

Connecticut

The project selected Connecticut to receive intensive, nonpartisan research, analysis, and expertise. Among other factors, its leaders have demonstrated both a bipartisan commitment to explore meaningful policy change and a dedication to collecting and using criminal justice data as a basis for sound reforms.

Progress Update »

Over the past decade, Connecticut has advanced some of the nation's most fiscally-responsible, data-driven policies and practices in sentencing and corrections to reduce recidivism, increase public safety, and reduce prison crowding. Between 2003 and 2006, policymakers in Connecticut created facilities and programs that hold probation and parole technical violators accountable without returning many of them to prison. Through these and other initiatives, they turned Connecticut from a state with one of the fastest growing prison populations in the U.S. to a state experiencing one of the steepest declines in its population – all while continuing to drive crime down.

The Council of State Governments Justice Center, a Public Safety Performance Project partner, was instrumental in Connecticut's progress by providing nonpartisan research, analysis and policy options to lawmakers. Now, both the Justice Center and the Vera Institute of Justice, another Pew partner, are working with the state to help cement its gains. The Justice Center recently helped plan a joint Appropriations and Judiciary Committee hearing on prison crowding issues. They have also helped state officials launch a new Criminal Justice Policy and Planning agency, which is charged with tracking the forces that drive crime and incarceration in the state. Vera, meanwhile, is helping state officials develop a legislatively-created Sentencing Task Force that will analyze sentencing trends and advise lawmakers about policy options.

Case Study »

By 2002, Connecticut's prison population growth exceeded both regional and national trends — leaving the state with a prison overcrowding crisis. See how the Public Safety Performance Project and its partner, the Council of State Governments, helped Connecticut go from one of the nation's fastest-growing prison populations to the second-largest population decrease in the country.

[Download Connecticut case study](#) (PDF) Adobe Reader® required.

News

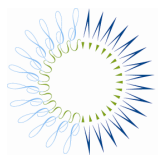
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- State maps way out of prisons box
- *The Hartford Courant*
- February 17, 2007

After spending \$1 billion to build 12 new prisons a decade ago, Connecticut realized a building boom couldn't contain an exploding inmate population. When construction was completed in 1996 and 11,000 beds added, the prisoner-crunch was worse.

To read the full article, visit the [Hartford Courant Web site](#).

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- **State's prison population not expected to increase**
 - *The Hartford Courant*
 - February 15, 2007



Once a state with one of the fastest-growing prison populations, Connecticut is now one of three states projected to maintain the same number of inmates through 2011, according to a study released Wednesday by the Pew Charitable Trusts.

Using state extrapolations, demographic trends, and criminal justice policies, the study's authors say the state, along with New York and Delaware, will buck a national trend of inmate increases over the next five years. Nationwide, the prison population nationwide is expected to rise 13 percent, or by 192,000 inmates, in that period.

To read the full article, visit the [Hartford Courant Web site](#).

- **Anything But More Prisons**

- Editorial — *The New York Times*

- January 14, 2007

Connecticut's prison population, at 19,000, is inching up toward record levels, reversing a trend of slight reductions over the last two years. Incarcerating people in overcrowded facilities is inhumane and always expensive: it costs \$29,500 a year to imprison each person. This problem did not develop overnight. The prison population rose steadily from the late 1980s until 2003. And the recent increase is not surprising, especially in light of last year's rising crime rate. But the important thing to remember is that prison is not an answer to crime; bigger prison populations reflect society's failure to find answers.

To read the full article, visit the [New York Times Web site](#).

**This is a pay service.*

- **State prisons bulging again, but Rell says situation improving**

- Associated Press

- December 26, 2006

HARTFORD, Conn. — State officials say Connecticut's prison population has again boomed to the level it was three years ago when overcrowding forced the state to ship some prisoners to Virginia.

To read the full article, visit the [Boston Globe Web site](#).