



Republican National Committee

Counsel's Office

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

WHEREAS, The purpose of the American criminal justice system is to make our communities safer while honoring the principles of liberty and justice for all and to function cost-effectively;

WHEREAS, State prisons confine 1.3 million offenders which result in 2.7 million children having a parent incarcerated, and the expectation is that more than 90 percent of these offenders will eventually exit prison and return to their communities;

WHEREAS, Corrections expenditures are the second fastest growing budget item for states, and taxpayer dollars spent just on prisons and jails now exceed \$80 billion annually;

WHEREAS, The federal prison population has exploded, increasing 734 percent from 1980 to 2015, while taxpayer spending has spiked 595 percent;

WHEREAS, Despite significant increases in incarceration and associated costs, taxpayers are not receiving the public safety return they deserve because lengthy prison terms increase recidivism rates for low-level offenders, with more than half of state offenders returning to prison within three years—any government program with a failure rate that high would earn justifiable criticism;

WHEREAS, The size of criminal and regulatory codes have dramatically increased in recent years with more than 300,000 federal penal laws and regulatory offenses carrying a criminal penalty; with most created by unelected Washington bureaucrats for actions not traditionally sanctioned by criminal law;

WHEREAS; With the sheer number of newly created potential offenses regulating ordinary business practices, it is essential to our constitutional liberties that the government prove a certain level of criminal intent, as it is what separates an accident from a crime;

WHEREAS, Conservative-led states, such as Texas, Alabama, Georgia, Kansas, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, and Utah, have adopted policies that have been proven to safely reduce incarceration rates, save billions in taxpayer dollars, significantly cut crime rates, and make our communities safer by reducing recidivism and allowing law enforcement to focus on serious and violent offenders; and

WHEREAS, These policies increase personal responsibility, remove government obstacles to putting ex-

offenders back to work, and use proven and effective faith-based, educational, and rehabilitative programs which allow these individuals to lead productive, crime-free lives; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, The Republican National Committee (RNC) supports effective criminal justice reforms for nonviolent offenders at the state and federal level that protect our communities, respect crime victims, restore families, safely reduce prison populations, decrease the size and scope of government overreach and spending, and increase transparency and accountability;

RESOLVED, The RNC urges state legislators and Congress to coordinate with families and faith-based communities, provide substance abuse treatment to addicts, emphasize work and education, and implement policies that cut costs while obtaining better outcomes; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, The RNC calls for a reevaluation and elimination of excessive government regulation where inadvertent noncompliance has been deemed a criminal offense.