

Ohio House Bill 130: A First Step to Reducing Ohio's Prison Population



Ohio's prison population is growing and recently reached a record high of 50,000 inmates. Yet, according to the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, over 60 percent of inmates are incarcerated for a year or less.

Prison officials, judges, and community advocates agree that something must be done to keep people out of prison and to make sure that ex-offenders have the support they need to avoid returning to prison.

In response to this crisis, bipartisan state legislators proposed a solution: House Bill 130.

The major changes H.B. 130 makes in Ohio law can be grouped broadly into three subject areas: Drug Treatment, Release from Prison and Post-Release Supervision, Reentry.

It's time to send a message to our legislature that we can't keep locking people up indefinitely. We need real solutions. House Bill 130 is a good first step toward addressing over-incarceration.

While this legislation does not present an ideal solution to our growing prison population, it is progress and does a lot of good things:

- Promote substance abuse treatment in addition to or in lieu of incarceration.
- Increase, albeit slightly, opportunities for early release from prison including:
 - allowing judicial release for some inmates serving lengthy terms
 - expanding eligibility for medical release
 - removing provisions related to bad time.
- To provide released prisoners with identification cards and additional procedures for access to social services, training and employment.
- Eliminate the broad authorization of licensing groups to discipline licensees or revoke licenses simply because of a criminal conviction, if that conviction is not substantially related to the regulated activity.
- Create the Ex-Offender Reentry Coalition to identify barriers to the reentry of ex-offenders into the community and make recommendations to the legislature.

You can help get this bill passed! Here is what you can do:



Please contact your State Representative and urge them to support House Bill 130.

- **Ask them to vote for H.B. 130.**
- **Ask them to sign on as a cosponsor.**
- **Encourage them to support further efforts to fix Ohio's prison problem.**

You can look up your Representative by name or zip code online at <http://www.house.state.oh.us/jsps/Representatives.jsp>

Or you can call 1-800-282-0253 to leave a message for your Representative, Monday through Friday, 8:30am – 5:00pm.