



LEADING ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

I'm proud that Connecticut leads the nation in criminal justice reform. Compared to ten years ago, there are fewer people in prison, and more people at home in their communities. Overhauling the bail system has brought us one step closer to fulfilling the promise of equal justice under law for all. Reforms inside our prisons are bringing them closer in line with their correctional mission and reducing recidivism. And all of that was accomplished while driving crime rates down to historic lows and saving tens of millions of taxpayer dollars.

We have made important reforms to pre-trial practices and prison conditions, but have not done nearly enough to prevent people from becoming involved in the justice system in the first place or to successfully reintegrate residents into their communities after they have served their time.

While we make progress on our vision of a second chance society, we must redouble our efforts to ensure that everyone in Connecticut has a first chance at success. That means fighting for equal access to good jobs, housing, excellent public education, and affordable healthcare. It also means being vigilant against laws that, no matter their intentions, negatively impact communities of color.

The contrast in this election couldn't be clearer. Bob Stefanowski believes that our model policies are "out of control" – I understand that we need to move forward, not backward, on reform.

As governor, I will:

- **Appoint smart-on-crime prosecutors dedicated to ending mass incarceration.** Connecticut's prosecutors are chosen by a Criminal Justice Commission whose members are appointed by the governor. My appointees to that Commission will share my commitment to ending mass incarceration, reflect the diversity of our state and the communities most impacted by mass incarceration, and include a formerly incarcerated person who can ensure affected communities have a voice in the informed, even-handed administration of justice.
- **Legalize marijuana and remedy the harms caused by discriminatory criminalization.** The war on drugs has been a failure, and its costs have fallen particularly hard on Connecticut's people of color. In my first year in office, I will not only follow neighboring states in responsibly

regulating marijuana – I will also right historical wrongs by expunging non-violent marijuana convictions and ensuring communities victimized by criminalization receive their fair share of legalization’s benefits, like new tax revenue and distributor licenses.

- **Continue the Risk Reduction Earned Credit program.** I reject politicians’ scare tactics about criminal justice reform. We know our risk reduction program works, because we have lower crime rates and declining incarceration rates since its inception. Providing incentives for incarcerated people to earn their way to release improves prison staff safety and advances our criminal justice system’s rehabilitative mission.
- **Prepare people in prison for life after incarceration.** I will expand innovative programs in our prisons, like the TRUE program, that empower those with experience in the criminal justice system to mentor young people and lay the groundwork for successful reentry into their communities. And I’ll build on those successes by ensuring we have hired enough teachers and adequately partnered with colleges and universities to enable all incarcerated people to finish their secondary education and pursue vocational opportunities or higher degrees.
- **Welcome formerly incarcerated people into society.** Equipping people recently released from prison with the tools they need to succeed is a necessary part of our criminal justice system’s rehabilitative purpose. It’s also the smart thing to do for our communities. That means closing the health care coverage gaps that plague people on reentry, connecting people with educational opportunities, partnering with the business community to hire people into good-paying jobs, and ensuring a transition into accessible and affordable housing.
- **Sign Clean Slate legislation.** People who have earned a second chance should not be subjected to a lifetime of discrimination in housing, employment, voting, and their finances. I will support and sign a bill, modeled on recent bipartisan legislation in Pennsylvania, to automatically seal the criminal records of rehabilitated offenders. I will also strengthen Connecticut’s “Ban the Box” legislation to prevent most employers from asking job applicants about their criminal records until a conditional job offer has been extended.

