

JUSTICE REINVESTMENT: SD1874 / HD3425



AN ACT TO INCREASE NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY AND OPPORTUNITY

Jobs Not Jails is a coalition of 130 organizations of faith, labor, and community, joining together to advance economic and racial justice by ending mass incarceration and ensuring living wage jobs for all. **We believe that just as a body needs exercise and good nutrition to be healthy, a community needs jobs and good incomes.** When part of our community is struggling, we can't simply cut it off or ignore it – otherwise our community as a whole becomes sick. That's why **NOW is the time for Jobs Not Jails!**

Senator Sonia Chang-Díaz (D-Boston) and **Representative Mary Keefe (D-Worcester)** have filed an omnibus bill backed by our coalition to improve Massachusetts' systems of criminal justice, end mass incarceration, and re-invest in our communities through job and educational opportunity expansion. Included in the bill are:

I. Criminal Justice Reforms

- **Repeal Mandatory Minimum Drug Sentences** – This would restore judicial discretion in sentencing for non-violent drug charges, reducing the economic and social costs of extended prison terms;
- **Reduce Certain Low-Level Felonies to Misdemeanors** – Under this scenario certain offenses (such as shoplifting or other petty theft, or low-level drug charges) would be made misdemeanors, with different sanctions that rely less on long and expensive terms of incarceration;
- **End Collateral Sanctions at the RMV** – This would eliminate the current law requiring the Registry of Motor Vehicles to confiscate the license of a person convicted of any drug offense (even where charges are unrelated to the operation of a vehicle) for up to 5 years and charge at least \$500 to reinstate it; and
- **Extraordinary Medical Placement** – This would allow a judge to decide whether a person who is permanently incapacitated or terminally ill should be transferred out of prison for treatment, remaining under state custody.

II. Jobs and Schools

The final sections of the bill establish a trust fund with the cost savings from these improvements in the justice system. Trust funds will be used to right our unbalanced economy by directing resources towards programs with broad eligibility (not limited to ex-offenders) that use evidence-based practices to implement job development efforts for youth, veterans, victims of violence, and other people with significant barriers to employment, and help at-risk youth stay in school.

Programs supported by the trust will include:

- **Job training programs** to address the skills gaps identified by Massachusetts industry leaders;
- **Transitional job and pre-apprenticeship programs** to prepare people for today's workforce and place them in good, living-wage jobs;
- **Youth jobs** that provide both sustenance and experience;
- Initiatives to **create new jobs** through **social enterprises, coops**, and other businesses; and
- Evidence-based programs that specialize in **drop-out prevention and recovery**, giving youth a second chance at academic achievement and setting them on a path to success.

NOTE: Legislators are also filing many of the above sections as separate, individual bills: SD1770/HD1921 Mandatory minimums (Sen. Creem and Rep. Swan); SD1665/HD2584 RMV Collateral Sanctions (Sen. Chandler and Rep. Malia); and SD1417/HD2997 Extraordinary Medical Placement (Sen. Jehlen and Rep. Toomey).

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