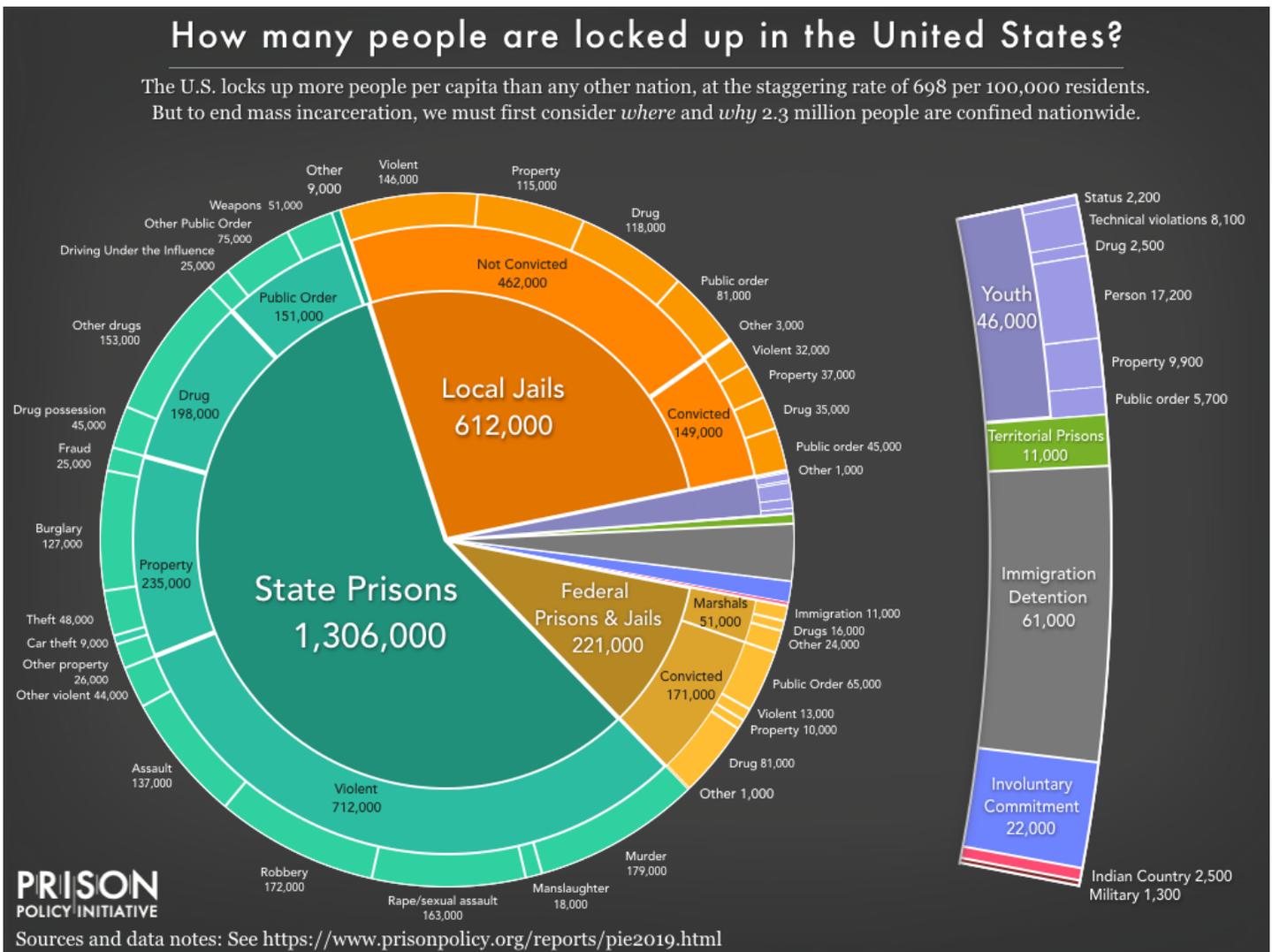


“Every time I was released from prison, people would tell me, ‘Pull yourself up by your bootstraps. Hell, I didn’t even have boots!’” - Susan Burton

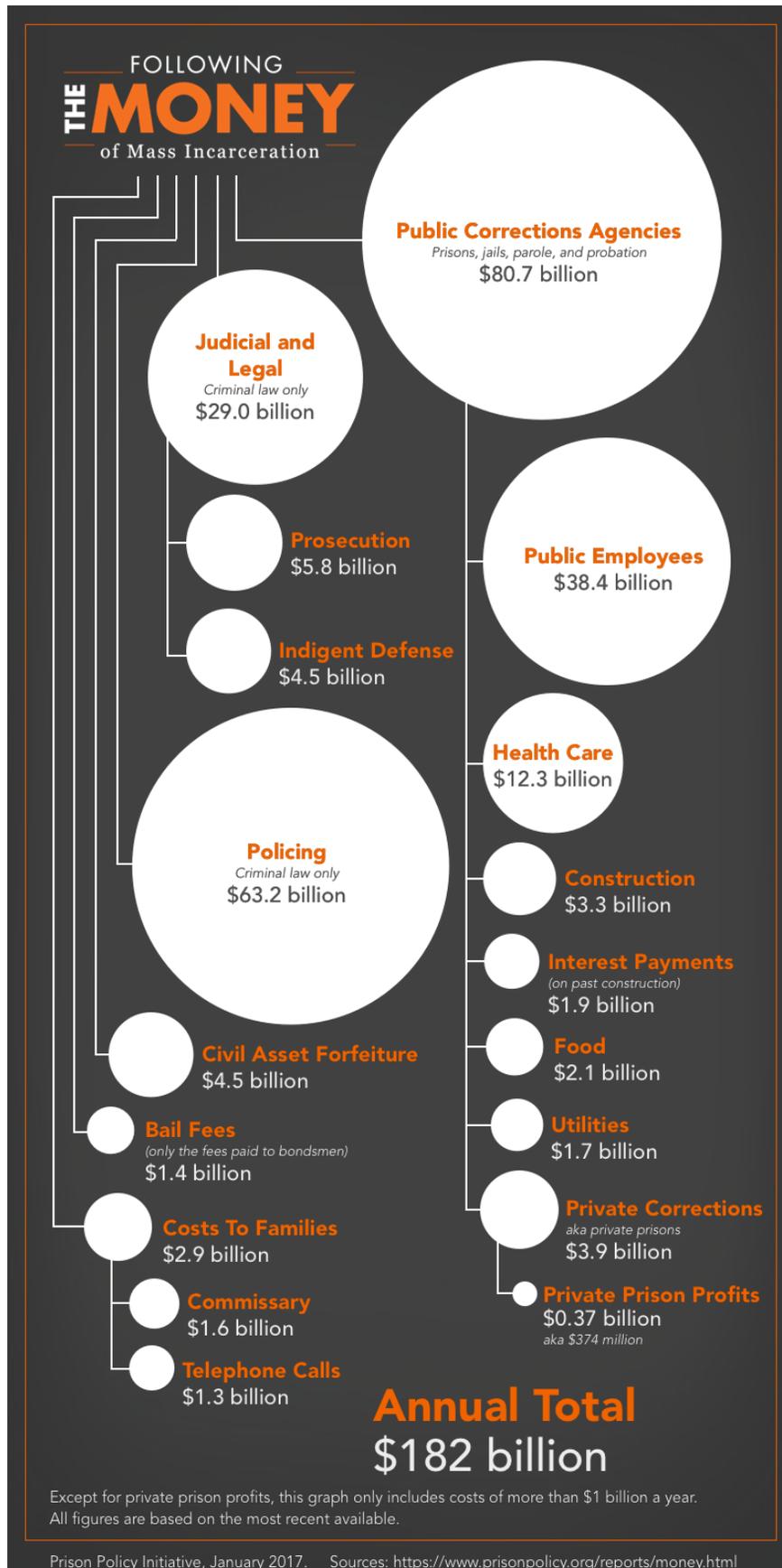
MEDIA TALKING POINTS:

➤ **Mass Incarceration:**

- In 2019, federal and state corrections facilities held nearly 2.3 million prisoners (both men and women), that’s more than one in every 200 U.S. residents.



- **The Money:**



- Rates of incarceration are higher for Blacks and Hispanics and are disproportionate to the general population. (<https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/rates.html>)

2010 Snapshot: Inmates in adult facilities, by race and ethnicity. Jails, and state and federal prisons.			
Race, Ethnicity	% of US population	% of U.S. incarcerated population	National incarceration rate (per 100,000 of all ages)
White (non-Hispanic)	64	39	450 per 100,000
Hispanic	16	19	831 per 100,000
Black	13	40	2,306 per 100,000

- At least 95 percent of state prisoners will be released back to their communities at some point. (<https://csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc/facts-and-trends/>)
- According to a 2011 National Employment Law Project report, over 65 million individuals in America have criminal histories. Civil rights and consumer protection violations are routine. (http://www.nelp.org/page/-/65_Million_Need_Not_Apply.pdf?nocdn=1)
- A large, three-state recidivism study found that less than half of released prisoners had secured a job upon their return to the community. (Uggen, C. & J. Staff, "Work as a Turning Point for Criminal Offenders," in J.L. Krienert & M.S. Fleisher (eds.), *Crime & Employment: Critical Issues in Crime Reduction for Corrections*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2004.)



- People coming home from prison face tremendous institutional barriers that operate to deny them access community supports, permanent housing and employment. With diminished opportunities, they are too often left in despair, reaching for any means available to survive. As a result, mothers and fathers continue to cycle in and out prison, children cycle in and out of foster care and the cycle of familial and neighborhood disenfranchisement persists.

➤ Women in Chains:

- According to a [2016 Vera Institute of Justice Study](#), women are the fastest growing incarcerated population. **From the study's Fact Sheet:** "Available research to help explain why women are increasingly incarcerated in U.S. jails is scarce, dated, and limited in scope. Nevertheless, general data about women in the criminal justice system provides clues about who these women are, and why they end up in jail. Like men in jail, they are disproportionately people of color, overwhelmingly poor and low-income, survivors of violence and trauma, and have high rates of physical and mental illness and substance use. The majority are charged with lower-level offenses—mostly property and drug-related—and tend to have less extensive criminal histories than their male counterparts. Unlike incarcerated men, women in jails are often primary caregivers to their young children—nearly 80 percent of women in jails are mothers, and most are single parents."
- While African American women make up only about 3% of California's general population, they comprise 27% of the female prison population. ([Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation](#))
- Two-thirds of incarcerated women in California are mothers to minor children. [Bias Behind Bars, California Women's Foundation](#)



- For many women, incarceration is a “dead-end” faced after traveling unpaved trails through lifetimes of pain, trauma, mental/physical illness and poverty. Women are uniquely impacted by incarceration. When men are incarcerated, the women in their lives stay behind, struggling to maintain contact to sustain and repair the frayed fabric of familial relations. When women are incarcerated, that fabric unravels; children are lost and families are destroyed.

SIGNIFICANT REFORMS:

- *Ban the Box:*

“The Box” refers to the question that is found on most job applications asking applicants about their conviction histories. Statistics have indicated that those who disclose conviction histories are 50% less likely to move forward for gainful employment.

The Fair Chance Hiring Ordinance passed on November 30th, 2016. The City of Los Angeles enforces the most progressive form of the ordinance – it’s illegal to inquire about a person’s conviction unless it comes after a conditional offer of employment in Los Angeles. Statewide, it simply bans the question on an application but doesn’t prohibit any inquiries during the interview process.

BAN THE BOX RESOURCE GUIDE

- *Prop. 47 – A Step in the Right Direction:*



SECOND CHANCES SMARTER INVESTMENTS

Do you have a low-level, nonviolent felony on your old criminal record? Find out if Prop. 47 can help you!

www.myprop47.org | [@safeandjust](https://twitter.com/safeandjust)

- California’s Proposition 47 is an opportunity for people convicted of specific nonviolent offenses to clean up their records, removing barriers to jobs, housing, education and other community resources.
 - Specific lower-level felonies can be changed to misdemeanors:
 - Simple drug possession
 - Petty theft under \$950

- Shoplifting under \$950
- Forging or writing a bad check under \$950
- Receipt of stolen property under \$950
- Individuals in jail, prison, on probation or parole because of one of these six offenses can request a new sentence (and possibly release from custody).
- *Prop. 64 – Another Significant Reform:*

Proposition 64 was a successful 2016 ballot measure based on recognized best practices to control, regulate and tax responsible adult use, sale and cultivation of marijuana in California.

- Adults aged 21+ are allowed to possess marijuana and grow small amounts at home for personal use
- Sale of marijuana is legal and highly regulated to protect consumers and kids
- The measure included toughest-in-the-nation protections for children
 - ✓ Currently, the courts are clogged with cases of non-violent drug offenses. By legalizing marijuana, the Adult Use of Marijuana Act was intended to alleviate pressure on the courts but continue to allow prosecutors to charge the most serious marijuana-related offenses as felonies, while reducing the penalties for minor marijuana-related offenses as set forth in the Act
 - ✓ The act also authorized courts to resentence persons serving a sentence for offenses for which the penalty is reduced by the Act, so long as the person does not pose a risk to public safety, and to redesignate or dismiss such offenses from the criminal records of persons who have completed their sentences as set forth in the Act.
 - A New Way of Life provides free legal clinics twice a month – one in Watts, the other in Long Beach — to help clients redesignate their marijuana convictions (and expunge or reduce other convictions). For information regarding pro bono legal services/assistance, call 323-563-3575.

➤ **Solutions:**

It is critical to create community support systems that will maximize the probability of successful reentries. When provided with intensive, culturally sensitive resources, A New Way of Life Reentry Project (ANWOL) has found that individuals are far less likely to recidivate or reengage in criminal activity, and they can become contributing members of society.



A New Way of Life's Impact:

Through the success of our innovative program design, ANWOL is demolishing destructive stereotypes and demonstrating that alternatives to incarceration are viable. ANWOL's culturally relevant approach to service delivery was conceptualized around four key values that, based on the founder's personal experiences, were determined necessary to effectively promote successful community re-entries after periods of incarceration:

1. Every person has inherent value and holds the power of possibility and transformation within.
2. Public resources are better invested in opportunities for transformation than in prisons and punishment.
3. Formerly incarcerated people must be at the forefront in creating solutions to the incarceration crisis.
4. Incarceration of one family member affects the entire family; therefore, the healing process must involve families, as well.

ANWOL provides reentry services for less than 1/3 the cost of incarceration. The organization is reversing the cycle of recidivism and repairing families. During 2017, on average, 8 out of every 10 women who received services were able to meet annual benchmarks identified as crucial to make successful community reentries.

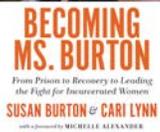


Since its founding in 1998, more than 1,000 women and children have found safety and support in ANWOL's reentry homes. Over 300 women have been reunited with their children. Since its inception in 2007, our legal department has provided pro bono criminal record expungement and occupational licensing services for more than 3,000 formerly incarcerated/convicted individuals, enhancing their ability to find employment and housing. As a result of our leadership building activities, hundreds more have been educated and empowered to speak in advocacy around issues that directly affect their lives.

Becoming Ms. Burton:



In 2017, ANWOL founder Susan Burton released her memoir, "[Becoming Ms. Burton,](#)" published by [The New Press](#). The book was the recipient of the 2018 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work (Biography/Autobiography). To read the prologue and first three chapters of "Becoming Ms. Burton," click [here](#).



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