



# Shaping Tomorrow: The Next 50 Years of JJDP



## JJDP at 50: Progress Made, Work Ahead

It's essential to resist a return to outdated 'tough on crime' policies for youth. Our approach was visionary just a few years ago—now, the rhetoric risks sliding backward. Rather than retreating, we must push forward with youth-centered, positive reforms. Yet, funding challenges and state compliance issues under the JJDP threaten this progress, underscoring an urgent need for transformative change.

### Where Progress is at Risk

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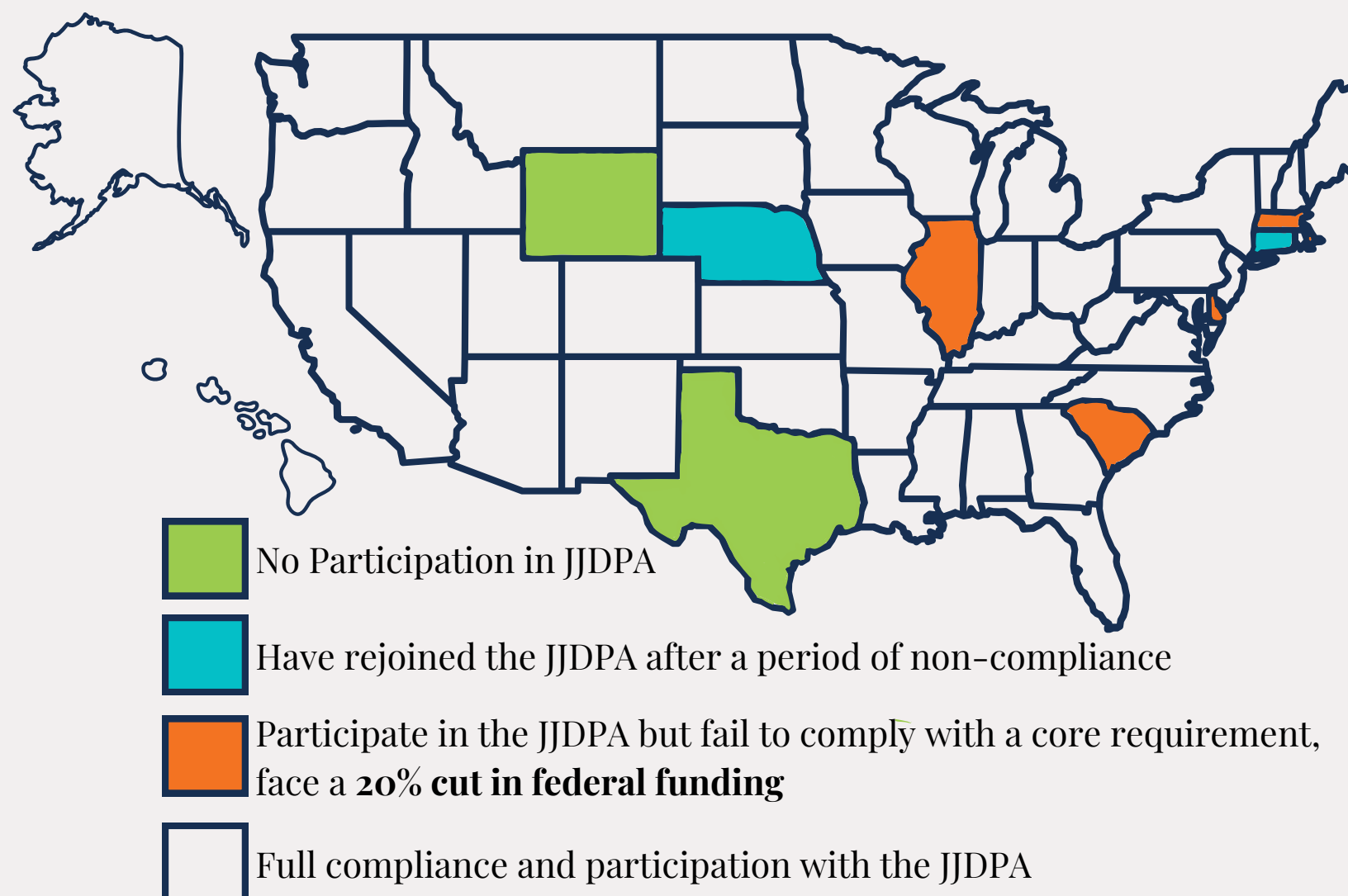
“Another new Louisiana law mandates that 17-year-olds accused of crimes be charged as adults [...] reversing a 2017 reform that did the opposite.”

“The wave of juvenile justice legislation and policy changes comes amid a heightened public perception that youth crime is rising. Political rhetoric and sensational media coverage, rather than statistics, are driving that perception.”

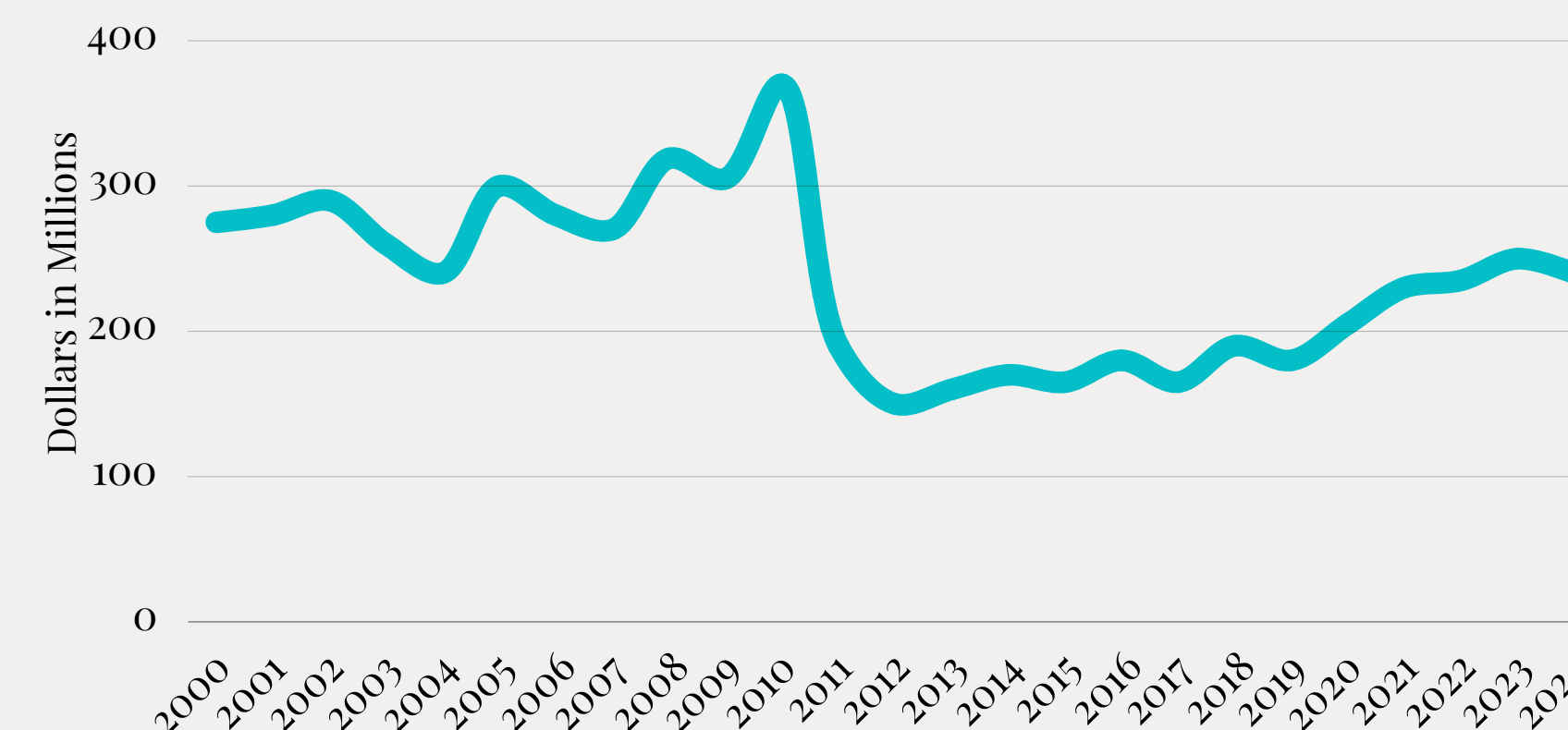
“Some legislatures considered policies that would create alternatives to incarcerating teens, while others debated bills that would toughen potential penalties for kids as young as 10 years old.”

“The so-called blended sentencing measure by Republican House Speaker was part of a package of get-tough-on-juvenile-crime measures resurrected this year.”

### Many States Falling Short on JJDP Compliance



### A Legacy of Insufficient Funding



## A New Vision for Lasting Impact



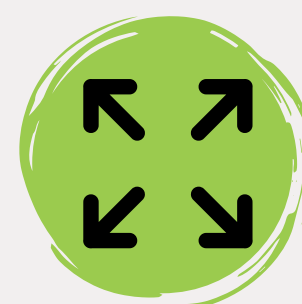
### Strengthen Funding Models

To build a more effective future for the JJDP, we must advocate for funding models that prioritize transformative youth development over punitive measures. This means redirecting resources to programs that emphasize education, mental health support, and skill-building.



### Empower Youth and Communities for Reform

Tackling deep-rooted racism in our system requires intentional, equity-focused policies that counter past injustices. Youth and community-led approaches are vital for building trust and achieving equitable outcomes. Grounded in the lived experiences of impacted communities, these grassroots initiatives create solutions tailored to the unique challenges and strengths of diverse populations.



### Build a System for Youth and Emerging Adults

It's essential for the JJDP to integrate insights on youthful development, recognizing that both youth and emerging adults share similar developmental needs as brain maturation extends into the mid-20s. Expanding protections and a rehabilitative focus to include emerging adults up to age 25 acknowledges this critical period of growth, when support for positive change is most impactful.



### Boost Federal Investment

Federal investment, especially from the Office of Justice Programs, is vital for sustaining juvenile justice reforms. Foundation funding helps but cannot drive nationwide change alone. The incoming Trump administration's potential shift in priorities raises uncertainty about future federal support, risking progress on key reforms.