

# REDUCING CORRECTIONS COSTS

THROUGH SMART AND SAFE POLICY SOLUTIONS



## How Arizona can fight crime, reduce costs, and protect communities

*"There is an urgent need to address the astronomical growth in the prison population, with its huge costs in dollars and lost human potential. . . The criminal justice system is broken, and conservatives must lead the way in fixing it."* — **Newt Gingrich, former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives**

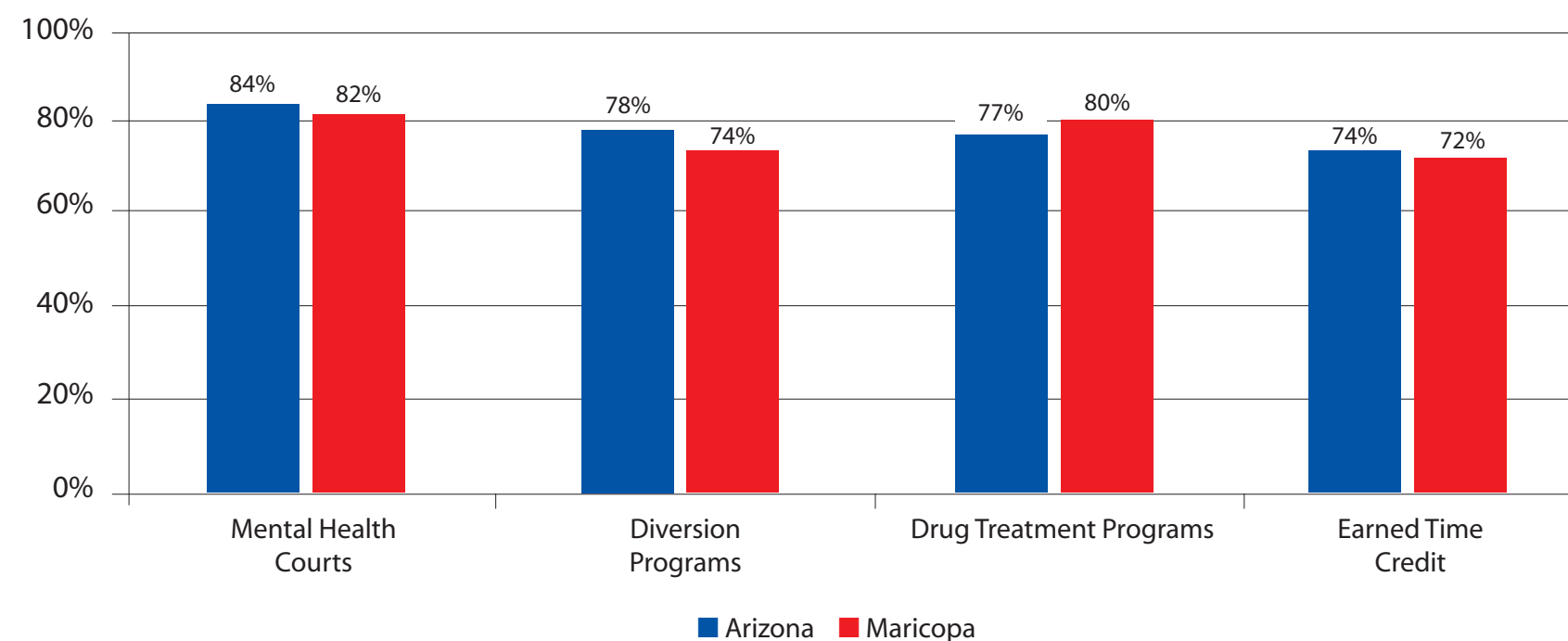
There is a growing consensus in Arizona and nationally that the incarceration-focused approach to crime has reached a point of diminishing returns. While high incarceration rates succeeded in temporarily incapacitating offenders, increased recidivism rates and skyrocketing corrections costs have revealed the need for more nuanced and practical criminal justice solutions.

While prisons may be appropriate for those who pose a serious risk to the community, there are a range of common sense policy approaches that cost far less and are more effective at reducing crime.

### Arizona Voters Favor Smart and Safe Approaches

Voters in Arizona support alternative ways of handling low-risk, non-violent offenders as a budget-saving strategy.

#### SUPPORT FOR ALTERNATIVES TO PRISON



<http://www.afsc.org/story/poll-arizona-voters-approve-alternatives-incarceration-disapprove-corrections-spending-privati>

### Our Broken System

*"Today's criminal justice system is big government on steroids, and the responsibility for taming its excesses falls to those committed to smaller government: conservatives. We fight against big government, excess spending, unaccountability, and bureaucracy in nearly every other segment of spending."* — **Grover Norquist, President of Americans for Tax Reform**

Arizona has the 6th highest incarceration rate in the US, and the highest of Western states, including California.

**The Department of Corrections budget for 2014 is over \$1 billion** (\$1,016,655,700).

Corrections is the third largest agency share of the budget, absorbing 11% of the state General Fund. Since 2003, the Corrections budget has increased by 67%.

Arizona's recidivism rate is conservatively estimated at 42%. Recidivism means *future crime*. No responsible business would survive in the free market with a 40% failure rate. Yet, we continue to pursue this counterproductive model, sinking billions into a revolving door of prisons, courts, and crime.



### What Works?

*"I believe we can take an approach to crime that is both tough and smart. . . [T]here are thousands of non-violent offenders in the system whose future we cannot ignore. Let's focus more resources on rehabilitating those offenders so we can ultimately spend less money locking them up again."* — **Rick Perry, Governor of Texas**

In recent years, reducing prison populations with the goal of controlling correctional costs has been a salient reason for reform in states like Kansas, Mississippi, and Texas. Overall, **prison populations declined by 28,582 in twenty-six states during 2011, or 1.5%**. These policy and practice changes have reduced prison populations in some states to a level so low that they have begun closing prisons.



### Cost Effective Solutions

Various types of alternative sentencing and drug treatment programs are vastly more affordable than incarceration.

	Prison	Jail	Drug Court*	Drug Treatment	Standard Probation*
<b>Cost per person, per year</b>	\$22,166	\$23,725 (\$65.00/day)	\$3,309	\$2,735	\$1,669

\*Data are for Maricopa County only