

# Right on Crime



# Smart on Crime

**Two efforts, one from Republicans and one from Democrats, have common ideas about criminal justice reform**

Presentation for Discussion

March 11, 2011

Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice



# Right On Crime

**THE CONSERVATIVE CASE FOR REFORM: Fighting Crime, Prioritizing Victims, and Protecting Taxpayers**

<http://www.rightoncrime.com>

Presentation to the Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice

Doug Wilson, State Public Defender

March 11, 2011



# Principles of **Right on Crime** Movement

- Grounded in **conservative values**
  - constitutionally limited government
  - transparency
  - individual liberty
  - personal responsibility
  - free enterprise, and
  - the centrality of the family and community

# Signatories Include

- **Newt Gingrich**, American Solutions for Winning the Future
- **Grover Norquist**, Americans for Tax Reform
- **Edwin Meese, III**, Former U.S. Attorney General
- **William J. Bennett**, Former U.S. Secretary of Education and Federal "Drug Czar"
- **Asa Hutchinson**, Former U.S. Attorney and Administrator of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
- **Pat Nolan**, Justice Fellowship
- **David Keene**, American Conservative Union
- **Richard Viguerie**, ConservativeHQ.com
- **Chuck Colson**, Prison Fellowship Ministries
- **Brooke Rollins**, Texas Public Policy Foundation
- **Paul Gessing**, Rio Grande Foundation (NM)
- **Tony Perkins**, Family Research Council
- **George Liebmann**, Calvert Institute for Policy Research (MD)
- **Rabbi Daniel Lapin**, American Alliance of Jews and Christians
- **Kelly McCutchen**, Georgia Public Policy Foundation
- **Penny Nance**, Concerned Women for America
- **Ward Connerly**, American Civil Rights Institute and former Regent of the University of California
- **John J. Dilulio, Jr.**, University of Pennsylvania
- **Kevin Kane**, Pelican Institute for Public Policy (LA)
- **Bob Williams**, State Budget Solutions
- **J. Robert McClure, III**, James Madison Institute (FL)
- **Gary Palmer**, Alabama Policy Institute
- **Matt Mayer**, Buckeye Institute for Public Policy Solutions (OH)
- **Viet Dinh**, Georgetown University Law Center and former U.S. Assistant Attorney General
- **John S. McCollister**, Platte Institute (NE)
- **Michael Carnuccio**, Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs
- **Ronald F. Scheberle**, American Legislative Exchange Council
- **Eli Lehrer**, Heartland Institute
- **David Barton**, WallBuilders
- **Matthew Brouillette**, Commonwealth Foundation (PA)
- **George Kelling**, Manhattan Institute
- **Foerest Thigpen**, Mississippi Center for Public Policy
- **John Hood**, John Locke Foundation (NC)
- **Craig Ladwig**, Indiana Policy Review Foundation
- **Deborah Daniels**, Former U.S. Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs

# ***Right On Crime debuted at a press conference in Washington DC***

- Right on Crime formed in December 2010
- Is urging policymakers to engage in a conversation about the money spent on criminal justice and its effectiveness.
  - 'How do we keep the public safe on limited budgets?’
  - The movement is dedicated to conservative solutions for reducing crime, restoring victims, reforming offenders, and lowering costs.

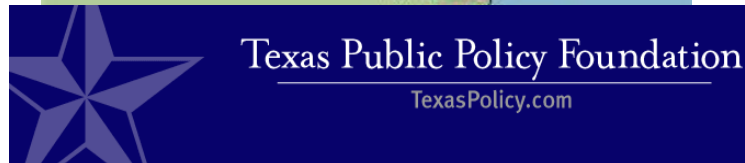
## Challenged by “Ideological Gridlock”

- In general, conservatives have sought harsher punishments while liberals have pushed for prevention and rehabilitation.
- **Right on Crime** seeks to break the gridlock. The website states that conservatives are admitting that they may have been wrong on some aspects of anticrime policy and are therefore seeking consensus on key issues.

Led by a conservative Texas think tank, the **Texas Public Policy Foundation**, it touts the example of Texas, a former leader in prison building that has turned to spending money instead on rehabilitative approaches and still has seen its crime rate drop.



- The immediate goal of **Right on Crime** is to export the Texas model to other states.
- A few states already have embraced elements of it, notably Kansas and South Carolina.



*The Foundation's mission is to promote and defend liberty, personal responsibility, and free enterprise in Texas...*

# Right on Crime

- Concerned that **“over criminalization”** results in a tendency to make every offense to society into a crime.
- This **results in filling prisons and jails**
  - Sometimes has the unintended effect of making nonviolent, low-risk offenders a greater risk to the public than when they entered.



# **Right on Crime** promulgated principles to guide reform

***“As members of the nation’s conservative movement, we strongly support...”***

Read the principles that have united Newt Gingrich, Grover Norquist, Ed Meese, & other leaders.

**READ OUR PRINCIPLES**

<http://www.rightoncrime.com/the-conservative-case-for-reform/>

**On Twitter, Facebook and YouTube!**

# Principle #1

- The criminal justice system must be **transparent** and include **performance measures** that hold it accountable for its results in
  - protecting the public
  - lowering crime rates
  - reducing re-offending
  - collecting victim restitution and
  - conserving taxpayers' money

## Principle #2

- **Crime victims**, along with the **public** and taxpayers, are among the **key “consumers”** of the criminal justice system. These should be prioritized when determining an appropriate punishment:
  - **the victim’s conception of justice**
  - **public safety and**
  - **the offender’s risk for future criminal conduct**

## Principle #3

- The corrections system—probation, parole and prisons--should emphasize
  - public safety
  - personal responsibility
  - work
  - restitution
  - community service and
  - treatment



Lots of things to measure

## Principle #4

- An **ideal** criminal justice system
  - works to **reform amenable offenders** who will return to society through harnessing the power of families
  - **charities**
  - **faith-based groups and**
  - **communities**



## Principle #5

- Because incentives affect human behavior, **policies** for both offenders and the corrections system
  - must align incentives with our goals of
    - **public safety**
    - **victim restitution and satisfaction and**
    - **cost-effectiveness**
  - thereby moving from a system that grows when it fails to one that **rewards results**

## Principle #6

- **Criminal law should be reserved** for conduct that is either **blameworthy or threatens public safety**, not wielded to grow government and undermine economic freedom.



# State Initiatives

**22 states are discussed on the Right on Crime website**

([www.rightoncrime.com](http://www.rightoncrime.com))

## Colorado and CCJJ legislation

**HB 09-1263** utilizes the power of incentives to influence human behavior by allowing inmates to earn up to two days of credit per month for exemplary behavior, such as successfully completing education, treatment, and vocational programs.

**SB 09-006** is a common sense measure that will enhance public safety and help inmates released from prison obtain employment and housing by making it easier for them to obtain a state photo identification card.

**HB 10-1352** emphasized diversion to substance abuse and mental health treatment in cases involving low-level drug possession while increasing penalties for selling drugs to minors.

**HB 10-1360** is projected to save taxpayers millions of dollars by enhancing the mandatory treatment options available in lieu of prison revocation for parolees who commit a technical violation, but not a new crime.



## Highlights of Other State Initiatives

- **Arizona** probation departments receive a share of the state's savings from less incarceration when they reduce their revocations to prison without increasing probationers' convictions for new offenses.
- In its 2010 budget recommendations, **New York** called for consolidating partly empty prisons, rather than keeping unneeded prisons open to avoid cutting government jobs, and expanding the use of alternatives to incarceration that cost-effectively reduce recidivism among nonviolent offenders.
- In 2003, the **Texas** legislature required that all drug possession offenders with less than a gram of drugs be sentenced to probation instead of state jail time.
  - In 2009, the legislature added 64 reentry coordinators with the goal of reducing the number of released inmates who return to prison.

# **Right on Crime** is consistent with the **Commission's statutory mandate**

*The mission of the Commission is to enhance public safety, to ensure justice, and to ensure protection of the rights of victims through the cost-effective use of public resources. The work of the commission will focus on evidence-based recidivism reduction initiatives and the cost-effective expenditure of limited criminal justice funds.*

*---C.R.S. 16-11.3-103(1)*