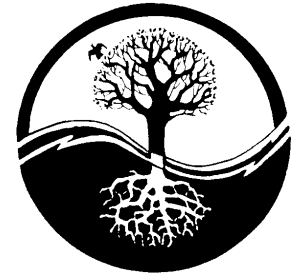


Justice Reinvestment



An Act to Increase Neighborhood Safety and Opportunity

SECTION I – Reducing Certain Low-Level Felonies to Misdemeanors

- This section of the Act changes some low level crimes like drug possession and petty-theft from potential felonies to misdemeanors. Cost savings from the changes will be invested in grants for job-creation and programs to help young people stay in school.
- Under this section of the Act, theft under \$950 would be a misdemeanor, including shoplifting or theft by check or credit card, and possession of a small amount of a drug for personal use would be a misdemeanor, rather than a felony.
- These provisions do not change penalty levels for felony charges or misdemeanors, only the threshold for triggering a much more serious penalty. Misdemeanors carry a sentence of up to 2 ½ years in jail, while felonies can carry much longer sentences.
- This focuses law enforcement resources on violent and serious crime, and stops wasting prison space on petty crimes.
- These provisions are modeled after California’s Proposition 47, which was authored by George Gascon, San Francisco County **District Attorney** and William Landsdowne, Former **Chief of Police** of San Diego, Richmond and San Jose, and which voters passed overwhelmingly in November 2014.
- These provisions will save Massachusetts taxpayers millions of dollars that can be better used for schools and for job creation. In California, the Legislative Analyst’s Office projects that these reforms will save taxpayers \$200 million per year.
- Massachusetts voters have consistently shown that they want policymakers to treat the underlying causes of addiction and desperation rather than wasting our precious resources on incarcerating people for low-level offenses, which tends to exacerbate those underlying causes and leads to more serious crime down the road.

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