

10/30/24 Six States - Alabama, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, North Carolina, and Washington - have joined “Reentry 2030”, an initiative led by the Council of State Governments and partly funded by DOJ. Focused on persons being released from incarceration, it seeks to promote their successful transition into society by providing a host of services, including physical and mental health care, educational opportunities, job training, and access to housing. It’s hoped that in time every State will join in. (See 8/12/21 and 5/7/22 updates)

10/21/24 Ninety-three million bucks. That’s what California’s paid a vendor since 2003 to have it house and monitor 56 “sexually violent predators” after their conditional release from prison. Good news is that only two of the 56 recidivated. In contrast, of the 125 “predators” whom courts unconditionally released, twenty-four were reconvicted of 42 felonies and 13 misdemeanors within 10 years. But the program’s excellent outcome was likely facilitated by the recommitment of releasees who evidenced dodgy behavior.

7/23/24 L.A. County D.A. George Gascon’s progressive policies - among other things, he forbid sentence enhancements and trying juveniles as adults - caused major clashes with his assistant D.A.’s, who openly criticize him in the media. Several, claiming retaliation, have even sued. Come election time Gascon will face Nathan Hochman, a former Federal prosecutor who’s certain that his “hard middle” crime-fighting approach will win the day. And he’s got a victim of violent crime, Mary Klein, openly rooting for his success.

5/20/24 In a bristling editorial, the *Chicago Tribune* condemned a move by progressive D.A. Kim Foxx, who is not standing for reelection, to reject drug and gun cases generated through traffic stops. After all, most of those stopped are persons of color, and few arrests are made. But the *Tribune*’s editors emphasize that it’s precisely the residents of neighborhoods of color who are most impacted by guns on the street. “If officers are effectively prohibited from looking for these weapons, more people will die.”

2/9/24 In September 2018 Illinois man Torrey Lewis was arrested and charged with the July 2017 shooting death of a disabled man. Lewis was held on a high bond, but in 2020 he was released on electronic monitoring because of the pandemic. Since then, provisions of Illinois’ 2021 SAFE-T Act, which eliminated cash bail, granted Lewis unmonitored “free time” each week. And on January 31 he took advantage, driving a stolen car at “over 100” MPH and getting involved in a car-to-car shootout in which he and three others were wounded. Prosecutors want him detained when released from the hospital.

11/3/23 In its third year, Chicago’s “restorative justice court” program uses peer

“circles” and education and job services to help reform youths convicted of non-violent crimes (so far, eighty percent faced gun possession charges.) A review revealed that participants have exhibited far less recidivism than conventionally punished peers. Successful outcomes lead to expungement of all records. Originally limited to several poor, highly crime-impacted neighborhoods, it’s being expanded to suburban areas. (See 11/14/20 update)

9/20/23 As Illinois began its first day without cash bail, judges across the State were required to release accused persons unless prosecutors presented convincing evidence that they posed a substantial risk to others or were a serious flight risk. Faced with making decisions about two defendants who committed crimes while armed, a judge released one on home monitoring but remanded the other, as to whom there was substantial proof that they pointed a gun. “I do find that he does (pose a threat)”. (See 7/2/23 update)

8/18/23 To reduce recidivism, SWIFT, a Tarrant County, Texas program, provides selected high-risk felony probationers, including gang members, with intensive supervision. An academic study that compared the outcomes of gang members in the program with gang members who were on conventional probation determined that revocations were less likely for participants. But members of both groups were equally likely to be re-arrested.

8/16/23 Elected to office in 2020 during the post-George Floyd wave, progressive L.A.D.A. George Gascon formed a special unit to seek re-sentencing of prisoners convicted under his disfavored punitive model. But so far only 95 of 400 candidates have directly benefited. Frustrated defense lawyers blame opposition from within by assistant D.A.’s. And to two (albeit, unsuccessful) recall campaigns. But a spokesperson insists that the program is functional, and that many defendants have benefited through other means, including the application of California’s 2019 resentencing law.

7/21/23 New Los Angeles Superior Court policies eliminate cash bail for most misdemeanants and nonviolent felons. Most persons will presumably be cited and released. However, some arrestees, including all parolees and persons already under supervision, may be required to appear before a judge - one will be available around the clock - who can impose conditions such as electronic tracking and home monitoring. Bail will still be imposed on domestic assailants.

7/19/23 On September 18 Illinois will become the first State to do away with cash bail. On July 18 its Supreme Court ruled 5-2, with conservative Justices on the losing side, in favor of a hotly challenged provision of the reform-minded “SAFE-T Act”. To

detain someone pre-trial, [prosecutors will have to demonstrate](#) by “clear and convincing evidence” that an accused “poses a real and present threat to the safety of a specific, identifiable person or persons.” Governor J.B. Pritzker said he’s open to making changes should they prove necessary. (See 9/20/23 update)

[6/5/23](#) In 1982 Texas man Raul Meza was on parole for a robbery and shooting when he pled guilty to the rape/murder of an 8-year old girl. He got 30 years and was released in 1993 after serving one-third of his term. Meza was then “run out” of a string of cities. He’s now back in custody, charged with two murders in the Austin area (he turned himself in and admitted to one). Meza is also being looked at in ten “cold cases”. Austin’s City Manager complains that “somebody made a bad decision 41 years ago and let this guy for whatever reason manipulate the system and justice was not served.”

[4/10/23](#) In 2021, after serving seven years in a Texas prison for murder, Lydell Grant was a free man. Although six eyewitnesses said they saw him stab the victim, new DNA evidence and a confession by another man led to Grant’s exoneration. But he’s now back in jail, accused of shooting the driver of another car dead after a minor collision.

[12/15/22](#) Oregon Governor Kate Brown commuted the death sentences of all 17 inmates slated for execution to life without parole. She did so, she said, because death sentences are immoral. Governor Brown has drawn criticism for issuing nearly 1,000 grants of clemency during the pandemic, including to 73 persons under eighteen who committed violent crimes ranging to murder.

[12/5/22](#) Adding to the discord in the L.A. D.A.’s office brought on by the election of George Gascon, a decades-long prosecutor is suing him after she was removed from a high-ranking position. Victoria Adams claims the move came as retaliation for objecting to a series of progressively-minded measures, including prohibitions on seeking sentence enhancements and trying juveniles as adults. Other assistant D.A.’s have also sued, and they and their colleagues have been openly criticizing their boss in the media.

[11/30/22](#) NIJ assigned a “promising” rating to a Minnesota program that places selected high-risk prison releasees under intense supervision. Agents make frequent visits and assure that participants complete required activities, including work, job training, education and treatment of psychological disorders. A one-year followup revealed significant reductions in rearrest and reconviction for ordinary and violent offending. But there was also a significant increase in revocations for technical violations.

[10/27/22](#) Darrell Brooks, who by all appearances purposely drove his SUV into a

Waukesha, Wis. Christmas parade last year, killing six and injuring “dozens,” was quickly convicted at his murder trial. Brooks, [a convicted felon and registered sex offender](#), turned away an insanity plea and represented himself. During the trial he very much acted the madman, declaring himself a “sovereign citizen” and repeatedly tangling with the judge. (See 11/22/21 update)

9/13/22 On Sept. 2 Memphis resident Eliza Fletcher, 34, disappeared during a Friday morning jog. Video depicted a man forcing her into a truck, where a struggle apparently ensued. Cleotha Abston, 38, was arrested the next day. His DNA was matched to the victim’s sandals, which were located near the crime scene. Fletcher’s body was found two days later in a vacant apartment. Abston’s criminal record dates back to the mid-90’s. He was released in 2020 after serving two decades for armed kidnapping.

9/8/22 Violent recidivists aren’t just a problem in the U.S. Myles Sanderson, 32, whose knife-armed rampage in an indigenous Canadian reserve killed ten and wounded eighteen, was paroled in February from a term for assault and robbery. His 59 past convictions include the stabbing, seven years ago, of one of his new victims. Sanderson’s parole was revoked in May. He remained at large, and authorities say they will investigate the decision to free him. Sanderson apparently committed suicide yesterday as police closed in. His brother Damien’s body was found two days earlier.

8/19/22 A recent National Academies of Science workshop, “The Impact of Juvenile Justice System Involvement on the Health and Well-Being of Communities of Color,” addressed the disproportionate involvement of minority youths in the criminal justice system. It recommended alternatives to detention and punishment “that promote health and positive development” while taking culture and gender identity into account.

8/3/22 Rebelling against progressively-minded D.A. Kim Foxx, Chicago prosecutors continue to resign. Most recently that includes James Murphy, who headed the prosecution of murder and other serious crimes. He called his boss’s excuse, that the shift away from prosecuting lower-level crimes was a way to concentrate on serious matters, a lie. “This administration is more concerned with political narratives and agendas than with victims and prosecuting violent crime. That is why I can’t stay any longer.”

7/23/22 In 2019 New York State [eliminated cash bail for misdemeanors and non-violent felonies](#). On July 21, during his campaign for New York Governor, Rep. Lee Zeldin (R-NY) was assaulted by a man wielding a pointed plastic object. David G. Jakubonis, 43, was tackled by bystanders and arrested for attempted assault. It’s considered a non-violent felony, and he was released without bail. This episode is now

being cited as evidence that the “Blues” have gone unreasonably soft on crime. [A day later](#) Feds arrested Jakubonis for assaulting a Member of Congress, and he is being held without bail.

[After serving six years](#) of a 50-life term for robbery-murder, Andrew Cachu, 25, was released last year under the provisions of [Prop. 57](#). Enacted in 2016, it requires that prosecutors who wish to apply adult sentencing to persons such as Cachu, who was 17 when he committed the crime, justify it in a hearing. But progressive L.A. District Attorney George Gascon forbid it, and Cachu was freed. He is now charged with having a gun, possessing drugs for sale and fleeing from police.

[7/16/22](#) When progressive Los Angeles D.A. George Gascon took office in 2020 he forbid prosecutors from seeking sentence enhancements based on prior convictions. His staff revolted, their union sued, and a State appeals court [ordered him to rescind the directive](#), as State law trumped his policies. He did, but his lawyers have appealed to the California Supreme Court.

[6/30/22](#) Justin Flores, a 35-year old Southern California man, had a long criminal record. But thanks to the D.A.’s intercession, his conviction last year for felon with a gun resulted in probation. And even as Flores continued misbehaving - a warrant was recently issued for domestic violence - probation officers failed to follow up in person. So they’re also catching blame for the violent deaths of two El Monte police officers earlier this month, shot dead by Flores when they responded to reports of an assault at a motel.

[6/17/22](#) According to a deputy L.A. county prosecutor, Justin Flores, who murdered two El Monte police officers on June 14, had a prior felony conviction that should have counted as a “strike” when he was arrested for drug and gun offenses in 2020. But new, progressive D.A. George Gascon forbid using enhancements. In 2021 Flores pled no contest, and the lack of a “strike” enabled him to get probation instead of prison time. Flores was under probation supervision when he gunned down the officers. Judges later ruled that State sentencing laws overruled Gascon’s lenient policy, and he withdrew it.

[6/7/22](#) Far fewer teens under eighteen are being sent to adult courts, even for serious crimes. That “historic” shift - referrals dropped from about 250,000 (8% of youths) to about 53,000 (2%) between 2010 and 2019 - is meant to prevent the harms of imprisonment. Community treatment options including counseling and peer mediation show considerable promise. But there have been some notable failures, and skeptics abound. One police chief called the new approach “arrest, release, repeat.”

5/7/22 “Have a safe trip to Danville.” That’s how Cook County (Chicago) Judge Stanley Stacks disposed of prosecutors’ motion to lop off a year from serial burglar Charles Miles’ sentence so he could get the special supports and participate in re-entry programs offered to convicts who are granted early release under [Illinois’ new resentencing law](#). Judge Stacks called Miles a “congenital burglar” and unlikely to take advantage of or benefit from the new offerings. So he sent him back to finish his term (see 3/19/22 and 10/20/24 updates).

4/18/22 In 2017 Garden Grove (Calif.) resident Ike Nicholas Souzer was thirteen and on home detection when he stabbed his mother to death. Prosecutors charged the “autistic” and “volatile” youth with murder, but in 2019 he was convicted of manslaughter as a juvenile. A few days ago he was released early to home monitoring. His grandmother warned the D.A. that “with that ankle bracelet, he’s not going to make it through the day.” Sure enough, the “extremely dangerous and violent” youth, who once escaped while awaiting trial, promptly cut it off and fled. [He was arrested one day later](#).

4/13/22 LAPD attributes a sharp increase in “follow-off” robberies to teams of South-L.A. gang members who assail persons they observe leaving luxury stores and steal jewelry and other valuables for resale to entrepreneurs. There were 165 such robberies in 2021 and 56 so far this year. A special task force has served nearly 300 search warrants and made dozens of arrests for robbery, gun possession and attempted murder. But officers are frustrated that arrestees are quickly released without bail. It took four arrests - most recently, for seven robberies - before one suspect was finally held without bond.

3/30/22 An overall rise in gun crime, and reports that persons released without bail often reoffend, have led New York Governor Kathy Hochul to propose rolling back some of the bail reforms enacted in 2020. Among other things, she would narrow the list of crimes for which release without bail is required and once again let judges consider a defendant’s threat to society when setting bail. (New York is reportedly the only State that prohibits it.) But reformers staunchly oppose any changes.

3/19/22 [Illinois’ resentencing law](#) took effect January 1. It lets local prosecutors petition courts to resentence persons to lesser terms “if the original sentence no longer advances the interests of justice.” Victims have an opportunity for input. Cook County (Chicago) D.A. Kim Foxx said she will soon “begin addressing the fact that many Black and brown people are still incarcerated today under failed policies of the past, even though they have been rehabilitated and pose little threat to public safety.” Elderly inmates and those who served ten or more years come first; sex crimes and homicide seem to be out.

[2/22/22](#) George Gascon, L.A.'s progressive D.A., conceded it was wrong to let Hannah Tubbs, a 26-year old transgender woman plead as a juvenile to a vicious sexual assault on a 10-year old girl when Tubbs was 17 and still identified as male. It turns out that FOX News got jailhouse recordings of Tubbs' boasts about the misdeed and its lack of consequences. Some of Gascon's deputies have openly despaired about their boss's go-easy policies, and another recall campaign (the first ran out of steam) is brewing.

[2/17/22](#) After facing threats of recall over his progressive policies, George Gascon, L.A.'s liberally-minded D.A. tweaked his much-criticized decision to forbid prosecutors from trying juveniles as adults. Instead, he now requires that such moves be approved by a supervisor. That change, he says, is in response to a looming judicial decision on Proposition 57, whose provisions could be interpreted to force the mass release of juveniles who were convicted as adults, and even for the most serious crimes. [Gascon subsequently announced](#) he would again allow prosecutors, with his approval, to seek life sentences, whose imposition he forbid when taking office. And on 2/21/22

[2/11/22](#) On December 8th. 2021 a 16-year old Chicago boy was arrested for armed robbery. He was carrying a loaded Glock. This was his second armed robbery arrest within months, but he was released and fit with an ankle bracelet. That enabled authorities to retrospectively track his movements a few days ago, when he hijacked a car at gunpoint, then shot a 15-year old boy as he walked to school. And to insure that his victim was dead, shot him nine more times as he lay on the ground.

[1/14/22](#) New, more permissive guidelines have made "thousands" of additional Federal inmates eligible for early release to supervision or home confinement. More than three-thousand were already released under the [2018 First Step Act](#), which confers 54 days of good-time credit for each year of a sentence imposed for a non-violent, non-gun related offense.

[1/13/22](#) As violence soars, even some "Blue" legislators are "reexamining" a provision of Illinois' massive 2021 criminal justice reform bill that eliminates cash bail as of January 1, 2023 to insure that persons charged with attempted murder and other violent crimes aren't simply let go. (Click [here](#) for the bill text and [here](#) for a summary.) After all, a Democratic legislator's husband recently traded gunfire with suspects who carjacked the pair in a Chicago suburb. Under pressure from the "Reds," legislators have also been tweaking other parts of the law, including provisions on officer decertification.

[12/30/21](#) An *L.A. Times* editorial ridicules the notion that Prop. 47 and bail reform may have increased crime. Instead, it points out that according to [LAPD data](#), robbery and burglary have declined since 2019. That's true for robbery, but only when compared to 2020 (it increased 5.3% this year.) Burglaries have come down somewhat, but Prop. 47 narrowed its application. Vehicle thefts are up 53.6% since 2019, and other forms of theft increased this year. And the *Times* itself recently [published a story](#) about a murder

allegedly committed by two persons who had been released after their arrest for serious crimes.

12/27/21 A Los Angeles man, Jose Ruiz Gutierrez, 23, was shot dead when he tried to intervene in the robbery of his companion. Three men were arrested for his murder. Two had been released and were awaiting court dates on recent cases: Jayon Sanders, 21, for felon with a gun, robbery, assault on an officer, and other charges; and Abraham Castillo, 20, for carrying a concealed weapon. A fourth man, Joshua Saulsberry, 21, who was charged only with robbery, recently pled not guilty to felon with a gun.

12/7/21 In the Illinois Governor's race, one political party (the "Reds") is citing the sharp increase in violent crime as proof that the "Blues," led by Governor J.B. Pritzker, have ignored the real threat to life and limb that voters face. But the "Blues" complain that the "Reds" are "racializing" things to appeal to suburban Whites. Pritzker may have become more vulnerable because earlier this year he signed a progressive criminal justice bill that, among other things, ends cash bail in 2023 (see 2/23/21 entry).

12/3/21 [Beverly Hills police arrested Aaeriel Maynor, 29,](#) for the murder of a noted Beverly Hills philanthropist who was gunned down in her own home. Maynor, a convicted armed robber on parole, was captured after accidentally wounding himself with an AR-15 rifle while committing a burglary. On the same day, in Chicago, [a man out on bail for carjacking](#) and a second suspect were arrested after an officer was shot and wounded during a traffic stop. Blake Williams, 22, is being held on \$250,000 bond. Meanwhile, [LAPD chief Michel Moore](#) attributed the persistence of high-end retail thefts on a permissive pandemic-era policy that recently led to the release of fourteen smash-and-grabbers on low or no bail.

11/22/21 On November 21 a speeding SUV plowed into a Waukesha (WI) Christmas parade, killing five and injuring 48. A police officer fired on the vehicle, but without apparent effect. Its driver, Darrell E. Brooks Jr., 39, was fleeing from a domestic dispute. [A registered sex offender](#), his felony convictions include a 1999 aggravated robbery and a 2010 strangulation. On November 5 Brooks was released on \$1,000 bond for "reckless endangerment" and other charges for allegedly "running over" a woman after a dispute. Prosecutors have criticized that bail amount as being far too low.

10/8/21 Struggling to find help because of the pandemic, some major employers are taking on promising ex-cons. Their success is encouraging others. Major industries including Koch and Amazon have partnered with "[Honest Jobs](#)," an Ohio-based service that seeks out and screens qualified felons to fill vacancies in various fields. But there are serious challenges. Felons often lack skills and education. Rising violence may also be leading potential employers to harbor second thoughts.

10/5/21 On parole for the aggravated kidnapping of “a teen relative of his ex-girlfriend,” whom he had held a knifepoint, Chicago man Donald Williams, 38 did it again. This time he imprisoned his roommate and her eleven-year old daughter in their apartment for days, repeatedly pummeling them and cutting them with a knife, and all because their landlord wanted him to move out. Once police showed up he barricaded himself, set a fire and eventually jumped out. And yes, his parole has been revoked.

9/17/21 With time and money running out and only 200,000 of the required 580,000 voter signatures on hand, recall backers suspended their effort against George Gascon, L.A.’s progressively-minded new D.A. But they vow to be back. Gascon’s moves to end cash bail and prohibit assistant D.A.’s from seeking death penalties and sentence enhancements [angered crime victims and many of his own deputies](#).

5/22/21 Elected under a progressive platform, L.A. District Attorney George Gascon faces a recall campaign. Efforts are underway to gather nearly 600,000 voter signatures by the deadline, October 27.

8/12/21 A 2018 NIJ-funded randomized controlled trial of 988 adult offenders who had been released from confinement found that after thirty months those who were assigned to a specially-funded “second-chance” re-entry program offering enhanced supervision, job training, help with substance abuse and cognitive therapy fared no better than the control group in terms of re-arrest and re-conviction. (See 10/30/24 update)

7/29/21 A five-year follow-up study of prisoners released in 2012 by 34 states revealed that within five years 71 percent were re-arrested and 46 percent were re-imprisoned for probation/parole violation or a new crime. Yearly arrest percentages ranged from 37 percent during the first year of freedom to 26 percent during the fifth.

7/9/21 A Loyola University study of a 2017 Chicago judicial initiative to increase pretrial release and insure that bail is affordable revealed that those who benefited were significantly more likely to fail to appear but not significantly more likely to commit a crime. (See 2/13/20 and 3/11/20 updates.)

5/25/21 In 2020 murders in L.A. surged 36 percent, reaching a decade-high 305. Police Chief Michel Moore attributes the spike to gang violence, the “despair and dislocation” of COVID, and the elimination of cash bail, which quickly put violent persons back on the streets: “When those gun arrests are not going to court...zero bail, court trials being deferred...there’s a sense [of] a lack of consequences.” Defunding the police has been replaced by a drive to replenish the ranks. Stop-and-frisk, once abandoned, is back in South L.A., where an elite unit is waging a targeted campaign.

5/23/21 Cook County (Chicago) has 1,544 persons awaiting trial for serious felonies at home. They’re wearing ankle bracelets. Ninety four face murder charges; 33, carjacking;

569, “aggravated unlawful use of a weapon.” And so forth. These numbers are vastly larger than pre-pandemic. According to Chief Judge Timothy Evans, who advocates criminal justice reforms, COVID forced an emptying of the jails. In any event, those released are not a threat and must be presumed innocent until proven otherwise.

3/26/21 In a potentially far-reaching decision, the California Supreme Court ruled that defendants must not be denied release simply because they cannot afford bail, and that if an amount within their means cannot be set measures that are “less restrictive” than confinement (such as wearing an ankle monitor) must be considered. ([*In re Kenneth Humphrey*, no. S247278](#))

3/10/21 BJS reports that the local jail population decreased about twenty-five percent during the twelve months ending June 30, 2020. Inmates being held on misdemeanors declined about 45 percent; those held for felonies, about 18 percent. At mid-year 2020 the jail incarceration rate was 167/100K, the lowest in three decades. COVID-imposed restrictions are considered the primary cause. [Report](#)

3/1/21 [Lawrence Anderson](#), an Oklahoma parolee with a string of prison sentences, savagely killed three persons two weeks after the state parole board commuted his most recent term. Their move, which has been severely criticized by the D.A., came during a three-day meeting in which the board reviewed six-hundred clemency requests. Anderson had reportedly cooked a victim’s heart and served it as food.

[Complaints that moves by George Gascon](#), L.A.’s newly-elected D.A., to implement a progressive agenda that prohibits his staff from seeking cash bail, sentence enhancements and the death penalty has led deputy D.A.’s, victim’s rights advocates and law enforcement and political figures to mount a campaign for his recall.

2/23/21 Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker signed a bill that eliminates cash bail in 2023. Civil libertarians enthusiastically backed the measure, which was reportedly inspired by [the death of George Floyd](#). Some worry, though, that judges might overuse the right to detain offenders they consider dangerous. [The Chicago Tribune announced its opposition](#) because it fears that dangerous persons will be released into the community. [Police and prosecutors have consistently opposed the bill](#) as it mandates release of pre-trial arrestees for a broad range of crimes, “irrespective of their likelihood of re-offending, the danger they pose generally to the public, or their willingness to comply with conditions of their release.”

2/9/21 [A judge ruled that plans](#) by George Gascon, Los Angeles County’s new, progressive D.A., to end the use of sentencing enhancements for categories such as felons, gang members and use of a weapon violates state law. With violence in L.A. way up, that promise drew flack from victims, judges and his own staff. Gascon has directed that his prosecutors [ask judges to release arrestees without bail](#) except for violent

felonies, and has prohibited seeking the death penalty, trying juveniles as adults, and prosecuting first-time violators for minor, “nuisance” crimes such as trespass and loitering. He has also promised more emphasis on prosecuting officers who use excessive force.

1/29/21 Cook County (Chicago) prosecutors charged Daniel Regalado, 27 with reckless homicide after a Jan. 20 head-on crash that killed a 12-year old girl. Regalado’s blood-alcohol was six times over the limit. Regalado has been out on bond on three felony cases, including ex-con with a gun in 2019 and reckless discharge of a firearm in 2018. Citizens, community leaders and the Mayor of Oak Lawn accuse D.A. Kim Foxx “of being more concerned about criminals than innocent victims” and demand she resign.

1/13/21 On January 12 the 3rd. Circuit Court of Appeal overruled a District Court decision that allowed “[Safehouse](#),” a Philadelphia non-profit, to open a “supervised injection site” where users inject illegal drugs under medical supervision. According to the Court, such sites, which are open and regulated in portions of Canada and Europe, and have been proposed in the U.S., violate Federal drug laws.

12/16/20 LAPD is blaming COVID-inspired early releases from jail and prison of gang members and repeat offenders for the dramatic increase in violence being experienced in poverty-stricken South Los Angeles, with forty killings in a recent week alone. According to a deputy chief, “information is getting out to the street that if you carry a firearm and you get arrested, you aren’t going to stay in jail.”

11/22/20 In Sept. 2017 Chicago courts facilitated pre-trial release by eliminating or reducing bail. In six months 500 additional defendants were released (9,200 instead of 8,700). A study revealed that those released after the change were slightly more likely to FTA but equally likely to reoffend (17 percent) as those released under the old guidelines. Overall Chicago crime rates did not change.

11/14/20 Young non-violent arrestees who reside In Chicago’s poor, violence-stricken North Lawndale neighborhood can opt out of the criminal justice system and be processed, instead, by a “restorative justice” court comprised of area residents. “Repair of harm agreements” include assignment to job training, drug treatment and counseling. Since 2017, none of the 63 who successfully completed the full program have been rearrested. (See 11/3/23 update)

7/14/20 NIJ’s assessment of HOPE, a stern version of probation with close monitoring and consequences for even minor infractions, found that it did not reduce “number of arrests, revocations and time to first arrest.” However, HOPE participants were more likely to be reconvicted.

4/23/20 Released without bail because of the pandemic, some California jail inmates who were being held pending trial have been quickly rearrested on new crimes. [Rocky](#)

[Lee Music](#), 32, an ex-con, allegedly committed a carjacking twenty minutes after his release from a jail where he was being held for car theft. [Owen Aguilar](#), 27, who was being held for criminal threats, was arrested on multiple counts of arson a few days after his release. [Kristopher Sylvester](#), 34, was let go twice. Two weeks after his release from jail, where he was being held on multiple counts of burglary, he and three buds were arrested for a string of car thefts. All four had substantial records, and all were let go.

4/17/20 To lessen the COVID-19 strain on its jails, on March 19 Hillsborough County, Fla. released 164 inmates who were booked on non-violent offenses. Among them was Joseph Edward Williams, a 26-year old ex-con arrested six days earlier for heroin possession. Williams has an extensive arrest record and convictions on burglary and gun charges. One day after his release he allegedly shot and killed a man. Williams is now back in jail. He faces charges of murder, resisting arrest and ex-con with a gun.

4/15/20 Two days ago Maryland's chief appellate judge [issued an "administrative order"](#) directing juvenile court judges to avoid detaining juveniles, and to consider others for release, when consistent with public safety. Arguing against any mass release, the Maryland Crime Victims Resource Center [pointed out](#) that what public defenders call "technical violations" may actually reflect dangerous behavior.

4/3/20 Ohio prisons hold 39,000 inmates. Pressed to grant early releases because of COVID-19, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine recommends that courts let thirty-eight non-violent offenders go. Of these, 23 are pregnant or delivered babies while serving time, and each of the others is over age sixty and within sixty days of release. "What we're doing is trying to be very careful, very respectful of the local courts, very respectful of the victims, very respectful of public safety. That's why we set a pretty strict — or very strict — criteria about who we would even think about." Additional releases would be "methodically" considered, and public safety would come first.

3/27/20 An NIJ-funded meta-analysis concludes that "focused intervention" programs that go beyond what's usually offered to ex-offenders can significantly reduce recidivism. Among these are cognitive-behavioral therapy, structured group counseling and drug court. [NIJ practices page](#)

3/11/20 A new academic study contradicts earlier findings by Chicago's court system that bail reforms which increased the number of persons released before trial did not lead to more crime. Researchers instead found that after the 2017 loosening, the proportion of releasees charged with new crimes increased by 45 percent, and with new violent crimes by 33 percent. They also confirmed the *Tribune* findings reported below (see 2/13/20 update).

2/14/20 Fearful that official opposition to the State's recent bail reforms may cause them to be dumped altogether, New York's "progressives" are backing changes that

would do away with cash bail but allow judges to keep dangerous accused in jail. Factors that would be considered for remand would include risk of non-appearance, criminal record and whether a crime resulted in death.

2/13/20 An extensive *Chicago Tribune* analysis of the effects of bail reforms implemented by the county's chief judge, including the reduction and elimination of cash bail, concludes that claims it reduced violent crime are based on flawed data and a purposely narrow definition of a crime of violence. Twelve homicides were allegedly committed in Chicago during the first nine months of 2019 by persons released under the new rules.

2/11/20 In a speech to the Major Counties Sheriffs of America, AG William Barr warned that lax prosecution of repeat offenders by "progressive" D.A.'s who engage in "catch-and-release and revolving-door policies" (he mentioned San Francisco, Seattle, St. Louis, Chicago, and Baltimore) imperiled public safety and was causing increased crime and violence.

2/10/20 In 2017 Robert Williams, 43, was paroled for a 2002 attempted murder in which he shot a civilian during a carjacking then fired at police. Yesterday he ambushed two NYPD officers sitting in a van, then opened fire in a precinct house. Two officers were wounded. Williams, who was due to appear in court in connection with a recent arrest for obstructing police, was taken into custody.

2/10/20 A string of fatal vehicle-pedestrian accidents involving drivers with a history of moving violations is leading New York City authorities to consider get-tough measures against drivers who repeatedly rack up speeding and red-light camera tickets. Instead of simply being fined, recidivists could face mandatory driver education or have their vehicles impounded.