

PARCA Annual Meeting

February 13, 2015

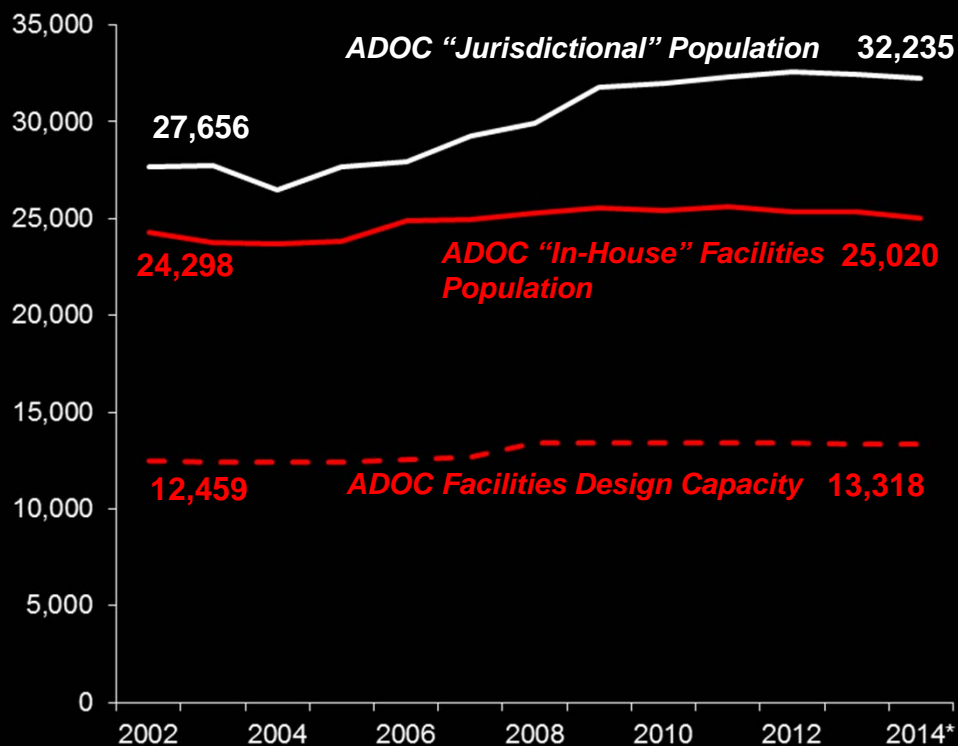
Alabama Prison Reform Task Force

Honorable Cam Ward, *Alabama State Senator*

Bennet Wright, *Alabama Sentencing Commission*

Alabama's prisons are significantly over capacity

ADOC Population and Capacity, 2002 – 2014



What would it cost Alabama to build its way out of the current situation?

Achieving 130% operational capacity requires adding 6,000 prison beds:

- ❖ Construction costs = \$420m
- ❖ Annual operating costs = \$93m

Achieving 100% operational capacity requires adding 12,000 prison beds:

- ❖ Construction costs = \$840m
- ❖ Annual operating costs = \$186m

Principles underpinning Justice Reinvestment and deliverables for Alabama's JR project

Justice Reinvestment Principles

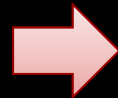
Deliverables for Alabama JR

Lower recidivism



Strengthen community supervision

Increase accountability



Respond to supervision violations with swift, sure sanctions

Avert costs



Reduce prison overcrowding

Increase public safety



Structure sentencing and parole to require post-release supervision

Address the needs of crime victims



Expand and improve victim notification

Justice Reinvestment process has identified key challenges in Alabama's criminal justice system

1.

RECIDIVISM

Inefficient supervision practices do not prioritize limited supervision resources, resulting in recidivism.

2.

OVERCROWDED PRISONS

Alabama's prisons are the most crowded in the country and limited prison space is not prioritized for individuals convicted of violent offenses.

3.

UNSUPERVISED RELEASES

Parole approval rates have declined resulting in longer lengths of stay in prison and an increasingly large number of people leaving prison each year without supervision.

Goal:

Address prison overcrowding and increase public safety

Alabama's Justice Reinvestment Policy Framework

Strategy

1

Strengthen supervision & treatment to reduce recidivism

2

Prioritize prison space for violent and dangerous individuals

3

Hold offenders accountable in prison and after release

A

Hire additional probation and parole officers and support staff.

B

Improve the use of objective risk assessments to target resources on individuals most likely to reoffend and reduce caseloads by limiting supervision of low risk individuals.

C

Develop policies establishing progressive sanctions in response to lower-level technical violations among probationers and parolees and articulate a framework for use of swift and short jail stays as part of the range of sanctions.

D

Fund treatment programs proven to work to reduce recidivism among probationers and parolees, such as cognitive behavioral and substance use programs.

E

Establish interim taskforce to address reentry barriers for those with mental health disorders.

F

Increase access to community corrections statewide and improve quality and utilization of evidence-based practices through performance based funding.

Alabama's Justice Reinvestment Policy Framework

1

Strengthen supervision & treatment to reduce recidivism

Strategy

2

Prioritize prison space for violent and dangerous individuals

3

Hold offenders accountable in prison and after release

A

Create a new class of the least serious, nonviolent felony offenses ("Class D") and increase front-end diversions away from prison for certain property and drug offenses.

B

Structure the use of prison sanctions for technical violations of probation and parole supervision.

Alabama's Justice Reinvestment Policy Framework

1

Strengthen supervision & treatment to reduce recidivism

2

Prioritize prison space for violent and dangerous individuals

Strategy

3

Hold offenders accountable in prison and after release

A

Require individuals sentenced to prison on a Class C offense will be required to serve a split sentence to ensure supervision upon release.

B

Mandate a period of supervision on parole to be served prior to the end of any straight prison sentence.

C

Require the parole board to develop guidelines to structure decision-making around risk to reoffend and program compliance.

D

Create administrative hearing officers to function as field members of the Board to conduct interviews of incarcerated individuals. The officers would have the authority of casting one "vote" on nonviolent cases.

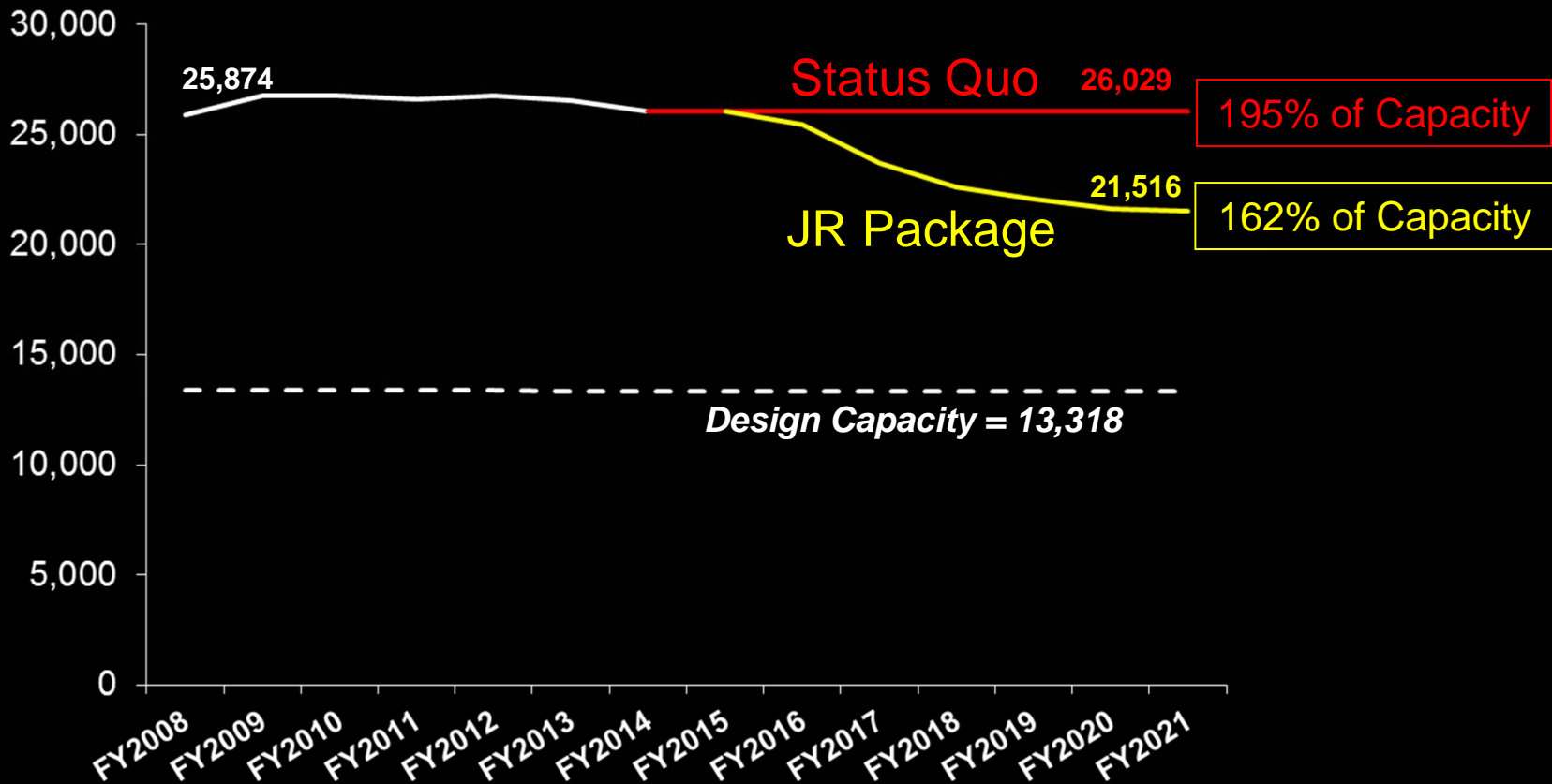
E

Expand victim notification to inform victims of all releases from prison.

F

Establish interim taskforce to address issues related to felony restitution collection and victim notification, including exploring ways of prioritizing and enhancing collection of restitution obligations, while also prioritizing the need to develop policies and practices that balance accountability alongside a defendant's ability to pay.

JR policy framework reduces Alabama's prison overcrowding



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