



NATIONAL CONFERENCE of STATE LEGISLATURES

The Forum for America's Ideas

Principles of Effective State Sentencing and Corrections Policy

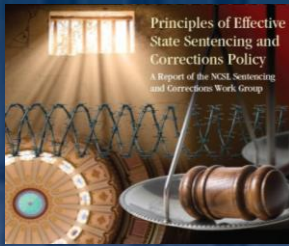
A Report of the NCSL Sentencing
and Corrections Work Group



Principles of Effective State Sentencing and Corrections Policy

A Report of the NCSL Sentencing
and Corrections Work Group

Presented
August 9, 2011
NCSL Legislative Summit
San Antonio, Texas



NCSL Sentencing and Corrections Work Group

- **18 Legislators, bipartisan and geographically diverse**
- **Discuss and identify overarching principles for effective state sentencing and corrections policy**
- **In partnership with the Public Safety Performance Project of the Pew Center on the States**



Principles of Effective State Sentencing and Corrections Policy

Includes:

- Seven principles;
- Corresponding points that serve as action items for Legislatures;
- Topical chapters that discuss and provide examples of the principles at work; and
- Glossary and resources.

Themes:

- Policies can both reduce recidivism and provide cost savings;
- Benefit from interbranch and intergovernmental cooperation;
- Use of data and evaluation.



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Principle 1

- **Embody fairness, consistency, proportionality and opportunity**

Example: Drug Sentencing and Diversion



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Principle 2

- **Articulate clear and purposeful rationale**
- **Related policies should be logical, understandable and transparent**

Example: Success is defined as recidivism reduction



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Principle 3

- **Make available a continuum of options, including prison space and community programs**

Example: Supervision tailored based on risk; prison space ensured for dangerous offenders



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Principle 4

- **Policies should be resource-sensitive; costs and benefits should be measurable**

Example: Incentive Funding



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Principle 5

- **Justice information is a foundation**

Example: Justice Reinvestment



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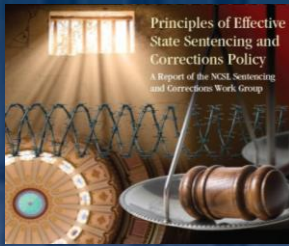
Principle 6

- **Policies should reflect current circumstances and needs**

Example: Theft thresholds



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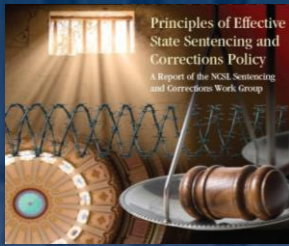
Principle 7

- **Include strategies to reduce crime and victimization; tap federal, academic and private resources**

Example: Prevention programs and reentry initiatives



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For questions and more information, contact:

- Principles of Effective State Sentencing and Corrections Policy: www.ncsl.org/Portals/1/Documents/cj/WGprinciplesreport.pdf
- NCSL at www.ncsl.org, 303/364-7700 or cj-info@ncsl.org
- Public Safety Performance Project at www.pewcenteronthestates.org/publicsafety



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