

Nevada

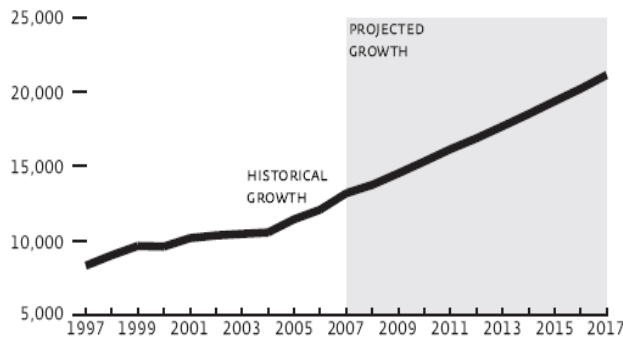
"Our state is truly at a crossroads. We can continue to do what doesn't work or change our direction. I think it's time for a change."

— Assemblywoman Sheila Leslie

Prison Population & Cost Indicators

- Between 1996 and 2006, the Nevada prison population increased 58 percent. During this period, state spending on corrections grew by 103 percent, from \$121 million to \$246 million.
- Between 2005 and 2006, the violent crime rate in Nevada grew significantly, increasing 22 percent.
- At the beginning of the 2007 legislative session, the state prison population was projected to grow 60 percent by 2016. To accommodate this projected growth, the Governor proposed a prison expansion plan which included \$2 billion in capital construction costs for several new prisons to be constructed by 2015.
- The Legislature appropriated \$293 million for the construction of 2,952 beds for the 2007-09 biennium. The appropriations also included planning for an additional 2,490 beds to meet the projected growth through FY2012.

Figure 1. Nevada Department of Corrections Inmate Population: Historical Growth (FY 1997–2007) and Projected Growth (FY 2007–2017)



Drivers of Incarceration & Spending

- The exponential growth in the state resident population has accounted for a large share of the growth in the prison population. By 2005, Nevada entered its 19th consecutive year as the state with the fastest growing resident population. Between 1996 and 2006, the increase in the prison population (58 percent) coincided with a 56 percent increase in the resident population.
- The high failure rate among people on probation supervision has also contributed to the growth of the prison population. In 2006, 46 percent of people on probation were incarcerated for violating conditions of their supervision or for committing new crimes.¹
- Seventy percent of people on probation or parole referred to substance abuse treatment programs as a condition of their supervision waited an average of one month to receive placement in

Public Safety Performance Project

An operating project of The Pew Charitable Trusts, the Public Safety Performance Project seeks to help states advance fiscally sound, data-driven policies and practices in sentencing and corrections that protect public safety, hold offenders accountable and control corrections costs. The project helps states diagnose the factors driving prison growth and provides policy audits to identify options for reform, drawing on solid research, promising approaches and best practices in other states. The initiative also helps state officials, practitioners and others share state-of-the-art knowledge and ideas through policy forums, public opinion surveys, multi-state meetings, national, regional and state-level convenings, and online information about what works.

PARTNERS

The project works with the Pew Center on the States and a number of highly respected external partners, including the Council of State Governments Justice Center and the Vera Institute of Justice, to provide expert, nonpartisan information and assistance to states.

CONTACT

info@pewpublicsafety.org
www.pewpublicsafety.org

"We need to look at whether we're being smart about the way we punish and incarcerate inmates in this state."— Nevada Supreme Court Justice James Hardesty

an outpatient treatment program. During this time, they were more likely to relapse and return to prison for violating their conditions of release.

- Forty-three percent of people on probation and parole reported significant drug addiction and 20 percent reported significant alcohol use problems. Likewise, a survey of the general prison population revealed that 29 percent of inmates were reported to have mental illnesses, almost twice the national average.

Opportunities & Action

- In June 2007, the Governor signed AB 510, which provided inmates incentives to complete risk reduction programs. This new law also increased the amount of credits parolees can earn for complying with the conditions of their supervision, and it established a similar incentive for probationers to earn time off their sentences.
- To measure the impact of AB510 on the prison population and develop a comprehensive approach to managing future growth, members of the state's Advisory Commission on the Administration of Justice are working with the Council of State Governments Justice Center. The Justice Center is providing expert consultation and timely analyses to inform the commission's policy recommendations, which are due to the General Assembly when it next convenes in 2009.
- Policymakers are working closely with the Justice Center to institutionalize a data tracking tool to ensure real-time reporting of probation, parole and prison data.
- To reduce the number of probation revocations, officials from the Nevada Department of Corrections and the Parole and Probation Division are working with Justice Center staff to analyze substance abuse and mental health needs of people whose probation has been revoked.

By the Numbers			
2006 Index crime rate per 100,000 (rank):	4830.3 (4 th)	2008 Corrections budget:	\$270 million ⁱⁱ
2006 Violent crime rate per 100,000 (rank):	741.6 (3 rd)	2008 Corrections share of budget:	8%
2006 Incarceration rate per 100,000 (rank):	540 (9 th)	2005 Releases reincarcerated:	29%
2007 Prison population (as of 10/2007):	13,462	2011 Projected prison population:	16,764

FBI Uniform Crime Reports; "Public Safety, Public Spending: Forecasting America's Prison Population 2007-2011," Pew Public Safety Performance Project; Fiscal Year 2006 Statistical Abstract, Nevada Department of Corrections; "State of Nevada Executive Budget in Brief", Nevada Department of Administration, Budget and Planning; "Increasing Public Safety and Generating Savings: Options for Nevada Policymakers", Council of State Governments Justice Center.

Updated February 2008

ⁱ The distinction between the percentage of revocations resulting from technical violations of probation and commitments for new crimes is not clearly known due to lack of available data.

ⁱⁱ The FY2007 budget represents a 9.4 percent increase over the FY2006 budget. All funding sources were considered.

