

# PURSUING CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

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OUR CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM IS BROKEN — AND RACE IS RIGHT AT THE CENTER OF WHAT’S WRONG. BLACK AMERICANS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE ARRESTED, WRONGFULLY CONVICTED, AND SERVE LONGER SENTENCES THAN WHITE AMERICANS. IT’S TIME TO END MASS INCARCERATION.

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**ELIZABETH WARREN**

## | WHAT THIS PLAN IS ABOUT

The United States has the highest rate of incarceration in the world, with over 2 million people in prison and jail.

To make matters worse, the evidence is clear that there are structural race problems in our system — with Latinx adults and Black Americans much more likely to be arrested, convicted, and incarcerated than White Americans. One in ten Black children has an incarcerated parent.

Put Simply:

- We send too many people to jail.
- We keep them there **too long**.
- We do **too little** to rehabilitate them.
- And we’re spending billions** propping up an entire industry that profits from mass incarceration.

**This is unacceptable.**

And we can’t tackle this problem by nibbling around the edges. Elizabeth’s Comprehensive Criminal Justice Reform Plan is pretty comprehensive, and **what’s most important to know is that we need to implement bold, structural change at all levels of our government to reimagine the way we promote public safety.**

If implemented, the plan will **end cash bail** that essentially keeps people in jail for being poor, **repeal the 1994 crime bill** that exacerbated the mass incarceration crisis, **get rid of private prisons** so corporations can’t profit from people’s pain, and **provide solutions** by prioritizing prevention over punishment.

## | WHAT THE PLAN DOES

Real reform requires examining every step of this system: From what we choose to criminalize, to how law enforcement and prosecutors engage with communities and the accused, to how long we keep people behind bars, how we treat them when they’re there, and how we reintegrate them when they return.

Here are just *some* of the things that the plan does:

- **Repeals the 1994 crime bill** that exacerbated the mass incarceration crisis;
- **Addresses the legacy of the “War on Drugs”** — which has criminalized addiction instead of treating it like a health crisis and ripped apart families — by investing in programs for people who struggle with addiction;

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- **Eliminates the death penalty and bans life-without-parole sentences for minors;**
- **Ends racially discriminatory policing and prohibits local law enforcement from buying military equipment with federal funding;**
- **Ends cash bail and reduces the fines and fees** that that bury low-income people under court-related debt with no way out;
- **Strengthens public defenders** by ensuring they're paid a fair salary and have manageable caseloads;
- Commits to appointing a **diverse set of judges to the bench** so that our justice system reflects the country it serves;
- **Reduces or eliminates harsh mandatory minimum sentences** that have caused our prison population to balloon, and makes prison conditions more humane by **eliminating solitary confinement;**
- **Establishes an advisory board** that is made up of survivors of violence and formerly incarcerated individuals;
- **Breaks the school-to-prison pipeline** by equipping schools with resources to meet their students' mental and physical needs;
- **Decriminalizes mental health crises** by preventing people from reaching those crisis points in the first place through Medicare for All, which will provide continuous access to critical mental health care services;
- **Helps returning citizens succeed** by eliminating barriers to rejoining their communities and reducing needlessly restrictive parole requirements; and
- **Gets rid of private prisons** because no one should have a financial incentive for putting more people in prison.

**We can drastically improve public safety and reduce incarceration rates in this country.**



#### ABOUT ELIZABETH

Elizabeth is the daughter of a janitor who had the chance to become a teacher, a law professor, a U.S. Senator, and a presidential candidate because America invested in kids like her.

Now, she's fighting to build an America that works for everyone, not just the wealthy and well-connected. It won't be easy, but this is the fight of our lives. **And we've got to win.**

*Learned something exciting? Talk about it with your friends, family, and voters!*

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Updated: October 30, 2019