

# Alaska Legislature

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### House Bill 205 Sponsor Statement

In the last two years, all three branches of government came together to request the assistance of the Alaska Criminal Justice Commission, a non-partisan body composed of experts in all realms of the justice system, to help stem the growth of our prison population and the trend of recidivism and re-victimization in Alaska. The Commission spent over a year conducting an exhaustive review of the state's pretrial, sentencing, corrections, and community supervision data and systems. Understanding the financial cost, as well as the very real human cost, of continuing down the path of using jail time as the default, the Commission looked at ways to balance public safety, rehabilitation and fiscal security, and produced their Justice Reinvestment Report. This report offers over 21 consensus policy recommendations to the Legislature that prioritize Alaskans' safety, hold offenders accountable for their actions, and reduce the cost of criminal justice.

These policy recommendations are translated into action items in House Bill 205. The bill offers changes to our pre-trial procedures, sentencing, community supervision, and incorporate priorities important to victims and victim advocates. Perhaps most importantly, however, are crucial reinvestments derived from cost-savings from the previously listed policy changes. Reinvestment is recommended in the form of evidence-based rehabilitation, close supervision of offenders living outside of prison, enhanced victim notification, better use of existing infrastructure, and other policy areas.

A vehicle for the Commission's recommendations, and for a discourse about the way in which to use proven practices to reform our justice system, House Bill 205 aims to better protect Alaskans and keep our state from requiring an additional prison.