OKLAHOMA’S IMPRISONMENT CRISIS

WITHOUT REFORM, OKLAHOMA’S PRISON POPULATION IS PROJECTED TO KEEP CLIMBING, AT A HIGH COST TO OKLAHOMA TAXPAYERS, COMMUNITIES AND FAMILIES.

Oklahoma has the highest incarceration rate in the nation, and a prison population projected to keep growing. Without reform this year, the prison population will increase by another 14 percent by 2028, topping 31,000 people in prison and costing the state hundreds of millions of dollars in new prisons without improving public safety.

Oklahoma has made strides in recent years to reform its outdated criminal justice system. In 2016, Oklahoma voters approved State Question 780, ensuring that no one newly convicted of simple drug possession can receive an expensive and unnecessary prison sentence. In 2018, a package of reforms developed by the bipartisan Oklahoma Justice Reform Task Force went into effect, implementing a number of evidence-based corrections and sentencing practices.

But these actions alone are not enough to turn the tide. Oklahoma needs continued reform to make our criminal justice system more fair, fiscally responsible, and effective.

This session, Oklahomans for Criminal Justice Reform is supporting 14 smart reforms that collectively will reduce Oklahoma’s prison population by 17 percent by 2028 while improving public safety.

OKLAHOMANS FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM advances safety, restoration and freedom in Oklahoma. We are a coalition of business and community leaders, law enforcement experts, service providers and advocates committed to justice reforms that improve public safety by reducing Oklahoma’s bloated prison population, saving taxpayer dollars, reinvesting in alternatives, and keeping families together.
THESE FOURTEEN REFORMS, SPONSORED BY A LARGE AND BIPARTISAN GROUP OF LEGISLATORS, WILL:

REDUCE UNNECESSARY PRISON TERMS

• Define **possession with intent to distribute** to end overcharging for drug possession (SB 421, Sen. Stephanie Bice, R-Oklahoma City; HB 1100, Rep. Robert Manger, R-Midwest City; HB 2309, Rep. Avery Frix R-Muskogee)

• Expand use of **evidence-proven supervision and recidivism-reduction practices** that are in line with national standards, including limiting the time a person spends behind bars for violating the rules of supervision. (SB 616 and 618, Sen. Darcy Jech, R-Kingfisher; HB 2040, Rep. Dean Davis, R-Broken Arrow; HBs 2273 and 2279, Rep. Josh West, R-Grove)

• Limit **powerful sentence enhancements** for people who have only been convicted of non-violent crimes. (SB 287, Sen. Bill Coleman, R-Ponca City; HB 2278, Rep. Josh West, R-Grove; HB 2009, Rep. Garry Mize, R-Guthrie)

KEEP FAMILIES TOGETHER

• Apply **retroactivity to SQ 780** and other recent non-violent sentencing changes, allowing people still incarcerated under outdated laws to go home to their families. (SB 357, Sen. Stephanie Bice, R-Oklahoma City; SB 276, Sen. George Young, D-Oklahoma City; HB 1269, Rep. Jon Echols, R-Oklahoma City, and Rep. Jason Dunnington, D-Oklahoma City)

• Stop injustice against mothers for **failure to protect** from child abuse by preventing parents who committed no abuse from receiving longer sentences than abusers. (SB 246, Sen. Stephanie Bice, R-Oklahoma City; HB 2523, Rep. Tammy West, R-Bethany; HB 2032, Rep. Kelly Albright, D-Midwest City)

• **End pretrial detention** for misdemeanor and non-violent felony charges, with certain exceptions, so that people don't lose their jobs while locked up for a crime for which they have not even been convicted. (SB 252, Sen. Roger Thompson, R-Okemah; SB 974, Sen. George Young, D-Oklahoma City; HB 1037, Rep. Collin Walke, D-Oklahoma City; HB 2083, Rep. Mickey Dollens, D-Oklahoma City)

• **Cap in-state phone calls** from prison at the Federal Communications Commission rate so that families can stay in touch even while they are separated. (SB 188, Sen. Chuck Hall, R-Perry; SB 226, Sen. Stephanie Bice R-Oklahoma City)

ENSURE FAIRNESS IN OUR COURTS

• Create an **expiration date** for nonviolent warrants if no further offenses were committed. (SB 341, Sen. Stephanie Bice, R-Oklahoma City; HB 1934, Rep. Robert Manger, R-Midwest City; HB 1931, Rep. Mike Osburn, R-Edmond; HB 2458, Rep. Jason Dunnington, D-Oklahoma City)

• Implement Oklahoma City's **cite and release policy** for marijuana possession statewide. (SB 787, Sen. Carri Hicks, D-Oklahoma City)

• Grant defendants an **initial appearance** within 48 hours of arrest, with a guarantee of counsel, appropriate bail and determination of ability to pay, plus other determinations. (HB 2274, Rep. Josh West, R-Grove; HB 1294, Rep. Nicole Miller, R-Edmond)

• Present defendants with **discovery of evidence** within 20 days of the discovery request. (HB 1019, Rep. Marcus McEntire, R-Duncan; SB 165, Sens. Brent Howard, R-Altus)

• Make **jury verdict and sentencing** a two-part process, like most other states. (HB 2310, Rep. Avery Frix, R-Muskogee; HB 2589, Reps. Jon Echols, R-Oklahoma City)

BETTER INFORM FUTURE POLICYMAKING

• Improve collection and release of **data** on courts, prosecutors, jails, policing and prisons. (HB 2298, Rep. Trey Caldwell, R-Lawton)

• Require **community impact statements** be prepared for future criminal justice legislation. (HB 1097, Rep. Mike Osburn, R-Oklahoma City; HB 1855, Rep. Scott Fetgatter, R-Okmulgee; SB 253, Sen. George Young, D-Oklahoma City)