

February 2015



With more than 20,000 people in prison¹ and at a cost of almost *one billion dollars* a year, Maryland's corrections system consumes significant public resources. Knowing more about the impact incarceration has

on communities would help state policymakers and residents make more informed choices on better ways to invest taxpayer resources in more effective public safety strategies and opportunities to help people succeed.

As a result of Maryland's historic "No Representation Without Population Act," which ended the practice of "prison gerrymandering" and required incarcerated people to be counted at home for redistricting purposes, it is finally possible to know where the people in Maryland's prisons are from.

Focus on Baltimore City

Baltimore City and, specifically, certain communities within Baltimore, are ground zero for Maryland's incarceration challenge: While one out of 10 Maryland residents is from Baltimore, *one out of three* Maryland residents in state prison is from the city. With an incarceration rate three times that of the State of Maryland and the national average, Baltimore is Maryland's epicenter for the use of incarceration. Rates of incarceration are highly concentrated in certain

MARYLAND TAXPAYERS SPEND \$288M ON CORRECTIONS IN BALTIMORE



communities, with a handful of communities experiencing even higher concentrations. For example, at the high end there are 458 people in prison from the Sandtown-Winchester/Harlem Park community,² located in West Baltimore. At the low end, there were only three people in prison from the Greater Roland Park/Poplar Hill community in North Baltimore.

Maryland taxpayers spend nearly \$300 million³ each year to incarcerate people from Baltimore City. This includes as much as \$17 million to incarcerate people from a single community, Sandtown-Winchester/Poplar Hill.

Jurisdiction	Number of people in prison (2010)	Census population (2010)	Incarceration Rate
Baltimore City	7,795	620,961	1,255
Maryland	22,087	5,773,552	383
United States	1,404,032	308,745,538	455

Sources: Baltimore City: Maryland Department of Planning and Redistricting, Congressional and Legislative Districts, Data for Download," July 2014. <http://planning.maryland.gov/redistricting/2010/dataDownload.shtml>
 Maryland people in prison: Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, *Secretary's End of Year Report FY2010* (Towson, MD: Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, 2010). www.dpscs.state.md.us/publicinfo/publications/pdfs/2010_DPSCS_End_of_Year_Report.pdf; U.S: E. Ann Carson, *Prisoners in 2013* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, September 2014). www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/p13.pdf

Spending hundreds of millions of dollars to lock up Baltimore residents, rather than investing in their long-term well-being is reflected in an array of challenges facing Baltimore communities.

Drawing upon rich data sets about Baltimore City communities, this report illustrates how the communities most impacted by incarceration fare on several indicators of community well-being: employment, educational attainment, addiction, physical health, housing and public safety.

Combining indicators of community well-being, data showing where people in Maryland's prisons are from and the cost of incarcerating these people shows that the communities in which taxpayers spend the most on incarceration are in need of different resources and represent the greatest opportunity for more effective investments that will more likely promote community well-being and result in safer communities.

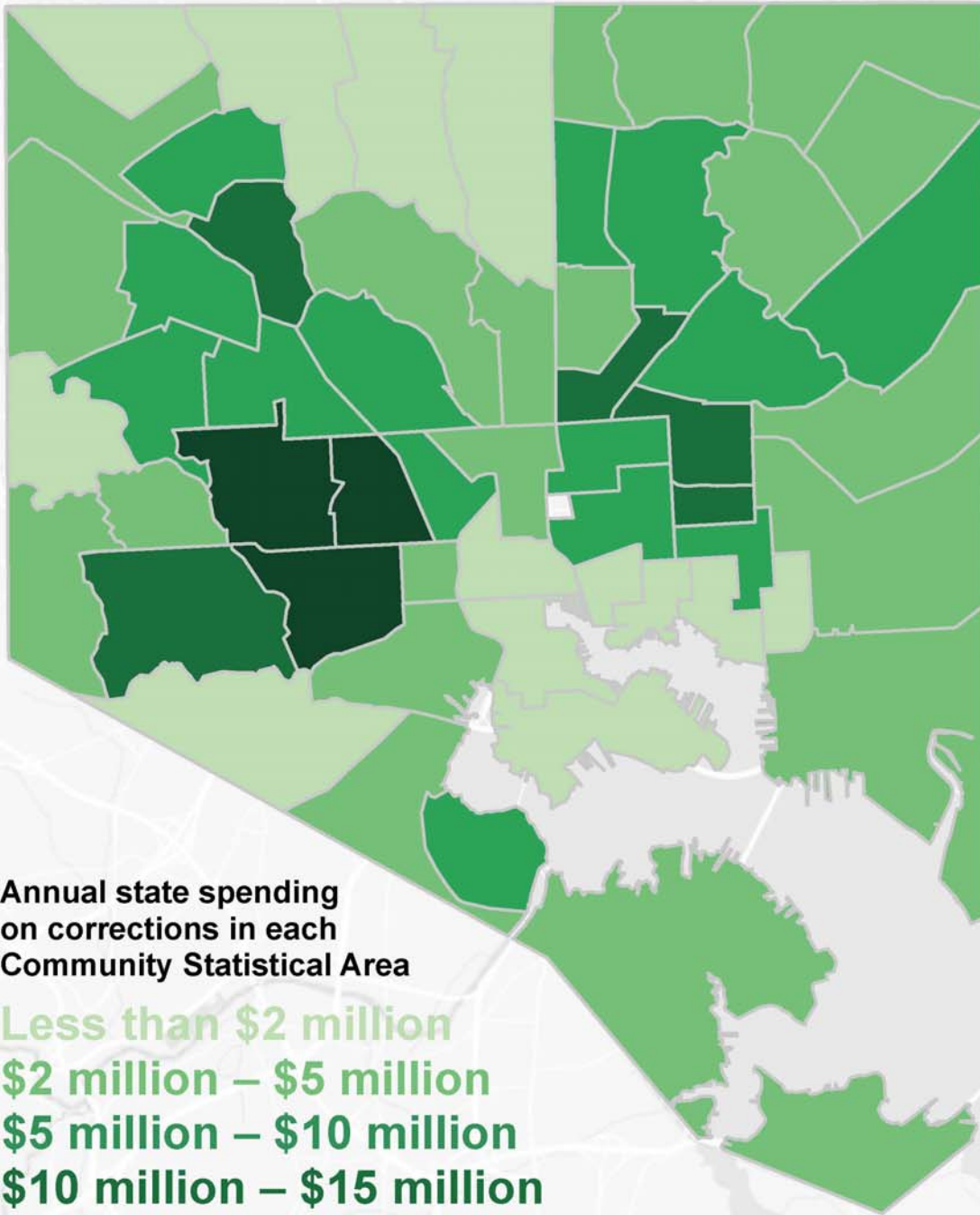
This report is organized into three frames for understanding the concentration of incarceration and, perhaps most importantly, the opportunity for different community investments:

- **Baltimore's 25 "high" incarceration communities:** About half the 55 communities that comprise Baltimore City experience a concentrated impact of incarceration. At least \$5 million is being spent by taxpayers to incarcerate people from each of these communities. Other indicators of community well-being show that, overall, the 25 high incarceration communities experience higher unemployment, greater reliance on public assistance, higher rates of school absence, higher rates of vacant and abandoned

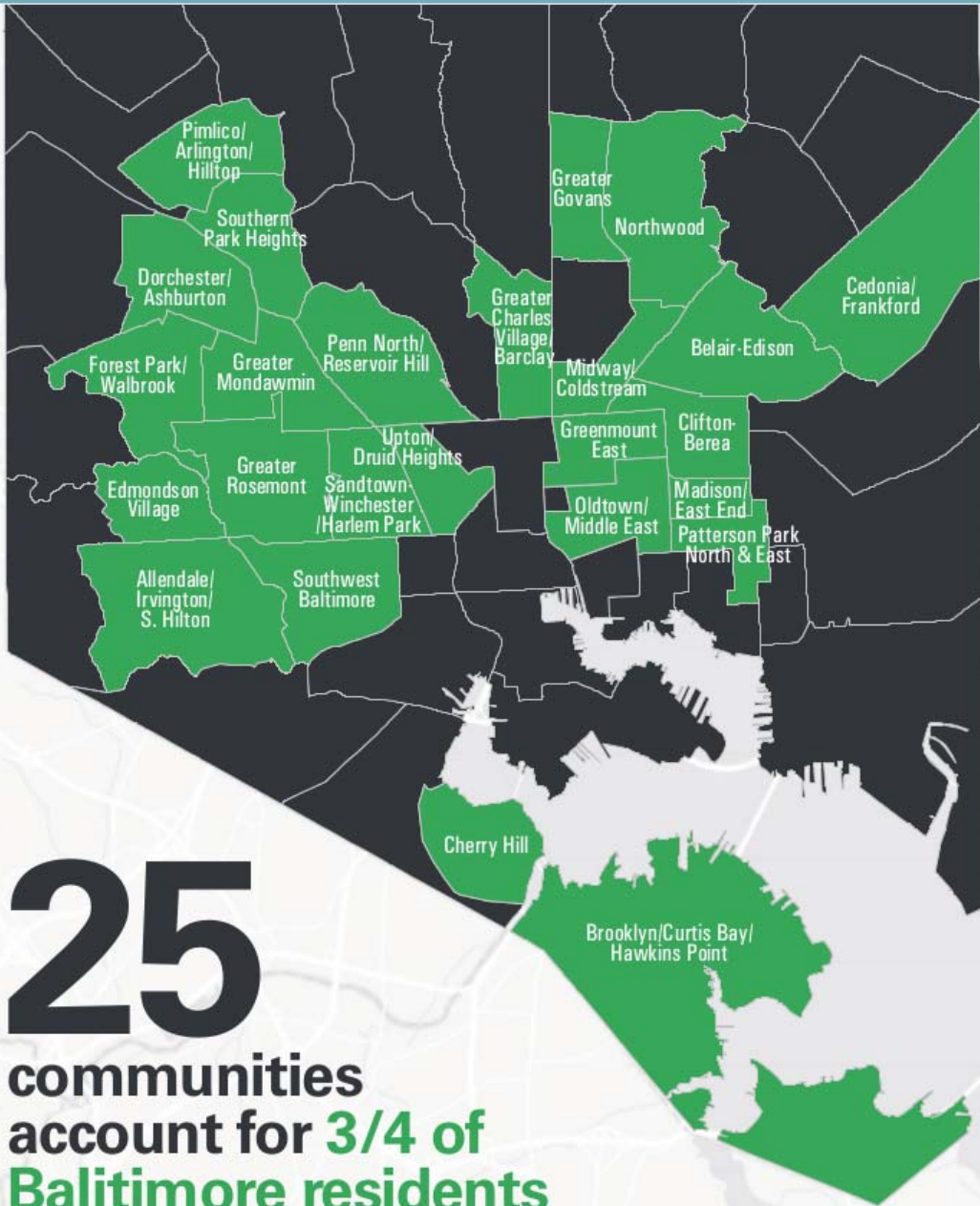
housing, and more addiction challenges than the city as a whole. These 25 high incarceration communities also experience lower life expectancy, lower rates of educational attainment, and lower incomes than other parts of Baltimore. More residents of these communities spend more time commuting than other city residents, a clear sign that people in high incarceration communities are distanced from opportunity.

- **Baltimore's 5 "higher" incarceration communities:** Among the 25 high incarceration communities, there are five places—the *higher* incarceration communities—where taxpayers spend \$10 million or more imprisoning people from these communities. These five "higher" incarcerated communities *experience even more unemployment, high school absence, more emergency narcotics calls to 911 and higher rates of vacant or abandoned housing.* These five higher incarceration communities have a life expectancy that is 13 years shorter than the five communities with the fewest number of people in prison.
- **Baltimore's "highest" incarceration community:** One community stands out as being the "highest" incarceration community: Maryland taxpayers spend \$17 million each year to incarcerate residents of Sandtown-Winchester/Harlem Park. This community faces extraordinary challenges around educational attainment, housing, and addiction. Seven percent of the children in this community have elevated blood-lead levels—a critical indicator of substandard housing and a cause of negative outcomes for young people. By contrast, 47 of Baltimore's 55 communities report *not a single child* having elevated blood-lead levels.

MARYLAND TAXPAYER SPENDING ON CORRECTIONS IN BALTIMORE



HIGH INCARCERATION COMMUNITIES IN BALTIMORE



25
communities
account for **3/4** of
Baltimore residents
in prison.

Public Safety: Making the right investment

For 30 years, policymakers in Maryland and across the country acted on the premise that building more prisons and making prison sentences longer would make communities safer. In the last 10 years, crime rates have fallen to 1960s-levels. While cities and states across the country, including Baltimore and Maryland, have experienced significant crime reduction, there has not been a similar drop in incarceration.⁴ In fact, the same communities where taxpayers spend the most on incarceration also have higher rates of violent crime than other parts of the city. Simply locking more people up and spending more money on incarceration does not necessarily mean a safer community.

With no guarantee that increased incarceration leads to long-term community safety, but *every* indication that incarceration disrupts lives, families, and communities, continued investment in prisons is questionable. This report is intended to explore what it means to have safe and healthy communities and discuss the role of taxpayer investments in public services as a way to build safer, stronger communities in the long-term.

For a person or community to thrive, avoiding justice system involvement or becoming a victim of crime is the absolute minimum requirement. A healthy and safe community is one where residents are employed, earn a high enough income to purchase basic services, have high levels of educational success, live long and

healthy lives, and spend less time commuting. Baltimore City and the State of Maryland should refocus resources and attention on those communities with the highest levels of correctional involvement to ensure that the people that live there can realize these basic goals.

Key recommendations include:

- 1) **Make investments in opportunity: Create a portfolio with better long-term returns on investment.** Baltimore City already has a number of resources available to help people get self-sustaining jobs, obtain an education, get stable housing, and access treatment. For the cost of sending one person to prison for a year, Baltimore City could pay for half of a high school teacher's annual salary, employment training for seven people, two-bedroom apartments for 30 families for one month, or a GED course for 37 people.
- 2) **Reduce spending on prisons: Free up public resources for long-term solutions to address public safety.** Maryland should follow the lead of other states that have

What could Baltimore City communities buy instead of incarceration?		
	Cost per person	Number that could be served for \$37,000
Drug Treatment for Adults	\$4,494	8 people
Employment Training	\$5,000	7 people
Housing (per month)	\$1,252	30 families
GED Course	\$1,000	37 people

Notes: **Drug Treatment for Adults** - Outpatient, per episode cost for one adult, Baltimore Behavioral Health System, FY13, **Employment Training** - Average Cost Of 100, Baltimore-Based Maryland Workforce Exchange Job Education Programs oriented toward earning a certificate, **Housing** - Rent for one month. Assumes two people living in a two bedroom apartment in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area. Althea Arnold and Sheila Crowley, Out Of Reach (Washington, DC: National Low Income Housing Coalition, 2014). <http://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/oor/2014OOR.pdf>, pg. 100. **GED Course**: South Baltimore Learns GED - Personal correspondence with South Baltimore Learns, 8/6/2014.

enacted wholesale sentencing reform, systemic reforms to reduce imprisonment, and redirection of funds to treatment. A portion of the hundreds of millions of dollars spent on incarceration in Baltimore should be redirected—and additional funds could be invested—to support locally-driven services, supports and opportunities that meet the unique needs of the communities they serve, especially related to work, education, health, and housing.

- 3) **Do not spend more money on incarceration: Find alternatives to jail expansion.** Any prison or jail expansion plan⁵ should be carefully scrutinized. Rather than exacerbating the ongoing challenges in Baltimore’s communities, policymakers should examine ways to direct resources to more effectively address community challenges to reduce the number of people incarcerated in the long-term. A number of pretrial reforms that can help keep jail populations low have already been proposed to state policymakers.

- 4) **Develop research capacity to analyze the costs and benefits of policy choices: Opportunities for data and analysis.** In other states, like the state of Washington, legislators and the executive have the capacity to develop cost-benefit analyses of any criminal justice initiative to test whether prison sentences are getting the public the bang for the buck they expect. Maryland should make modest investments in the state’s ability to collect and analyze data, and conduct cost-benefit analyses on criminal justice and social policy. With these kinds of tools, policymakers and the public could weigh

the costs and benefits of current and future criminal justice policies.

Opportunities and limitations

While this report adds important and new findings to an array of policy analysis, advocacy, and knowledge about Baltimore City, it is not without its challenges. The data included in the report also present new opportunities for further analysis of incarceration trends in Baltimore City and the State of Maryland.

This report does not closely examine racial and ethnic disparities in Baltimore, but the intensity of the impact of incarceration is felt more in communities of color. While Sandtown-Winchester/Harlem Park has the most people in prison, it is also 96.6 percent Black/African American. The community with the fewest people in prison, Greater Roland Park/Poplar Hill, is 77.5 percent White, 9.8 percent Asian, and 7.9 percent Black/African American. Communities of color most acutely experience the consequences of taxpayer dollars spent on incarceration.

This report encourages Maryland taxpayers to question whether continued spending on incarceration is wise, when other investments could be made to better benefit the state and the City of Baltimore. This report is an important first step – a detailed geographic analysis of incarceration in Maryland communities.

There is far more work that can and should be done with this data to shed light on incarceration’s impact on communities. Data available in the Appendix of this report and online encourage additional analysis.

About the organizations and the project

This report and the attendant maps and graphics are the result of collaboration between two organizations that have a long track record in Maryland criminal justice research and policy work. The **Justice Policy Institute** (JPI), a research and policy organization dedicated to ending society's reliance on incarceration has generated over two dozen reports and documents on Maryland's correctional challenges. The **Prison Policy Initiative** (PPI) produces cutting edge research to expose the broader harm of mass criminalization, and then sparks advocacy campaigns to create a more just society. The Prison Policy Initiative's research and advocacy launched the national movement against prison gerrymandering that led to the passage of the No Representation Without Population Act, legislation which ultimately allowed the organizations to develop this report.

These two lead research organizations worked collaboratively with other organizations, including the Baltimore Grassroots Criminal Justice Network, the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance-Jacob France Institute at the University of Baltimore, as well as policymakers and elected officials to procure and review the data and present the information included in this report.

More Online and in the Appendix

While this report is a detailed geographic analysis of incarceration in Maryland communities, there is far more work that can and should be done with this data to shed light on incarceration's impact on communities. Because this detailed origin data can answer other questions that the research and advocacy community will want to address in the future, this report includes in the appendix and online an estimate of the distribution of people incarcerated in the Baltimore City Detention Center by Community Statistical Area, and the raw data in two Baltimore-level geographies and in five state-level geographies for ready use by other researchers. All additional data can be found online at www.prisonpolicy.org/origin/ or justicepolicy.org/TheRightInvestment.

¹ Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, p.21, *Secretary's End of Year Report FY2010* (Towson, MD: Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, 2010).

www.dpscs.state.md.us/publicinfo/publications/pdfs/2010_DPSCS_End_of_Year_Report.pdf

² See Appendix B for an explanation of Baltimore's 55 Community Statistical Areas.

³ The estimated total cost of incarceration for 25 Community Statistical Areas in Baltimore City is \$288 million. Calculated using an estimate from the Maryland Department of Legislative Services indicating that it costs \$37,200 per year to incarcerate one person. An underestimate of \$37,000 is used for the purpose of this report. See Appendix B for a longer discussion of the estimated cost of incarceration in Maryland. Maryland Department of Legislative Services, Maryland General Assembly, 2014 Session, *HB 104 Fiscal and Social Policy Note: Contraband-Places of Confinement-Penalty*, http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2014rs/fnotes/bil_0004/hb0084.pdf

⁴ The Pew Charitable Trusts, "Prison and Crime: A Complex Link," September 2014.

www.pewtrusts.org/en/multimedia/data-visualizations/2014/prison-and-crime

⁵ For example, there are ongoing discussions about building a new, larger jail in Baltimore, which has included a budgetary line item. (See Department of Legislative Services, *Special Joint Commission on Public Safety and Security in State and Local Correctional Facilities*, (Annapolis, MD: Maryland Office of Policy Analysis, December 2013).

www.wbaltv.com/blob/view/-/23438840/data/1/-/rns7skz/-/Jail-complex-legislative-recommendations.pdf

JUSTICE
POLICY
INSTITUTE

PRISON
POLICY INITIATIVE