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GETTING SMART ON CRIME

It is time for new thinking on criminal justice in Australia. Justice reinvestment reduces crime by building stronger communities.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The tired, old “tough on crime” mantra has actually been tough on budgets. In Australia we spend more than \$10 billion a year on crime. We can pour billions of dollars into dealing with the consequences of crime after the damage has been done – Justice Reinvestment builds stronger communities by re-directing funding from prison budgets to targeted programs.

Justice Reinvestment is a new but proven approach to criminal justice spending. It has been remarkably successful in the US, where states that have both fewer people in prison and less crime.

If we want safer communities, it's high time for new thinking in Australia. The Australian Greens are standing up for justice reinvestment.



> THE COST OF INCARCERATION

Since 1984, the number of Australians in jail has tripled. More and more people are being locked up.

The cost of building a new jail can be around half a billion dollars. Every person we lock up for a year

And, in the end, prisons are only a temporary solution to criminal behaviour. Statistics show that 44% of prisoners are re-arrested within two years. This revolving door is counter-productive and expensive.

The *real* price of growing incarceration rates is not just the cost to the budget of building and running prisons, but the impact imprisonment has on each prisoner, their family and their community.

> A SMARTER APPROACH

Justice reinvestment is a detailed, place-based approach to the idea that prevention is better than cure. By reducing the number of people returning to jail, it generates savings which can then be re-directed towards disadvantaged communities where crime is concentrated.

While we will always need jails for the most serious offenders, there are many people who should be in the community. This is for mental health treatment, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, or doing community service, this way

The money saved can then be reinvested in the communities where most offenders come from, in providing better services

Less crime means fewer people in jail, fewer victims and safer, more caring communities.

It's also the way we can address the shameful rates of indigenous incarceration in Australia.

Justice Reinvestment is a smarter, more cost-effective approach to criminal justice which has been shown to be better for safer, stronger Australian communities.

> TIME TO END OUR LOCK-UP CULTURE

It's high time to admit that just locking up more and more people has not made us safer. We need to change the way we think about crime. Investing in disadvantaged communities, where most offenders come from, strengthens communities and makes us all safer.

The Australian Greens' plan includes:

Investing \$10 million over four years in establishing a National Centre for Justice Reinvestment

Funding a Justice Reinvestment Grants Program worth \$50 million over four years.

 [Download the Justice Reinvestment Initiative \(PDF, 155Kb\)](#)

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