

# ISSUE 1 FAQ SHEET

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## OHIO AT A GLANCE:

- OHIO PRISONS ARE AT 132% CAPACITY
- INCARCERATION HAS MORE THAN TRIPLED SINCE 1980
- ONLY 13 STATES INCARCERATE A HIGHER SHARE OF RESIDENTS
- ISSUE 1 WOULD REDUCE INCARCERATION BY MORE THAN 10,000 PEOPLE
- ONLY TWO STATES HAVE A HIGHER SHARE OF PEOPLE IN PRISON BECAUSE OF PROBATION VIOLATIONS
- OHIO SPENDS MORE THAN \$1.3 BILLION/YEAR TO KEEP NEARLY 50,000 PEOPLE IN PRISON

## WHAT WILL ISSUE 1 ACCOMPLISH?

- Issue 1 will reduce Ohio's overcrowded prisons and reinvest the money saved into communities. Specifically, Issue 1 will mandate four key changes:
  - Reclassify certain fourth and fifth degree drug possessions from felonies to misdemeanors;
  - Require a series of responses for probation violations such as missing a meeting with a probation officer;
  - Reward rehabilitation by allowing individuals in prison to earn credits to reduce their sentence by 25%; and
  - Reinvest money saved from decarcerating prisons into drug treatment and recovery programs.

## WHY NOT LET OHIO LEGISLATORS HANDLE THIS REFORM?

- The Ohio General Assembly has had the opportunity to create meaningful criminal justice reform for decades, and they've failed to pass laws that adequately address our addiction and mass incarceration crises.
- In fact, the prison population continues to soar, because our lawmakers repeatedly create new crimes, expand current crimes, and enhance sentences. We call this the Statehouse to Prison Pipeline, and it's simply not working.

## WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO OHIO'S DRUG COURTS?

- Issue 1 maintains Ohio's drug court statutes as-is, and drug courts can still accept individuals facing misdemeanor charges. Plus, Ohio's drug courts may benefit from the redirected cost savings.

## HOW WILL ISSUE 1 DEAL WITH FENTANYL PENALTIES?

- Issue 1 reclassifies certain fourth and fifth degree felonies to misdemeanors. People carrying excessive amounts of any substance will be charged with felony offenses that fall outside the scope of Issue 1. Law enforcement officers arrest these folks for trafficking, prosecutors charge them with trafficking, and courts convict them of trafficking.

## IF WE REDUCE PRISON POPULATIONS, WON'T THE LOCAL JAILS BE BURDENED BY ALL THE EXTRA PEOPLE?

- People who do not pose a threat to public safety will be returned to their communities, not sent from prison to jail.
- Bail reform is the key to solving jail overcrowding, and we are working with local jails to implement urgent reforms.

## HOW WILL ISSUE 1 BE IMPLEMENTED INTO LAW?

- Issue 1 will be amended to the Ohio State Constitution. Voters will have the opportunity to vote on this ballot measure during the November 6 election.
- The Ohio legislature will then be required to update Ohio's statutes to align with the purpose and intent of the measure.

## WHO CREATED ISSUE 1?

- Issue 1 was created for Ohioans by Ohioans.
- The Ohio Organizing Collaborative, the Ohio Justice and Policy Center, the Ohio Transformation Fund, and the Alliance for Safety and Justice led this movement.

## HOW MANY SIGNATURES WERE COLLECTED TO GET ISSUE 1 ON THE BALLOT?

- Over 730,000 signatures were collected by Ohioans. This is the second highest raw signature total of any initiated amendment in the history of Ohio.