

***Evidence-Based Policy Options
To Reduce Crime, Criminal Justice
Costs, & Prison Construction:
Results from Washington State***

**U.S. Sentencing Commission's
Symposium on Alternatives to Incarceration
Washington, DC
July 14, 2008**

Steve Aos

Assistant Director
Washington State Institute for Public Policy
Phone: (360) 586-2740
E-mail: saos@wsipp.wa.gov
Institute Publications: www.wsipp.wa.gov

1 of 11

Washington State Institute For Public Policy

Created by the 1983 Washington Legislature

**Mission: carry out non-partisan research on
projects assigned by the legislature or the
Institute's Board of Directors**

2 of 11

“Evidence-Based” Public Policy Levers to Affect Crime

✓ Prisons/Jails

✓ Police

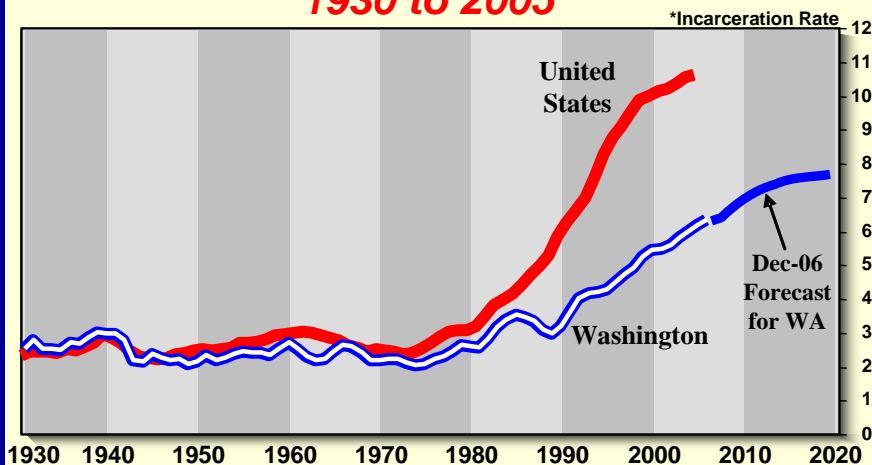
✓ Programs

All three cost money (no free lunch)

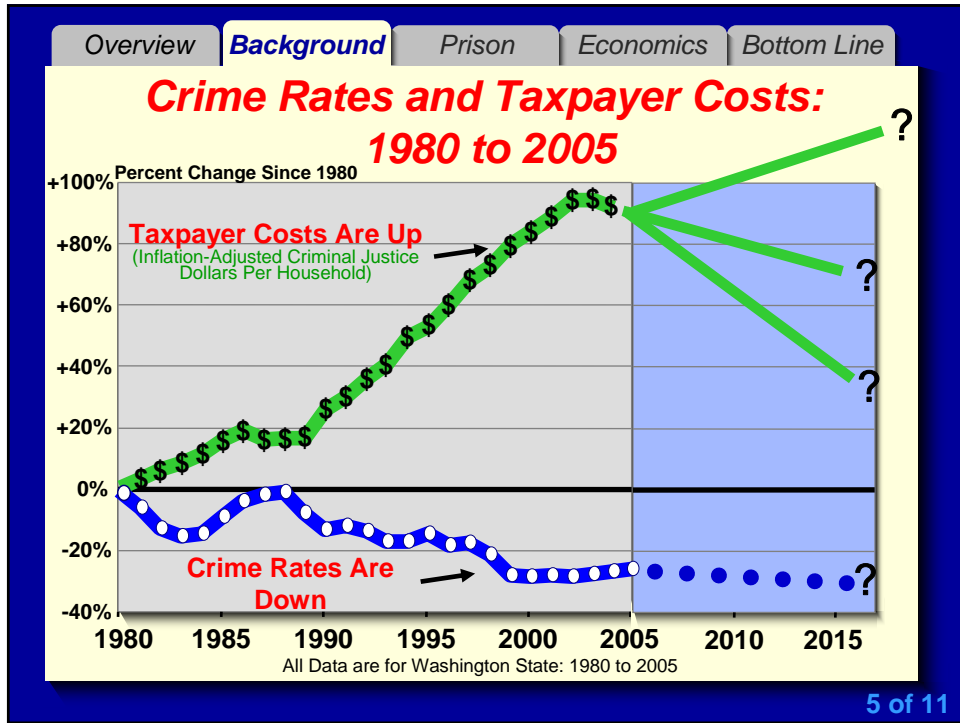
All three can be effective (or ineffective)

Therefore, → **Portfolio**

Adult Prison Incarceration Rates: 1930 to 2005



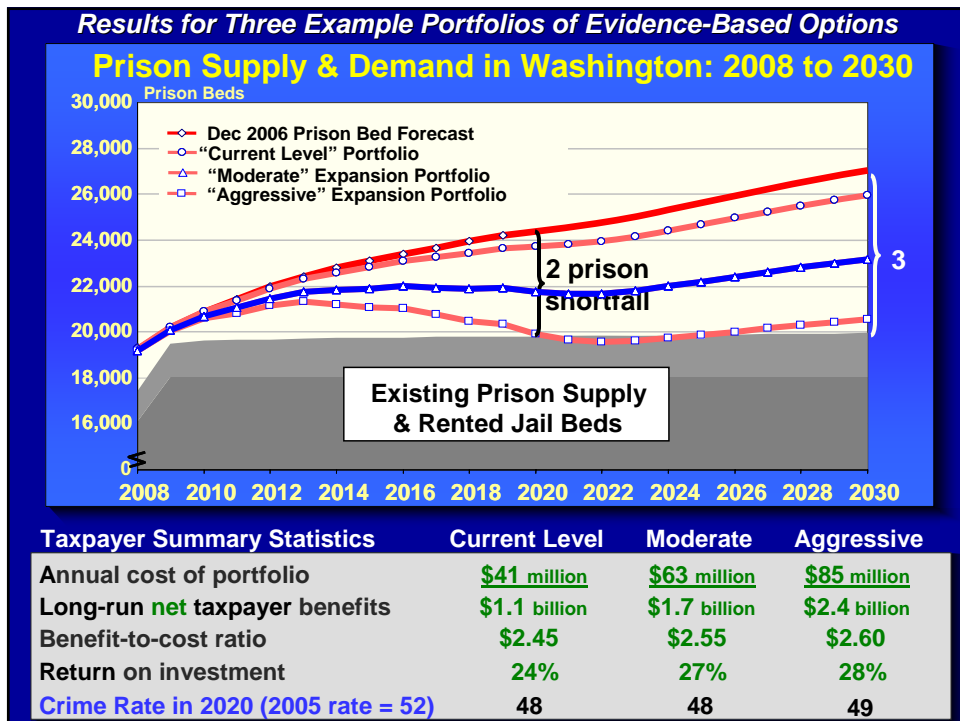
*The incarceration rate is defined as the number of inmates in state prisons per 1,000 18- to 49-year-olds in Washington or the United States.

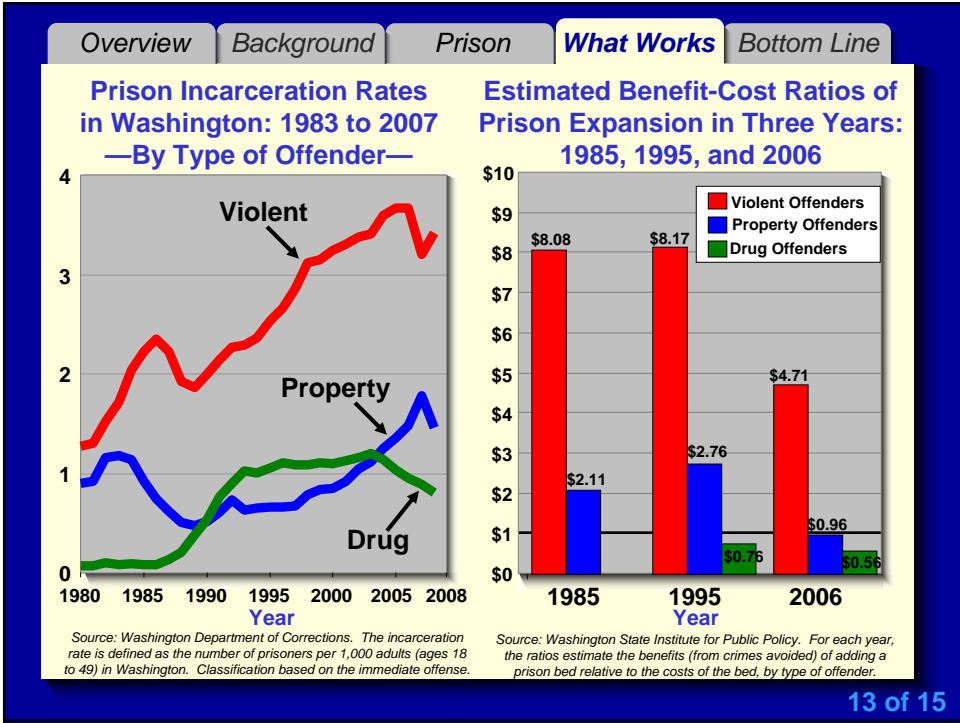


- Overview **Background** **Prison** Economics Bottom Line
- ### Crime & Incarceration: 3 Points
1. **Incarceration Rates Affect Crime Rates:**
Credible research indicates a 10 percent change in average incarceration rates changes average "Part 1" crime rates by 2 to 4 percent.
 2. **Specific Incarceration Policies Matter:**
Incarcerating different types of offenders (violent, property, drug) affects different types of "Part 1" crime rates (violent, property).
 3. **Diminishing Returns Really Do Happen:**
The impact incarceration has on crime rates declines as prison rates are increased.
- 6 of 11

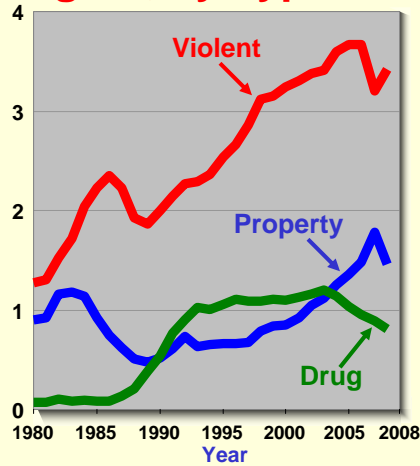
Overview	Background	Prison	Economics	Bottom Line
Selected Results				
Adult Offenders		Change In Crime (# of EB Studies)	Benefits - Costs (per-person, life cycle)	
Adult Drug Courts		-8.0% (57)	\$4,767	
Education Prgs., Prison		-7.0% (17)	\$10,669	
Drug Tx in Prison (TC or out-patient)		-5.7% (20)	\$7,835	
Cog-Behavioral Treatment		-6.3% (25)	\$10,299	
ISP: surveillance		-0.0% (23)	-\$3,747	
ISP: treatment		-17.1% (11)	\$11,563	
Juvenile Offenders				
Functional Family Thpy.		-15.9% (7)	\$31,821	
Multisystemic Therapy		-10.5% (10)	\$18,213	
Aggression Repl. Trng.		-7.3% (4)	\$14,660	
Family Int. Transitions		-13.0% (1)	\$40,545	
Restorative Justice (low risk)		-8.7% (21)	\$7,067	
Prevention				
Pre-School* (low income)		-14.2% (8)	\$12,196	
Nurse Family Partnership*		-36.3% (2)	\$27,105	

9 of 11





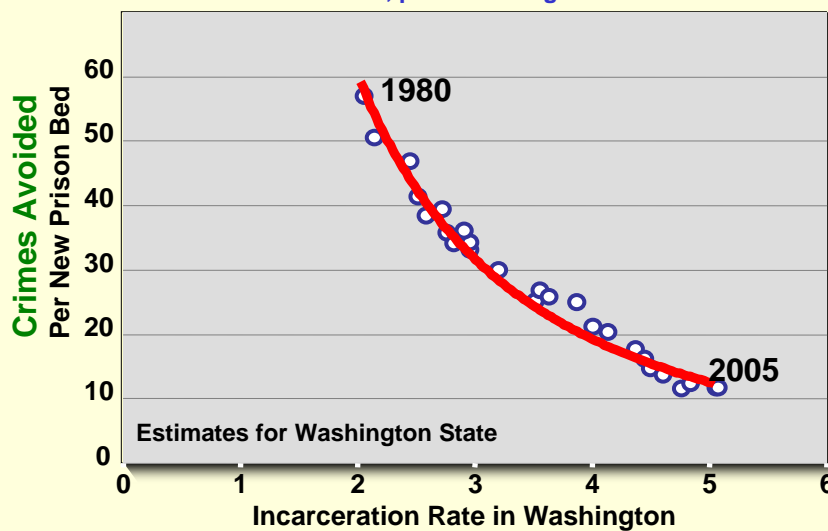
Prison Incarceration Rates In Washington, by Type of Offender



Source: Washington Department of Corrections. The incarceration rate is defined as the number of prisoners per 1,000 adults (ages 18 to 49) in Washington. Classification based on the immediate offense.

Prison & Diminishing Returns

As incarceration rates are raised, prison's marginal effectiveness declines



Summary

1. Individually:

Some evidence-based options work (some don't), and some have attractive economics.

2. Collectively:

A portfolio investment strategy can affect statewide outcomes significantly.

3. Washington State is implementing this strategy.