

***“The time is always right  
to do what is right”***

**- MLK**

***NOW* is the time for Transformation  
of our Criminal Justice System**

***NOW* is the time for 11X15**



# What is 11X15?

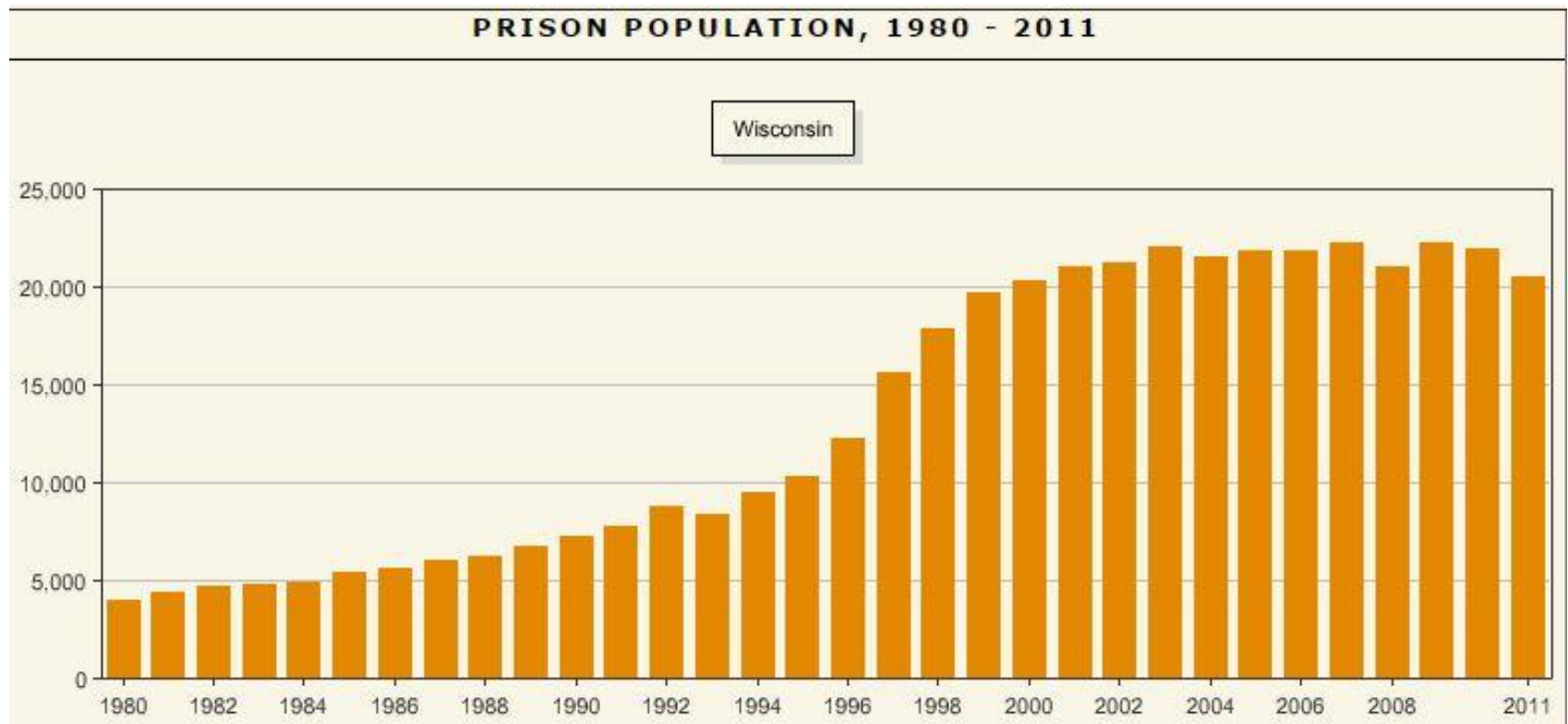
The “Eleven-by-Fifteen” Campaign is a challenge from the faith community to all the people of the State of Wisconsin:

So that we might all have less wasteful, safer, healthier, and more just communities...

**We can and must cut our prison population -  
to 11,000 -  
by the end of 2015**

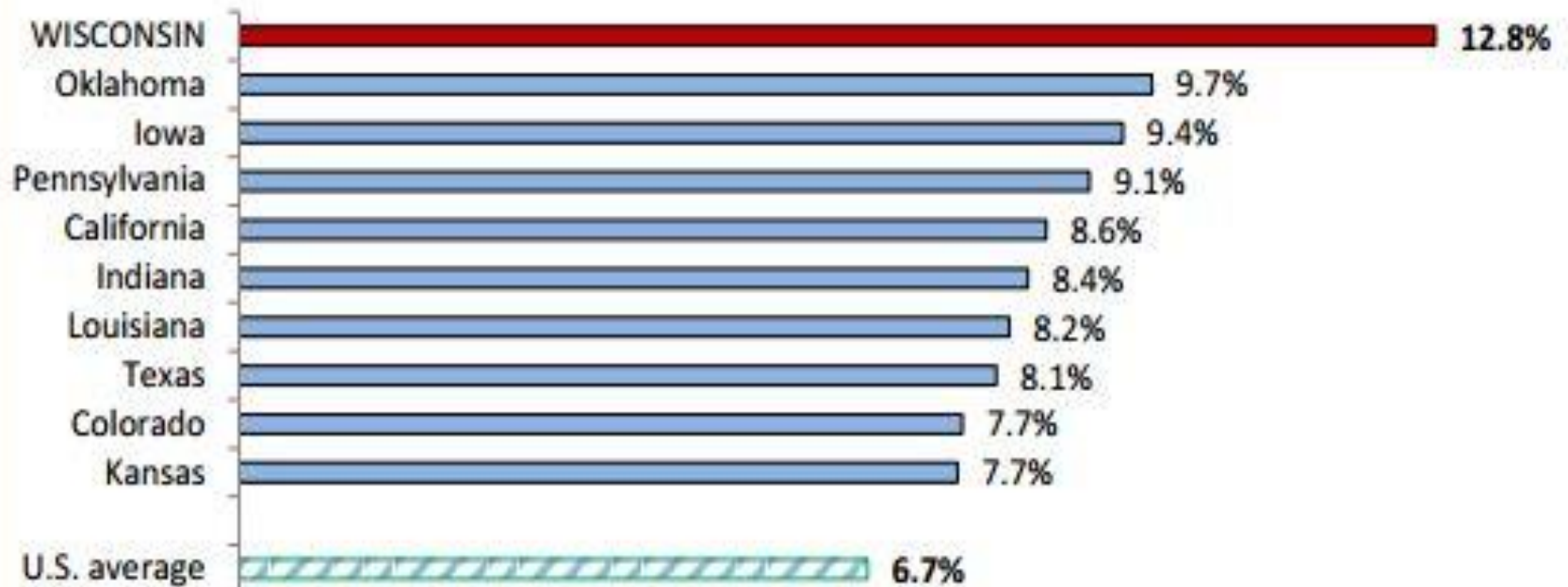
# The Magnitude of Wisconsin's Problem

\$1.3 billion/year is spent on Department of Corrections.



# Extreme Racial Disparity

**Ten Worst States for Incarceration of African American Men**  
(2010 U.S. Decennial Census)



# Wisconsin

# Minnesota

## 2010 State Population

5,686,986

5,303,925

## 2010 Prison Population

22,019

9,429

## Imprisonment Rate (2010, per 100,000)

387.2

177.8

# There *ARE* things we can do!

- The 11x15 campaign is working to bring justice to everyone effected by the out-of-control criminal justice system.
- Needed reforms are proven by experience in Wisconsin and other states to safely reduce prison numbers
- **Now is the time** to work with the 11x15 campaign and within our communities to bring about overdue reforms.

# The 11x15 Blueprint to End Mass Incarceration

There are three main ways to reduce the prison population:

- **Keep People Out of Prison**
  - Stop sending people who don't need to be there.
- **Justice Inside Prison Walls**
  - Treat prisoners humanely, and release those who can be safely released.
- **Keep Former Prisoners Out of Prison**
  - Stop sending people back needlessly, and help people get jobs, housing and other needed help.

# TAD – Treatment Alternatives and Diversions

Wisconsin has been able to provide alternatives to prison to many who need it – namely low-level offenders with addiction or mental health problems. In the next budget, we need to add \$20 million/year for TAD, with half targeted for high-incarceration communities.

TAD is ***less expensive*** and ***more effective*** than sending people to prison.

- Every \$1 spent on TAD saves \$1.96 in taxpayer money
- TAD participants are less likely to commit another crime.
- If all TAD-eligible people had access to an alternative program, 3,000 less people would go to prison each year, and 27,000 less to jail.



# Sentencing Practices

Wisconsin's sentencing guidelines and criminal code are outdated and inconsistent with national best practices.

- Prison sentences are often far too long; excess time in prison does more harm than good.
- 17-year-olds should be tried as *minors*, not as *adults*.
- Wisconsin needs to require a Community Impact Statement whenever a policy or law is changed, especially to evaluate the effect on communities of color, low-income people and people with disabilities.

***Reforming sentencing practices could keep many people from ever going to jail.***

# Old Law Prisoners and Parole

On January 1, 2000 the *Truth in Sentencing* law was put into effect, eliminating the possibility of parole to anyone coming into the prison system.

***Still, there were more than 2,800 people in prison in 2014 who were eligible to be released, but a broken system has slowed the parole rate to a crawl.***

The Administration needs to review and re-invigorate the parole system. By releasing those eligible for parole, Wisconsin could save \$95 million/year and restore many productive citizens to their families and communities.

# Solitary Confinement

The UN has declared that placing any prisoner in Solitary Confinement for more than 15 days is torture.

Yet, in 2012 in Wisconsin...

- 600 prisoners had been in solitary for 6-12 months
- 79 prisoners had been in solitary for 2-5 years
- 14 prisoners had been in solitary for 10+ years

Solitary Confinement is damaging psychologically and physiologically for people.

An inmate in solitary costs more than twice as much as a typical inmate.

***Wisconsin's DOC remains unaccountable for the inhumane conditions of Solitary Confinement.***

# Compassionate Release

Wisconsin law allows for elderly or seriously ill inmates to petition to be released. Unfortunately, the DOC makes little use of this provision.

- Elderly and seriously ill inmates are not a threat to public safety.
- This population is extremely expensive because they are not eligible for Medicare or other federal health benefits.
- Many of these prisoners have family members who are willing to care for them or nursing home facilities willing to accept them.

# Revocations

***The largest number of people entering Wisconsin prisons are re-entering.***

4,000 people re-entering prison each year do so because of “revocations,” the sending of someone on parole back to prison because of “technical violations,” not because of a new crime.

Violations can include

- Accepting a job offer
- Unauthorized computer or cell phone use
- Crossing county lines
- Missed appointments
- Failed drug test
- GPS malfunctions (out of the bracelet-wearer’s control)

# Revocations, cont.

Those picked up for parole violations are given *no right to be out on bail while awaiting a decision*. Even if they have done nothing wrong, they can lose jobs, housing, and continuity as they try to build a new life.

Few mid-level sanctions are used, so those violating parole rules are often sent straight to jail.

Of course, a revoked inmate costs taxpayers \$35,000/year, and those awaiting revocation hearings overcrowd our county jails.

# Transitional Jobs

Transitional jobs are subsidized jobs created specifically to help long-term unemployed people to re-enter the workforce.

In recent years, more than 4,000 people have participated in these projects, 39% of whom have had a felony conviction. About half of all participants (including those with a conviction history) secure full-time employment before the end of the six-month Transitional Job.

***Transitional jobs work! We need many more of them.***

# Ban the Box

- WISDOM supports initiatives to remove questions about felony histories from job applications so people can at least get an interview.
- We have had success in Madison, in Milwaukee County and in Appleton
- Ban the Box is important because those coming out of prisons need jobs to support themselves, and need a fair chance at being considered for available jobs.
- Eventually, Ban the Box needs to be statewide, for all employers, public and private. In addition, the “C-CAP” on-line data base needs to be reformed.



# Housing and Other Post-Release Needs

- **Housing** – A stable place to live is extremely important for those returning from jail or prison. Not everyone can stay with family or friends. Transitional housing needs to be more readily available.
- **Special Services** – People with addiction or mental health problems need adequate help. Greater opportunity is needed for education, training, and licensing.

# How can we achieve 11x15?

- **TAD** – Increase TAD funding by \$20 million/year this year, with half targeted for high-incarceration areas. Eventually, \$75 million/year for TAD can provide alternatives for 3,000 potential prisoners each year.
- **Old Law & Parole** – Immediately review the cases of the 2,800 people who are eligible for parole and are being unnecessarily held by the DOC.
- **Revocations** – Dramatically reduce the 4,000 people each year are sent back to prison for “technical violations.” There must be more community-based alternatives for those on parole.

# Achieving 11x15, continued

- **Solitary Confinement** – The practice of “segregation” must be changed now. It is unjust and damaging, and the DOC needs to be held accountable.
- **Compassionate Release** – The elderly and those with serious health needs should be released from prisons.
- **Transitional Jobs, Ban the Box, Housing, etc.** – The state must reduce prison spending and re-invest the savings in programs that will help people coming out of prison to succeed.

***3,000 alternatives through TAD,  
+ 2,800 potential parolees, and  
+ 4,000 fewer revocations  
= 9,800 people each year aren't in prison.***

***It is POSSIBLE and ACHIEVABLE to reduce  
the prison population significantly...***

***All we need is the courage to act.***

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