciary level; given the complexities in collecting data at the county or judiciary level, these states were intentionally excluded from the analysis. However, two such states—Texas and Pennsylvania—were able to provide statewide, aggregated budgetary information from centralized, state-run data management systems and were subsequently included in the analysis. In a number of other states—such as Washington, Oregon, Ohio and Florida—some probationers are supervised at a local level. This report only includes population and expenditure numbers related to those who are supervised by the state. Finally, many corrections departments and centralized state agencies responsible for both probation and parole were unable to report separate budget data for probation and parole. Therefore, the analysis of expenditures on community corrections includes spending on both probation and parole, unless otherwise noted.

For the structure of community corrections across responding states, see Appendix C.

LEGISLATIVE REFORM AND POLICY REVIEW

To inform our analysis of the survey data, Vera staff conducted a review of state legislative efforts. In particular, where respondents listed specific policy changes in response to open-ended questions on the survey, Vera staff conducted follow-up interviews to gain additional information about shifts in policy and their intended impact on correctional budgets and population.

Appendix B: Responding States

PROBATION AND PAROLE	PAROLE ONLY	PRISON
Alabama	Arizona*	Alabama
Alaska*	Colorado*	Arizona*
Arkansas*	Connecticut*	Arkansas*
Delaware*	Hawaii*	Colorado*
Florida	Illinois	Connecticut*
Georgia*	Indiana	Delaware*
Kentucky*	Massachusetts	Florida
Louisiana	Nebraska*	Georgia*
Maine	South Dakota	Hawaii*
Maryland	West Virginia*	Illinois
Michigan		Indiana
Missouri		Kentucky*
Montana*		Louisiana
North Carolina		Maine
Ohio*		Maryland
Oklahoma		Massachusetts
Oregon*		Michigan
Pennsylvania*		Missouri
Rhode Island*		Montana*
Tennessee		Nebraska*
Texas*		Nevada*
Utah		New Jersey*
Virginia*		Ohio*
Washington*		Oklahoma*
Wisconsin*		Oregon*
		Pennsylvania*
		Rhode Island*
		South Carolina*
		South Dakota
		Tennessee
		Texas*
		Utah
		Virginia*
		Washington*
		West Virginia*
		Wisconsin*

*States that received follow-up interviews

Appendix C: The Structure of Community Corrections

PROBATION AND PAROLE <i>State Dept. of Correction</i>	PROBATION AND PAROLE <i>Separate State Agency</i>	PROBATION <i>State Dept. of Correction</i>	PROBATION <i>State Dept. of Correction and County Depts. of Correction</i>	PROBATION <i>County Depts. of Correction or Judiciary</i>	PAROLE <i>State Dept. of Correction</i>	PAROLE <i>Separate State Agency</i>	PAROLE <i>State Dept. of Correction and County Depts. of Correction</i>
Alaska	Alabama	Georgia	Florida	Arizona	Arizona	Florida	Minnesota
Delaware	Arkansas	Iowa	Minnesota	California	California	Iowa	Ohio
Idaho	Nevada		Ohio	Colorado	Colorado	Hawaii	Oregon
Kentucky	Pennsylvania		Oregon	Connecticut	Connecticut	Georgia	Pennsylvania
Louisiana	South Carolina		Pennsylvania	Hawaii	Illinois	Massachusetts	
Maine	Tennessee		Washington	Illinois	Indiana	New Jersey	
Maryland				Indiana	Kansas	New York	
Michigan				Kansas	Nebraska		
Mississippi				Massachusetts	South Dakota		
Missouri				Nebraska	Texas		
Montana				New Jersey	Washington		
New Hampshire				New York	West Virginia		
New Mexico				South Dakota			
North Carolina				Texas			
North Dakota				West Virginia			
Oklahoma							
Rhode Island							
Utah							
Vermont							
Virginia							
Wisconsin							
Wyoming							

Appendix D: Data Tables

FIGURE D-1: PRISON POPULATION, 2006, 2009, 2010

STATE	TOTAL SENTENCED PRISONERS UNDER STATE JURISDICTION			PERCENT CHANGE FROM 2006-2010	PERCENT CHANGE FROM 2009-2010
	2006	2009	2010		
Alabama	27,526	30,723	30,739	11.67	0.05
Arizona	33,557	38,529	38,423	14.50	-0.28
Arkansas	13,713	15,144	16,147	17.75	6.62
Colorado	22,481	22,795	22,815	1.49	0.09
Connecticut	13,746	13,466	13,308	-3.19	-1.17
Delaware*	7,186	6,794	6,598	-8.18	-2.88
Florida	98,874	103,915	104,306	5.49	0.38
Georgia*	52,792	53,371	52,523	-0.51	-1.59
Hawaii*	5,967	5,891	5,912	-0.92	0.36
Illinois	45,106	45,161	48,418	7.34	7.21
Indiana	26,055	28,788	28,012	7.51	-2.70
Kentucky	19,514	20,672	19,937	2.17	-3.56
Louisiana	36,376	39,780	39,444	8.43	-0.84
Maine	1,997	1,980	1,942	-2.75	-1.92
Maryland	22,316	21,868	22,275	-0.18	1.86
Massachusetts	9,472	10,070	10,027	5.86	-0.43
Michigan	51,577	45,478	44,113	-14.47	-3.00
Missouri	30,146	30,554	30,614	1.55	0.20
Montana	3,563	3,605	3,716	4.29	3.08
Nebraska	4,204	4,392	4,498	6.99	2.41
Nevada	12,753	12,482	12,556	-1.54	0.59
New Jersey	27,371	25,382	25,007	-8.64	-1.48
Ohio	49,166	51,606	51,712	5.18	0.21
Oklahoma	23,889	24,396	24,514	2.62	0.48
Oregon	13,667	14,365	13,971	2.22	-2.74
Pennsylvania	43,998	51,316	51,075	16.08	-0.47
Rhode Island*	3,996	3,674	3,357	-15.99	-8.63
South Carolina	22,861	23,486	22,822	-0.17	-2.83
South Dakota	3,350	3,430	3,431	2.42	0.03
Tennessee	25,745	26,965	27,451	6.63	1.80
Texas	162,193	162,186	164,652	1.52	1.52
Utah	6,339	6,519	6,795	7.19	4.23
Virginia	36,688	38,059	37,410	1.97	-1.71
Washington	17,483	18,199	18,212	4.17	0.07
West Virginia	5,719	6,313	6,642	16.14	5.21
Wisconsin	21,881	22,332	20,812	-4.89	-6.81
			MEAN	2.77	-0.18
			MEDIAN	2.32	0.04

*All prisoners under state jurisdiction

FIGURE D-2: PRISON EXPENDITURES, FY2006, FY2009, FY2010

STATE	PRISON EXPENDITURES 2006	PRISON EXPENDITURES 2009	PRISON EXPENDITURES 2010	ADJUSTED EXPENDITURES 2006	ADJUSTED EXPENDITURES 2009	PERCENT CHANGE FY2006-FY2010	PERCENT CHANGE FY2009-FY2010
Alabama	\$372,619,120	\$410,230,899	\$433,745,923	\$403,034,895	\$416,959,820	7.62	4.03
Arizona	\$738,356,000	\$946,127,600	\$897,343,500	\$798,625,773	\$961,646,709	12.36	-6.69
Arkansas	\$243,207,957	\$280,135,153	\$288,888,121	\$263,060,289	\$284,730,144	9.82	1.46
Colorado	\$606,088,054	\$768,892,826	\$749,093,130	\$655,561,194	\$781,504,794	14.27	-4.15
Connecticut	\$559,936,789	\$650,891,981	\$607,667,376	\$605,642,740	\$661,568,409	.33	-8.15
Delaware	\$142,600,000	\$151,400,000	\$143,800,000	\$154,240,008	\$153,883,379	-6.77	-6.55
Florida	\$1,719,337,602	\$1,965,695,674	\$2,003,605,196	\$1,859,681,945	\$1,997,938,518	7.74	.28
Georgia	\$1,040,256,835	\$1,101,101,760	\$1,113,443,858	\$1,125,169,863	\$1,119,162,873	-1.04	-.51
Hawaii	\$161,820,260	\$200,194,396	\$187,613,165	\$175,029,160	\$203,478,138	7.19	-7.80
Illinois	\$917,306,700	\$1,118,295,400	\$997,859,100	\$992,183,679	\$1,136,638,537	.57	-12.21
Indiana	\$435,396,359	\$563,722,906	\$562,247,665	\$470,936,451	\$572,969,520	19.39	-1.87
Kentucky	\$233,180,680	\$276,315,462	\$286,381,151	\$252,214,516	\$280,847,800	13.55	1.97
Louisiana	\$544,274,248	\$655,484,989	\$610,880,240	\$588,701,713	\$666,236,755	3.77	-8.31
Maine	\$78,136,984	\$94,614,869	\$93,225,747	\$84,515,070	\$96,166,814	10.31	-3.06
Maryland	\$593,786,760	\$721,028,406	\$733,670,238	\$642,255,782	\$732,855,266	14.23	.11
Massachusetts	\$454,710,848	\$518,583,016	\$514,150,199	\$491,827,523	\$527,089,211	4.54	-2.45
Michigan	\$1,540,241,413	\$1,634,051,138	\$1,517,903,300	\$1,665,966,674	\$1,660,854,095	-8.89	-8.61
Missouri	\$469,515,798	\$545,739,093	\$533,210,722	\$507,840,957	\$554,690,723	5.00	-3.87
Montana	\$63,801,843	\$72,739,858	\$74,625,506	\$69,009,795	\$73,932,993	8.14	.94
Nebraska	\$136,751,706	\$152,119,484	\$158,190,135	\$147,914,335	\$154,614,664	6.95	2.31
Nevada	\$226,408,943	\$272,282,001	\$267,889,516	\$244,890,022	\$276,748,179	9.39	-3.20
New Jersey	\$1,039,773,000	\$1,095,180,000	\$1,161,258,000	\$1,124,646,534	\$1,113,143,980	3.26	4.32
Ohio	\$1,145,090,690	\$1,315,292,420	\$1,265,011,710	\$1,238,560,990	\$1,336,866,853	2.14	-5.37
Oklahoma	\$414,350,990	\$463,024,037	\$441,772,058	\$448,173,212	\$470,618,911	-1.43	-6.13
Oregon	\$437,116,832	\$558,006,048	\$568,476,929	\$472,797,361	\$567,158,890	20.24	.23
Pennsylvania	\$1,424,309,000	\$1,764,007,000	\$1,867,230,000	\$1,540,571,048	\$1,792,941,592	21.20	4.14
Rhode Island	\$136,498,962	\$156,331,335	\$152,666,473	\$147,640,961	\$158,895,601	3.40	-3.92
South Carolina	\$377,496,871	\$407,566,135	\$404,636,851	\$408,310,802	\$414,251,347	-.90	-2.32
South Dakota	\$51,782,925	\$56,494,094	\$57,967,921	\$56,009,809	\$57,420,753	3.50	.95
Tennessee	\$558,433,900	\$627,219,495	\$622,011,500	\$604,017,175	\$637,507,629	2.98	-2.43
Texas	\$2,048,358,033	\$2,493,586,126	\$2,471,827,691	\$2,215,559,322	\$2,534,487,833	11.57	-2.47
Utah	\$119,742,600	\$115,509,800	\$130,653,000	\$129,516,827	\$117,404,480	.88	11.28
Virginia	\$918,549,882	\$1,049,492,091	\$980,674,412	\$993,528,339	\$1,066,706,663	-1.29	-8.07
Washington	\$528,428,732	\$674,873,663	\$638,568,378	\$571,562,776	\$685,943,457	11.72	-6.91
West Virginia	\$117,390,388	\$157,470,515	\$154,936,305	\$126,972,611	\$160,053,467	22.02	-3.20
Wisconsin	\$617,943,973	\$736,674,895	\$738,334,059	\$668,384,876	\$748,758,401	10.47	-1.39
					MEAN	6.89	-2.43
					MEDIAN	7.07	-2.46

FIGURE D-3: COMMUNITY CORRECTION POPULATION, 2006, 2009, 2010

STATE	COMMUNITY SUPERVISION POPULATION			PERCENT CHANGE 2006-2010	PERCENT CHANGE 2009-2010
	2006	2009	2010		
Alabama	63,274	58,384	62,200	-1.70	6.54
Alaska	7,622	8,686	9,000	18.08	3.62
Arizona*	6,463	8,209	7,993	23.67	-2.63
Arkansas	49,913	51,296	49,900	-0.03	-2.72
Colorado*	9,551	11,655	11,014	15.32	-5.50
Connecticut*	2,567	2,873	2,894	12.74	0.73
Delaware	17,502	17,350	16,900	-3.44	-2.59
Florida^**	277,767	272,061	260,300	n/c	n/c
Georgia**	445,748	416,717	482,300	n/c	1.00
Hawaii*	2,316	1,831	1,850	-20.12	1.04
Illinois*	n/a	33,162	26,009	n/a	-21.57
Indiana*	7,950	10,527	10,872	36.75	3.28
Kentucky	53,029	66,400	71,400	34.64	7.53
Louisiana	62,720	67,811	70,000	11.61	3.23
Maine	7,950	7,347	7,300	-8.18	-0.64
Maryland**	90,049	118,283	101,400	n/c	-6.30
Massachusetts*	3,223	3,365	3,260	1.15	-3.12
Michigan**	201,136	199,505	206,800	n/c	-1.40
Missouri	74,026	77,338	76,900	3.88	-0.57
Montana	9,614	11,092	11,100	15.46	0.07
Nebraska*	797	823	941	18.07	14.34
North Carolina	113,655	109,703	107,400	-5.50	-2.10
Ohio	261,559	269,524	263,900	0.90	-2.09
Oklahoma	30,487	30,037	28,300	-7.17	-5.78
Oregon‡	34,601	32,992	31,347	-9.40	-4.99
Pennsylvania**	248,570	267,343	275,200	n/c	3.00
Rhode Island	26,381	26,509	25,700	-2.58	-3.05
South Dakota*	2,767	2,748	2,843	2.75	3.46
Tennessee	62,260	71,185	72,100	15.80	1.29
Texas	532,020	531,274	521,400	-2.00	-1.86
Utah	13,800	14,732	14,500	5.07	-1.57
Virginia**	52,122	60,250	57,900	n/c	-2.00
Washington†	26,690	19,708	18,690	-29.97	-5.17
West Virginia*	1,523	1,889	1,796	17.93	-4.92
Wisconsin	72,012	64,652	63,900	-11.26	-1.16
			MEAN	4.73	-0.96
			MEDIAN	1.95	-1.49

*Parole only

^Population figures for Florida obtained from BJS were not comparable to expenditures provided to Vera.

† Community corrections population reported for Washington includes only offenders supervised by the Washington State Department of Correction.

‡ Community correction population figures were obtained directly from the Oregon Department of Correction.

**Due to changes in reporting methods, 2010 probation and/or parole populations may not be comparable to figures reported in previous years. Change reported from FY2009-FY2010 reflects population change from Jan 1, 2010 to Dec 31, 2010.

FIGURE D-4: COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS EXPENDITURES, FY2006, FY2009, FY2010

STATE	EXPENDITURES 2006	EXPENDITURES 2009	EXPENDITURES 2010	ADJUSTED EXPENDITURES 2006	ADJUSTED EXPENDITURES 2009	PERCENT CHANGE FY2006- FY2010	PERCENT CHANGE FY2009- FY2010
Alabama	\$41,368,131	\$50,768,513	\$45,938,006	\$44,744,887	\$51,601,257	2.67	-10.98
Alaska	\$10,924,500	\$13,453,000	\$14,058,300	\$11,816,234	\$13,673,666	18.97	2.81
Arizona*	\$9,281,400	\$13,335,800	\$12,989,300	\$10,039,013	\$13,554,544	29.39	-4.17
Arkansas	\$23,975,373	\$24,942,856	\$28,342,706	\$25,932,410	\$25,351,988	9.29	11.80
Colorado*	\$28,404,664	\$42,343,928	\$42,417,112	\$30,723,251	\$43,038,486	38.06	-1.44
Connecticut*	\$8,645,428	\$14,561,853	\$14,708,644	\$9,351,128	\$14,800,708	57.29	-.62
Delaware	\$23,653,000	\$26,994,800	\$24,916,000	\$25,583,723	\$27,437,589	-2.61	-9.19
Florida**	\$253,273,729	\$253,837,574	\$240,909,947	\$273,947,700	\$258,001,212	-12.06	-6.62
Georgia	\$124,615,722	\$135,811,523	\$140,327,782	\$134,787,728	\$138,039,207	4.11	1.66
Hawaii*	\$3,424,103	\$2,804,778	\$3,381,876	\$3,703,602	\$2,850,784	-8.69	18.63
Illinois*	\$46,090,200	\$58,070,900	\$50,847,900	\$49,852,404	\$59,023,423	2.00	-13.85
Indiana*	\$7,124,613	\$9,877,138	\$9,215,074	\$7,706,174	\$10,039,150	19.58	-8.21
Kentucky	\$28,760,623	\$37,050,564	\$37,074,773	\$31,108,266	\$37,658,296	19.18	-1.55
Louisiana	\$47,911,477	\$63,681,131	\$60,166,708	\$51,822,346	\$64,725,678	16.10	-7.04
Maine	\$7,643,806	\$9,123,988	\$8,805,889	\$8,267,747	\$9,273,647	6.51	-5.04
Maryland	\$93,763,023	\$103,694,315	\$101,873,275	\$101,416,616	\$105,395,188	.45	-3.34
Massachusetts*	\$17,386,620	\$20,268,815	\$19,006,816	\$18,805,837	\$20,601,280	1.07	-7.74
Michigan	\$173,213,188	\$204,172,347	\$223,889,300	\$187,352,058	\$207,521,338	19.50	7.89
Missouri	\$70,410,072	\$90,785,314	\$90,639,112	\$76,157,434	\$92,274,444	19.02	-1.77
Montana	\$33,396,038	\$55,564,276	\$58,400,264	\$36,122,056	\$56,475,684	61.67	3.41
Nebraska*	\$2,021,906	\$2,887,718	\$3,538,366	\$2,186,948	\$2,935,085	61.79	20.55
North Carolina	\$135,459,332	\$160,072,395	\$164,714,345	\$146,516,469	\$162,698,025	12.42	1.24
Ohio	\$176,000,000	\$175,800,000	\$188,700,000	\$190,366,349	\$178,683,606	-.88	5.61
Oklahoma	\$27,499,691	\$36,059,743	\$34,897,398	\$29,744,408	\$36,651,222	17.32	-4.79
Oregon	\$94,410,331	\$107,275,488	\$107,371,389	\$102,116,762	\$109,035,103	5.15	-1.53
Pennsylvania**	\$80,361,000	\$92,864,000	\$96,496,000	\$86,920,626	\$94,387,226	11.02	2.23
Rhode Island	\$10,125,954	\$11,403,030	\$10,843,932	\$10,952,505	\$11,590,071	-.99	-6.44
South Dakota*	\$3,126,478	\$3,789,501	\$3,785,177	\$3,381,683	\$3,851,659	11.93	-1.73
Tennessee	\$62,177,611	\$70,439,000	\$74,644,600	\$67,252,982	\$71,594,394	10.99	4.26
Texas	\$419,261,716	\$433,560,545	\$449,682,860	\$453,484,785	\$440,672,137	-.84	2.04
Utah	\$42,368,100	\$49,430,800	\$44,928,500	\$45,826,480	\$50,241,602	-1.96	-10.58
Virginia	\$78,249,573	\$78,381,535	\$73,540,055	\$84,636,850	\$79,667,209	-13.11	-7.69
Washington**	\$101,167,667	\$129,170,922	\$124,342,088	\$109,425,679	\$131,289,682	13.63	-5.29
West Virginia*	\$2,793,389	\$3,205,048	\$3,589,371	\$3,021,405	\$3,257,620	18.80	10.18
Wisconsin	\$148,964,233	\$181,533,782	\$188,417,956	\$161,123,734	\$184,511,438	16.94	2.12
					MEAN	13.25	-.72
					MEDIAN	11.02	-1.55

*Parole expenditures only

**Does not reflect all community corrections expenditures

Acknowledgments

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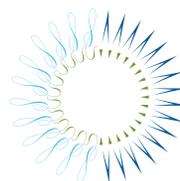
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