



# Colorado Prison Population: Growth, Forecasts, and Factors

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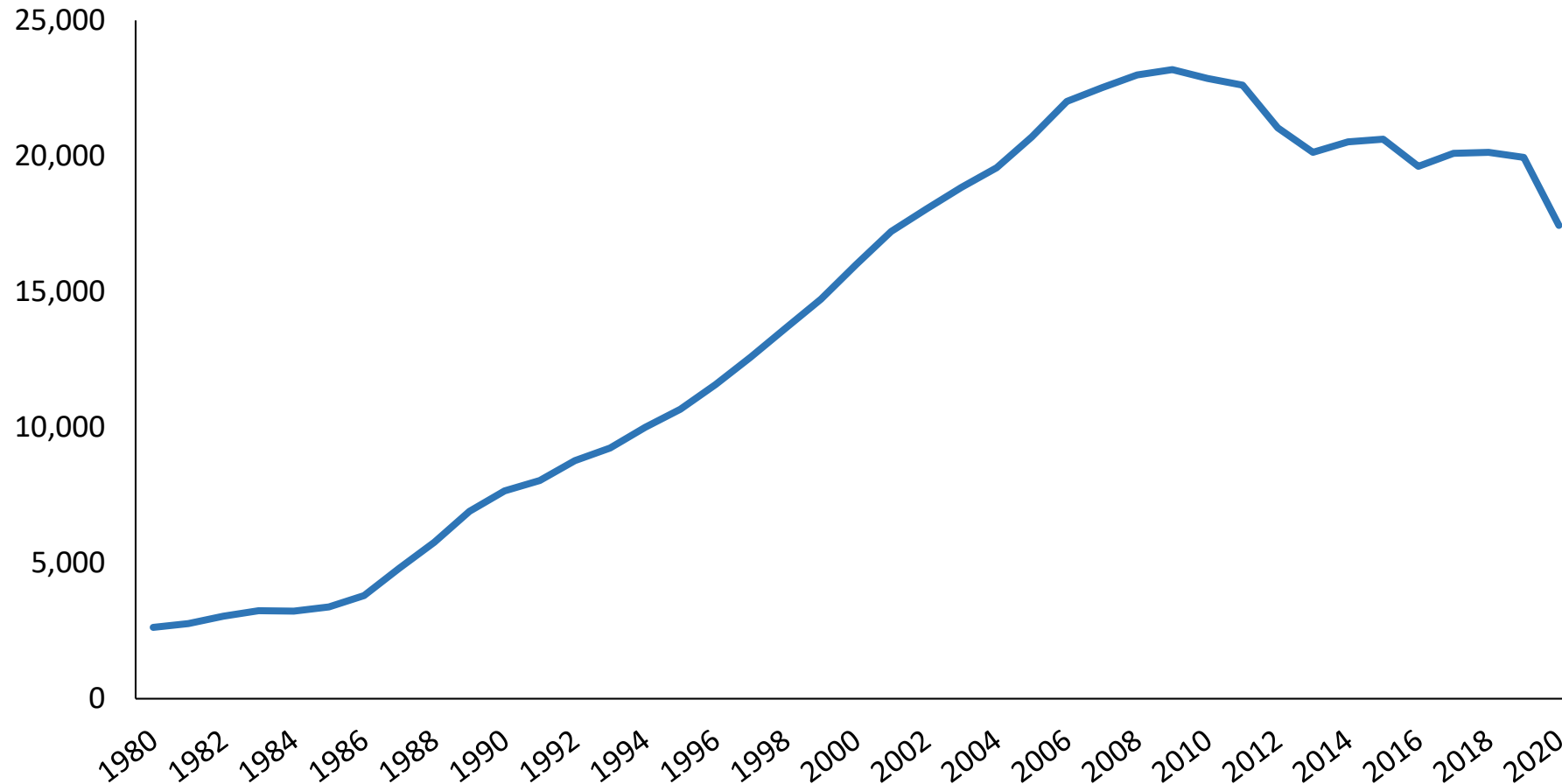
Colorado Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice, Office of Research and Statistics

Presented to the Sentencing Reform Task Force  
Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice



# Colorado prison population: 1980 to 2020

Figure 1. Colorado prison population, Fiscal Year End 1980-2020



Data source: Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Capacity and Population Reports

# Colorado Private Prisons

Facility	Location	Capacity	Population EOFY 2020
Bent County Correctional Facility (BCCF)	Las Animas	1388	1240
Crowley County Correctional Facility (CCCF)	Olney Springs	1850	1602

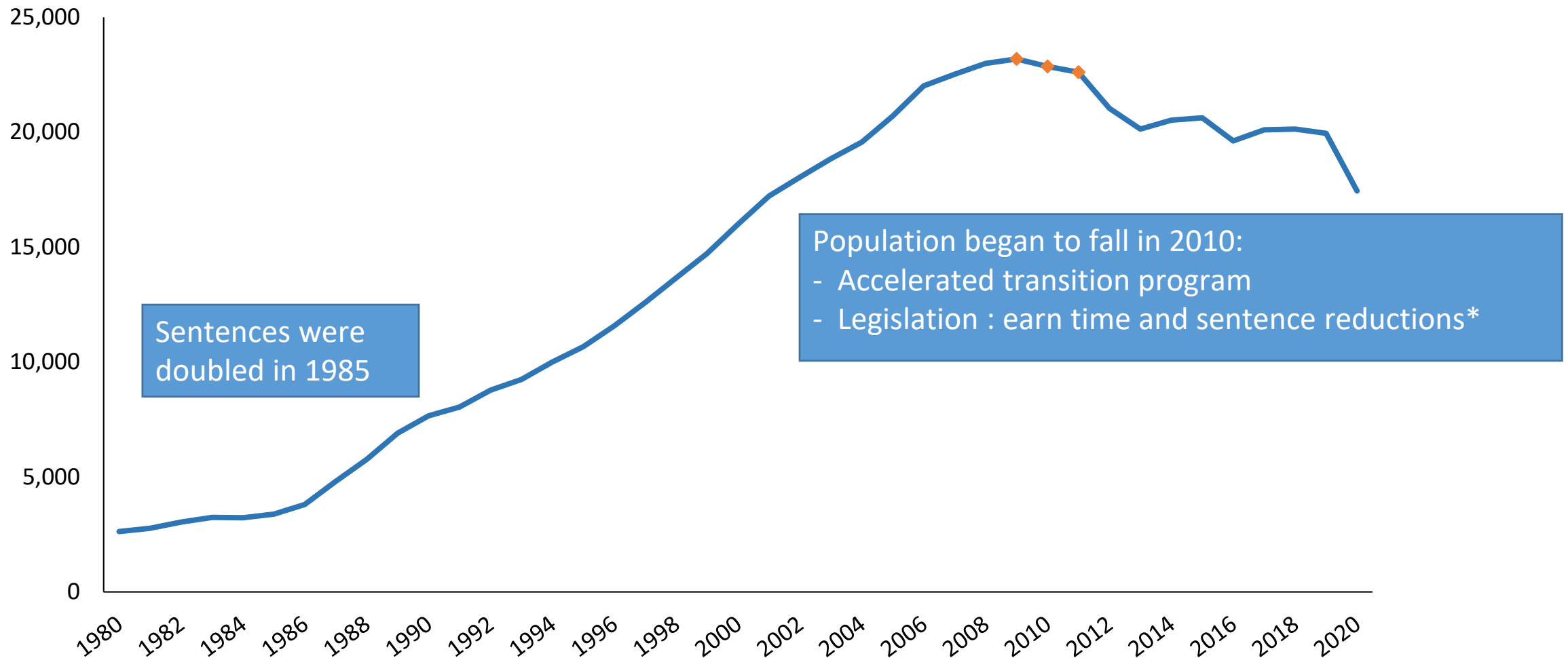
# What drives the size of the prison population?

#1. Number of admissions

#2. Length of stay in prison



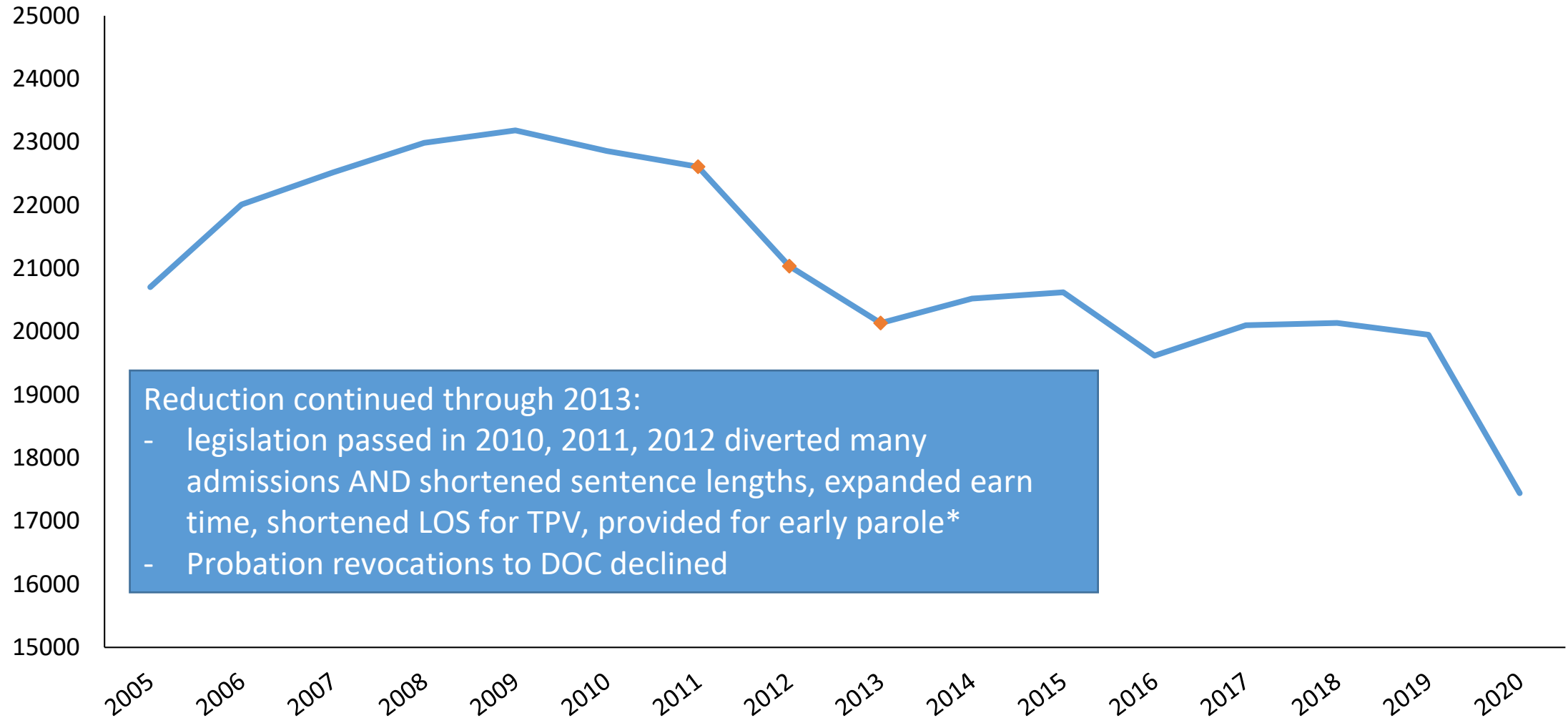
# Colorado prison population: 1980 to 2020



\*See House Bill 2009-1351

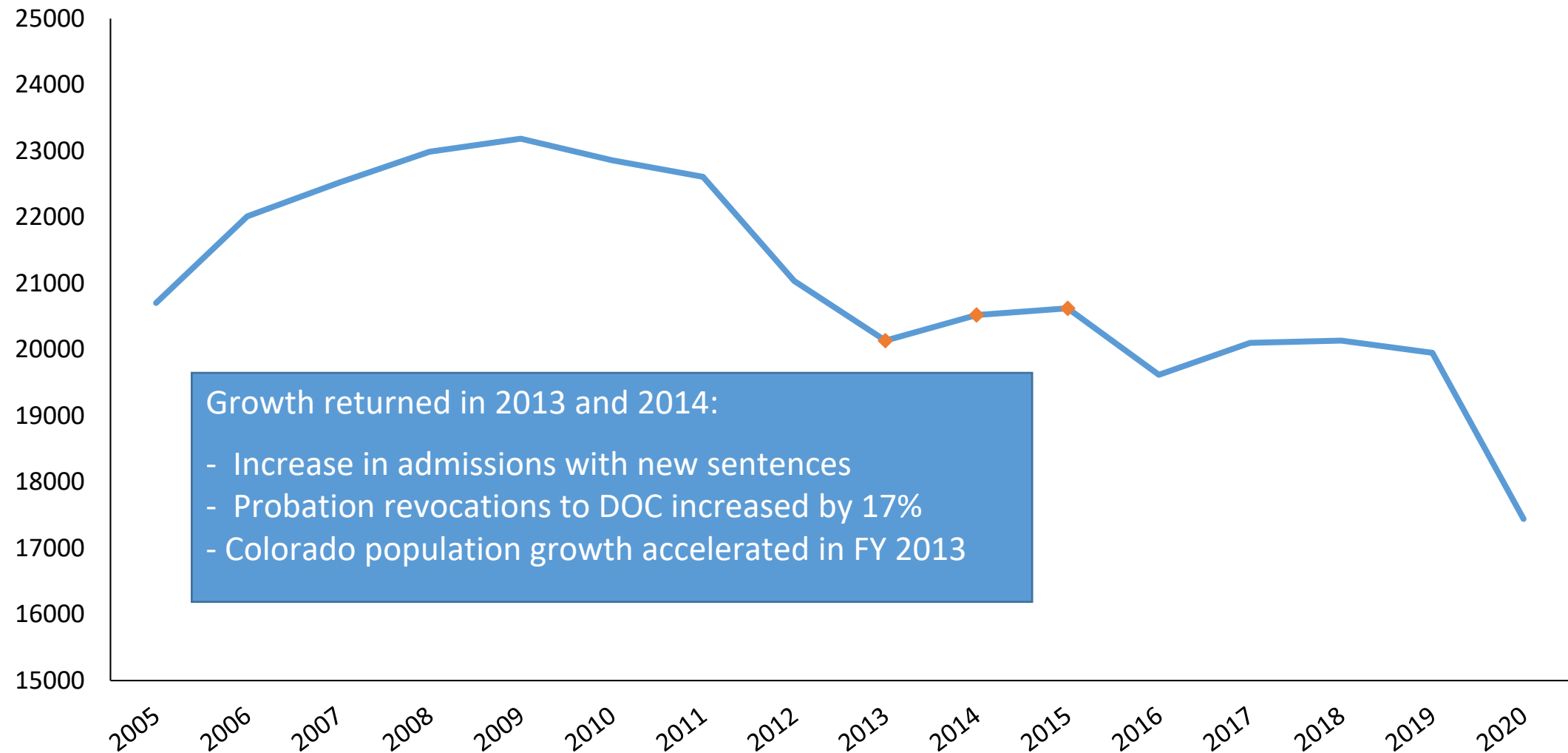
Data source: Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Capacity and Population Reports.

# Colorado prison population: 2005 to 2020



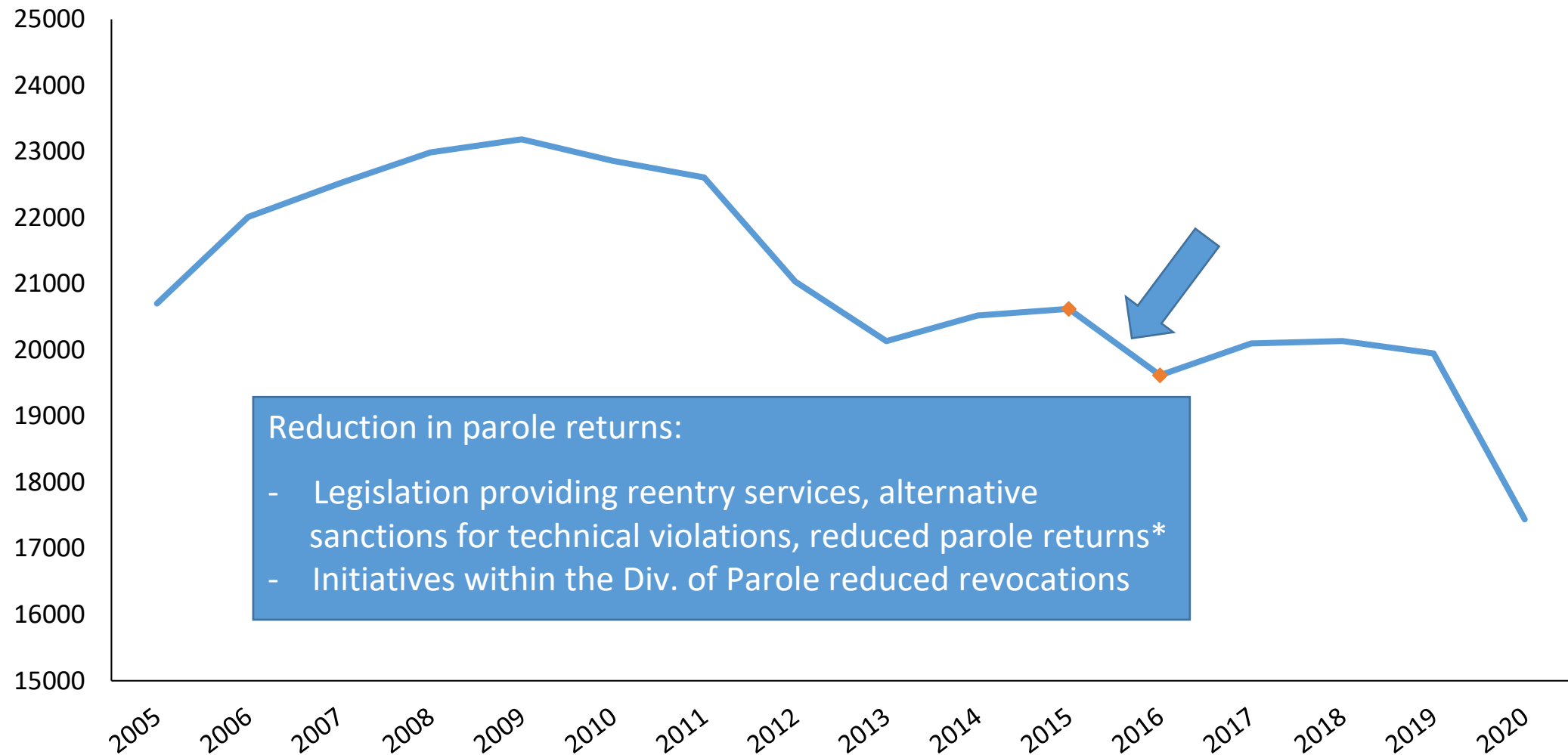
See House Bills 2010-1338, 1352, 1413, 1373, 1374 , HB 12-1223 and SB 11-241  
Data source: Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Capacity and Population Reports.

# Colorado prison population: 2005 to 2020



Data source: Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Capacity and Population Reports.

# Colorado prison population: 2005 to 2020

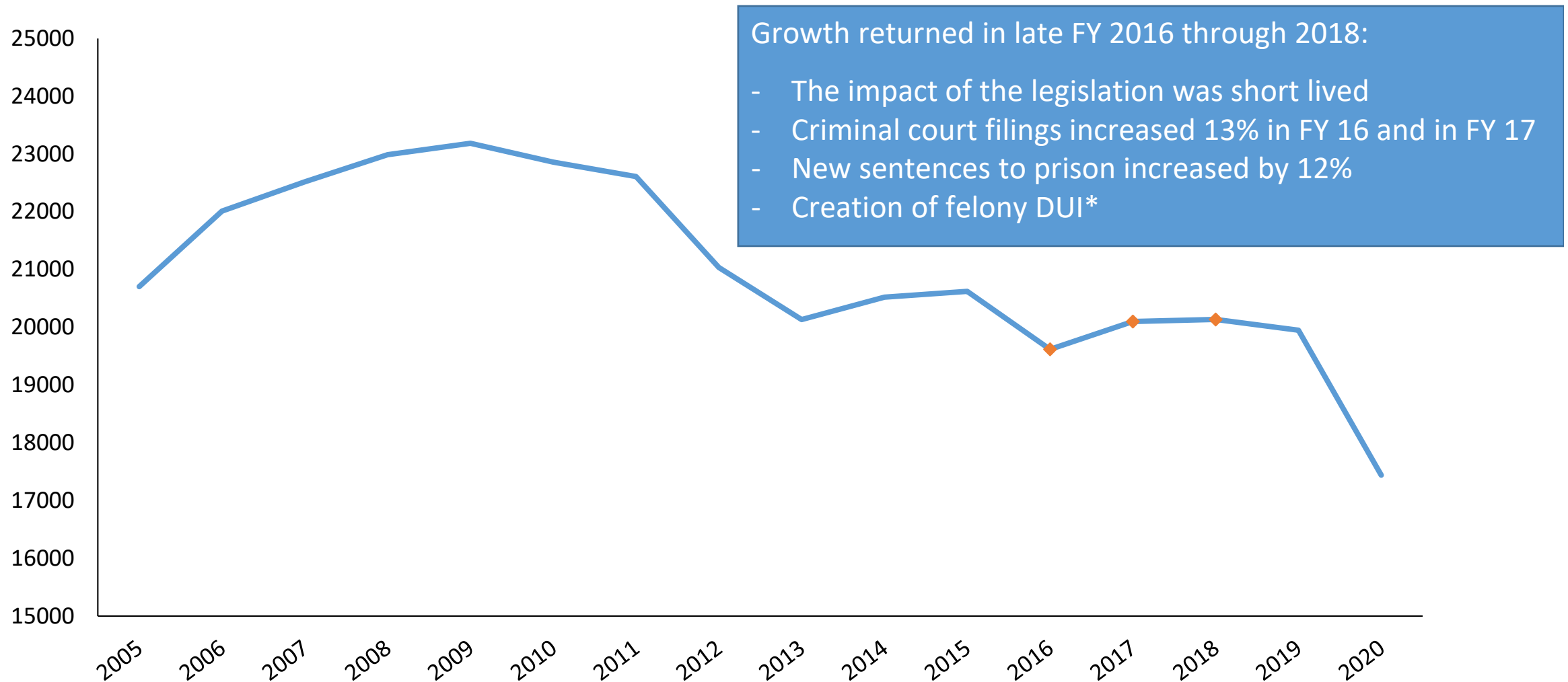


\*See HB 14-1355 and SB 15-124

Data source: Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Capacity and Population Reports.



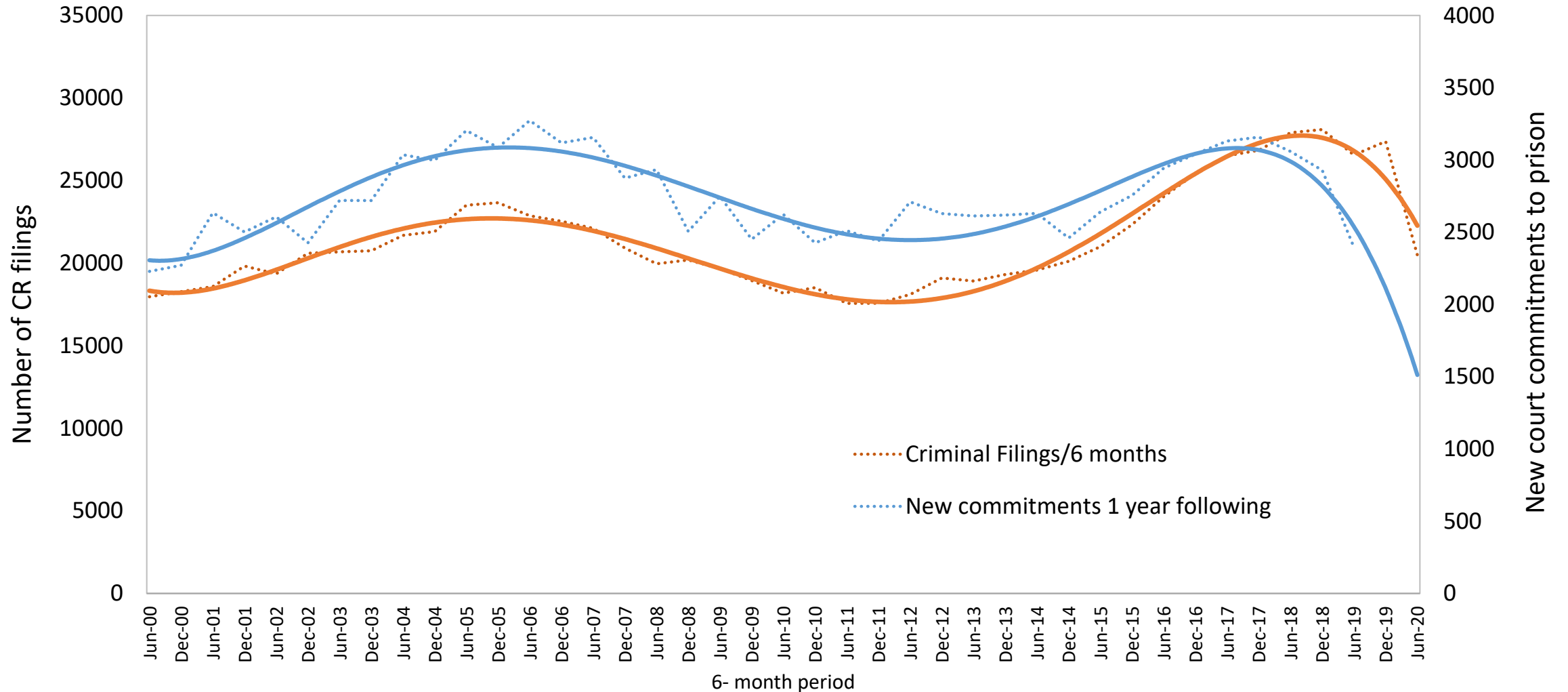
# Colorado prison population: 2005 to 2020



\*See HB 15-1043

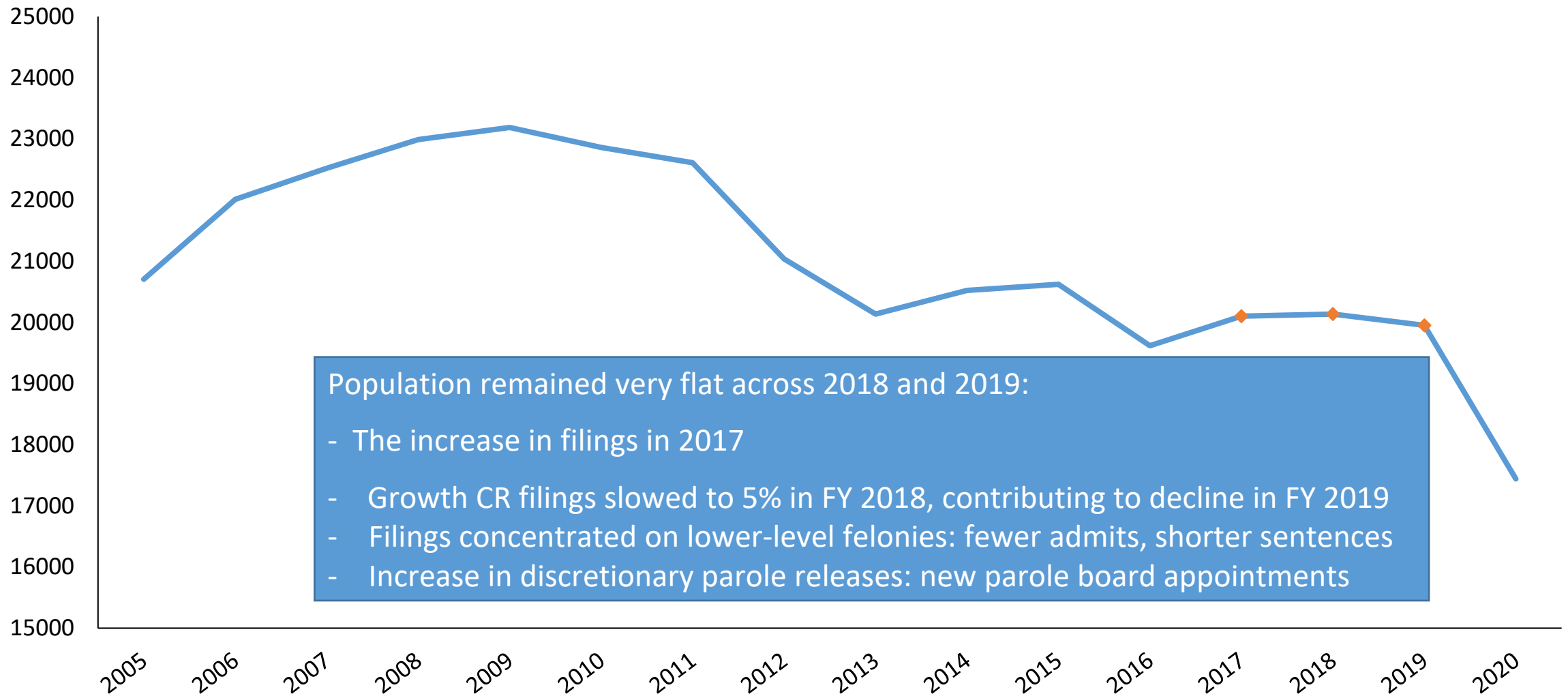
• Data source: Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Capacity and Population Reports.

# Correspondence of Colorado criminal court filings and new court commitments: FY 2000-2020



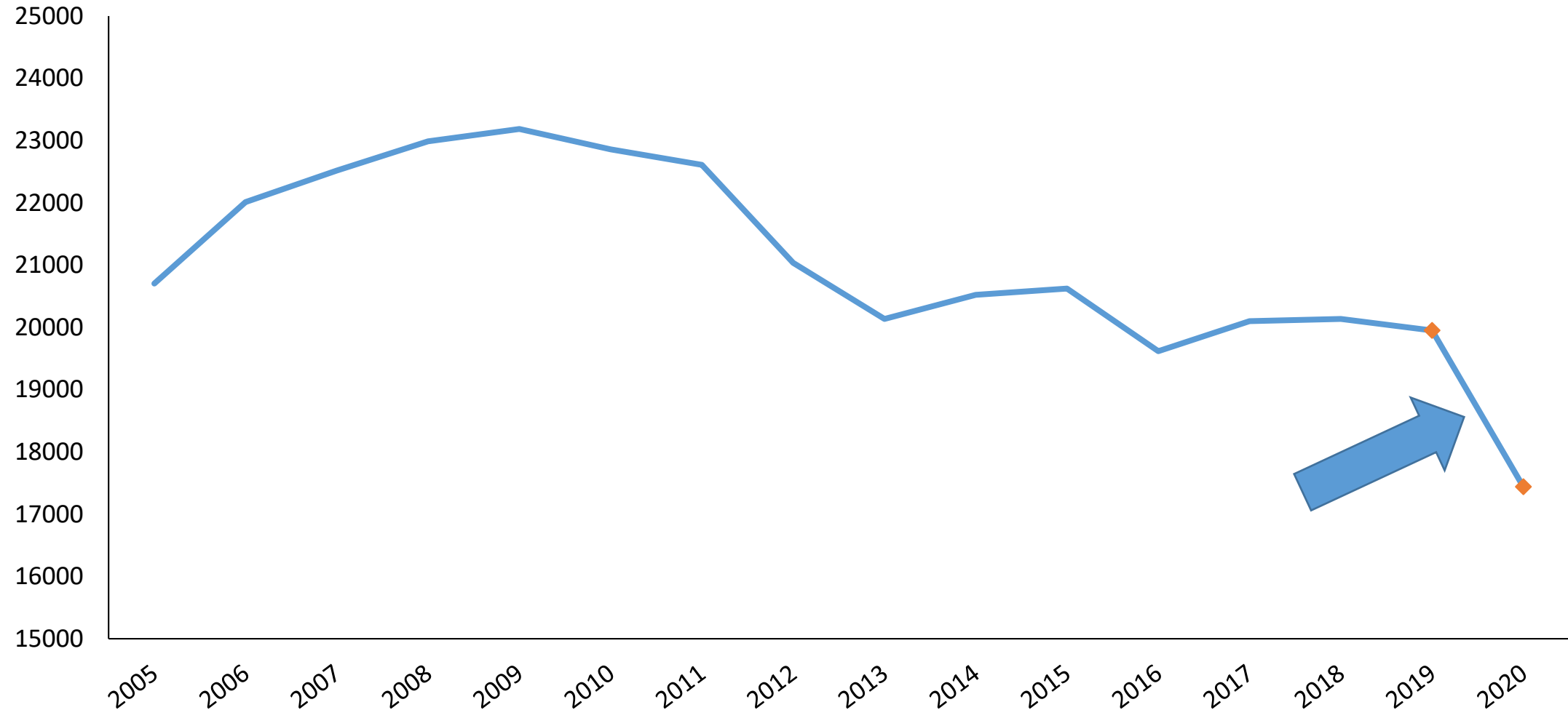
Data Sources: Colorado Dept. of Corrections monthly population reports; Colorado Judicial Branch

# Colorado prison population 2005 to 2020



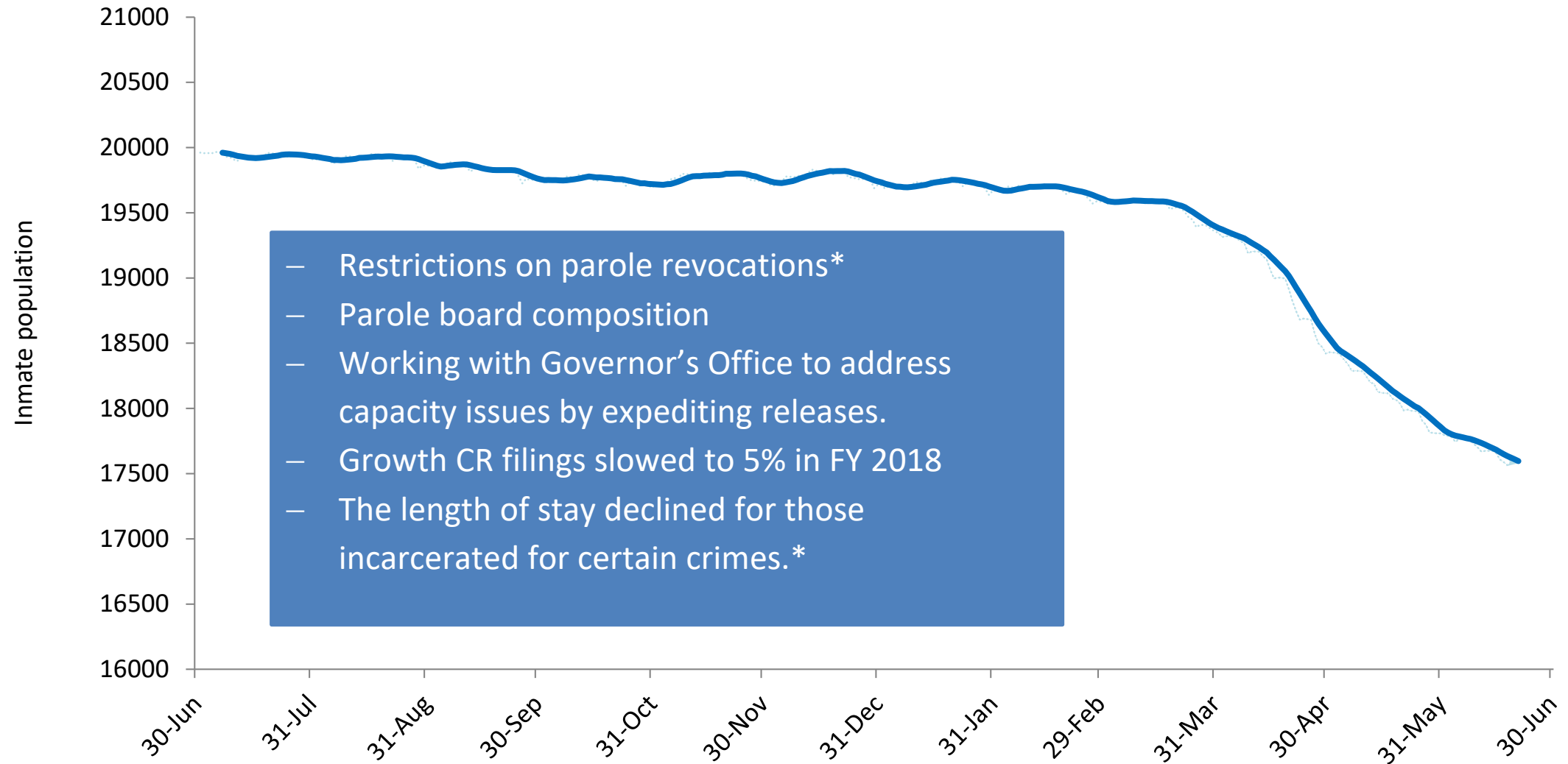
Data source: Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Capacity and Population Reports.

# Colorado prison population: 2005 to 2020



Data source: Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Capacity and Population Reports.

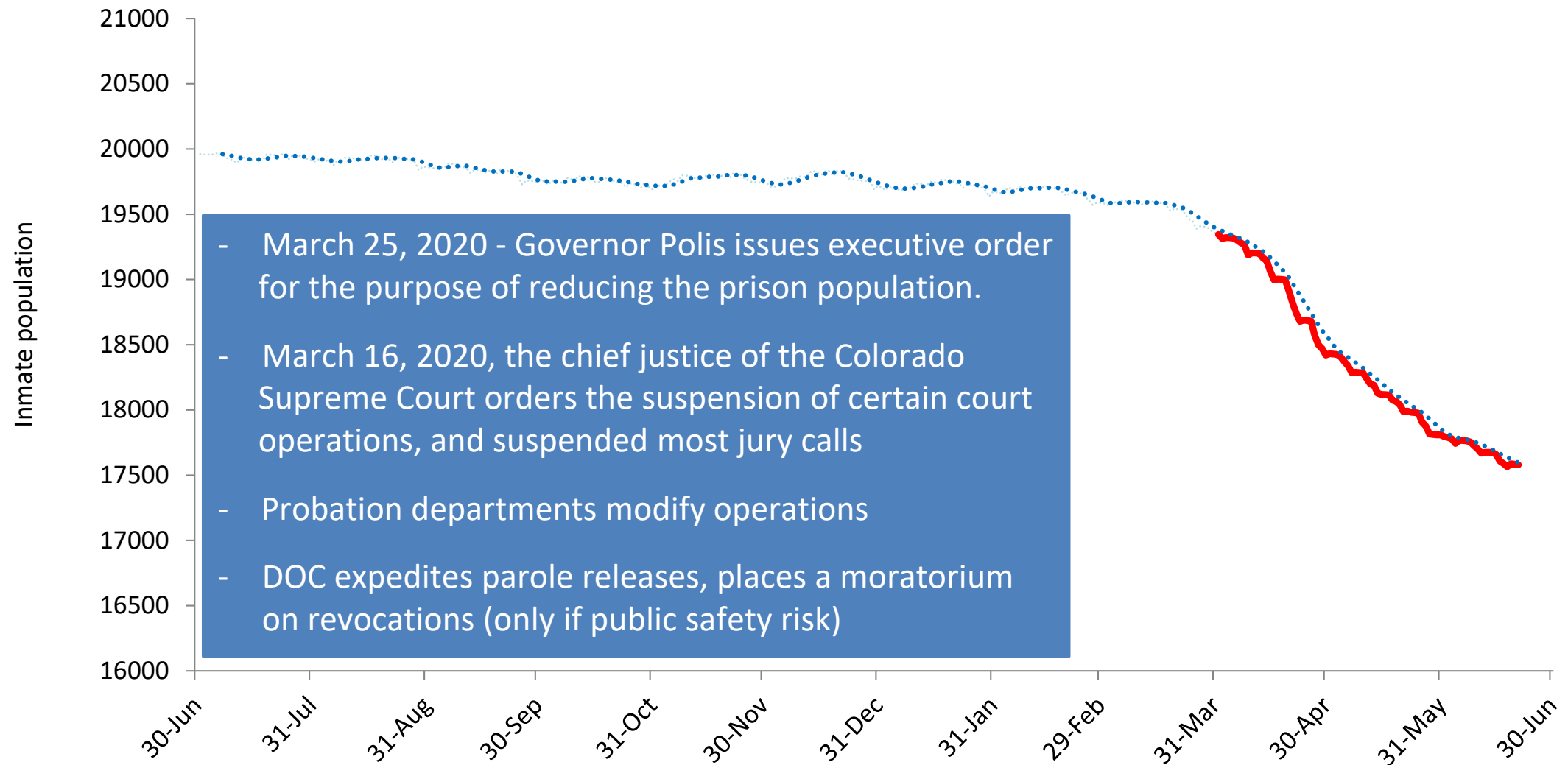
# Colorado prison population: FY 2020



Data source: Colorado Department of Corrections Daily Population Report: 7-day moving average

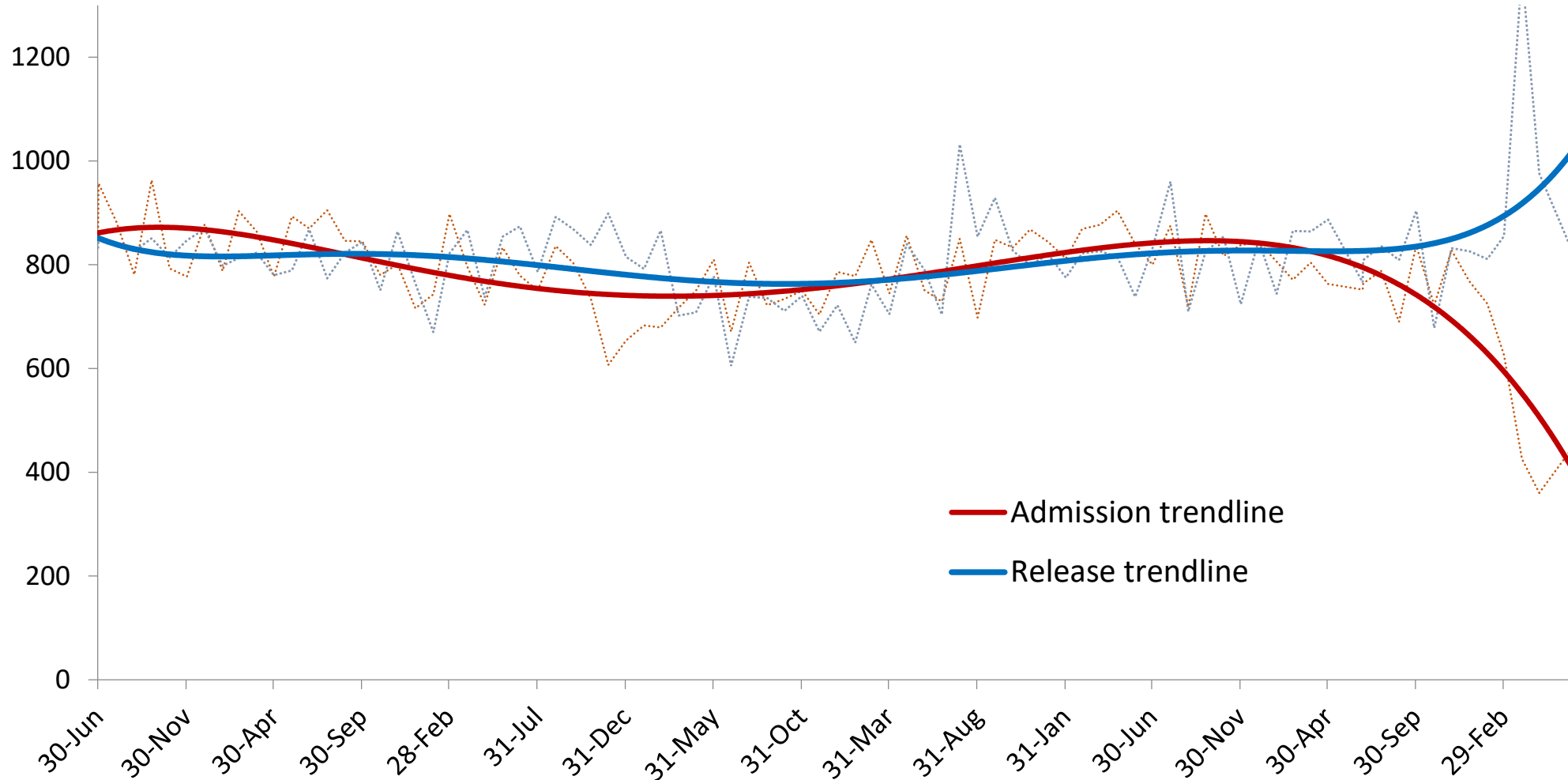
\* See SB 2019-143 \*HB 2010-1373

# Colorado prison population: FY 2020



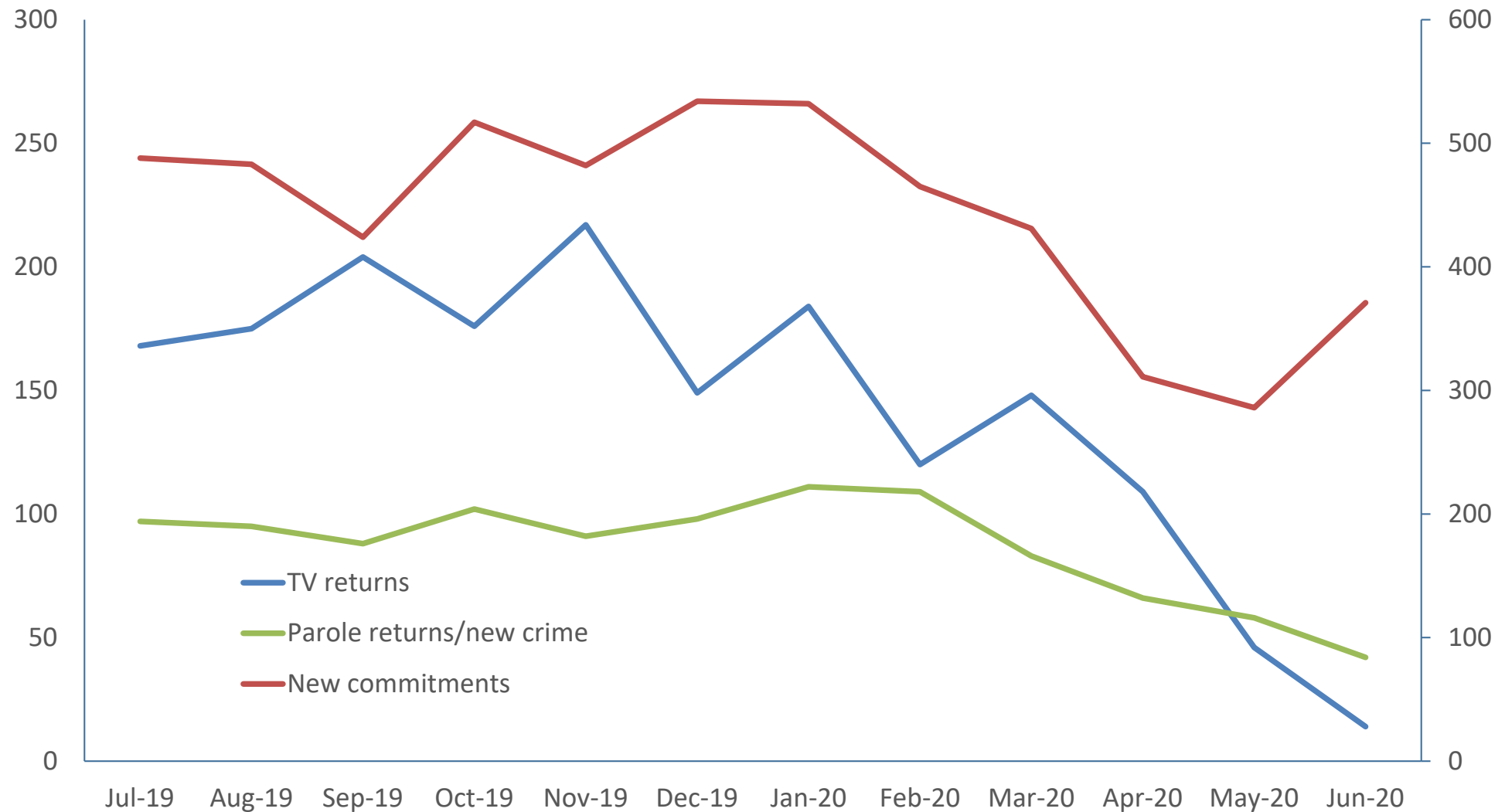
Data source: Colorado Department of Corrections Daily Population Report: 7-day moving average

# Admissions and Releases FY 2014-FY 2020



Data source: Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Population Report: Polynomial trendline

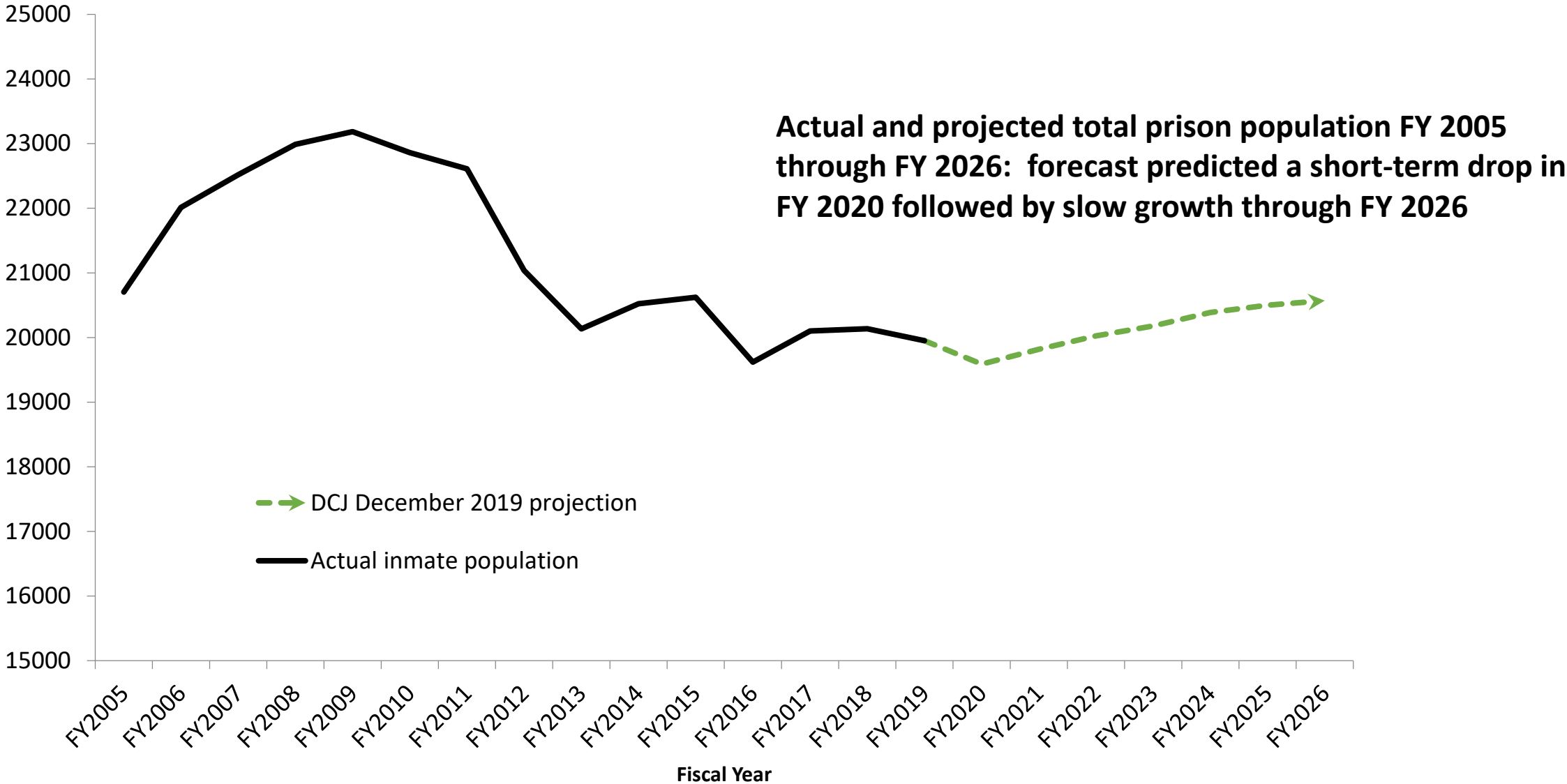
# Admissions by type: FY 2020



Data source: Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Population Report



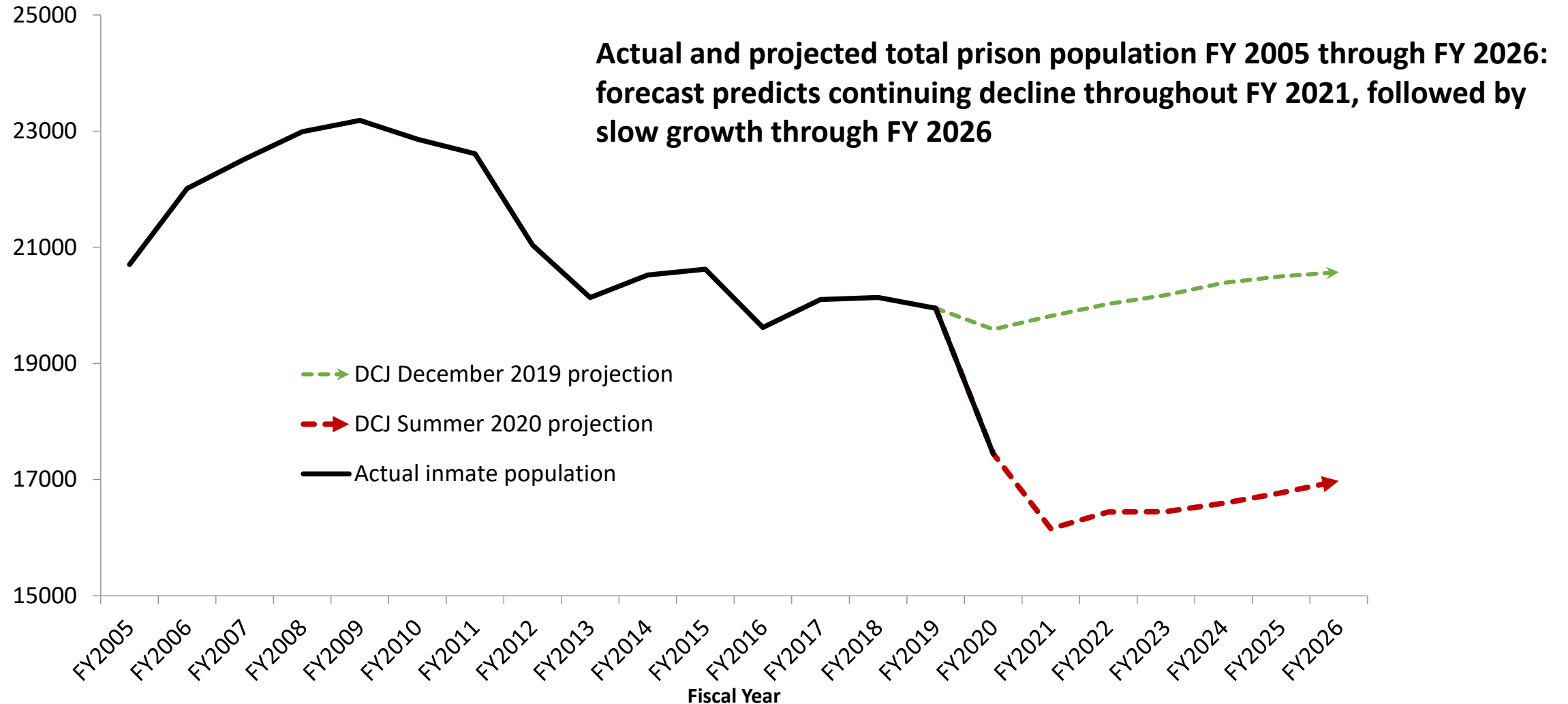
# DCJ December 2019 prison population forecast



Data source: Actual population figures FY 2005 through FY 2020: Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Capacity and Population Reports.

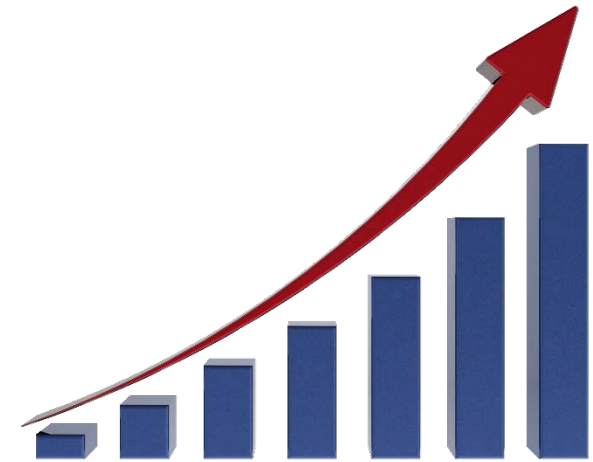
# DCJ Summer 2020 prison population forecast

## Comparison of DCJ December 2019 and Summer 2020 Prison Population Projections

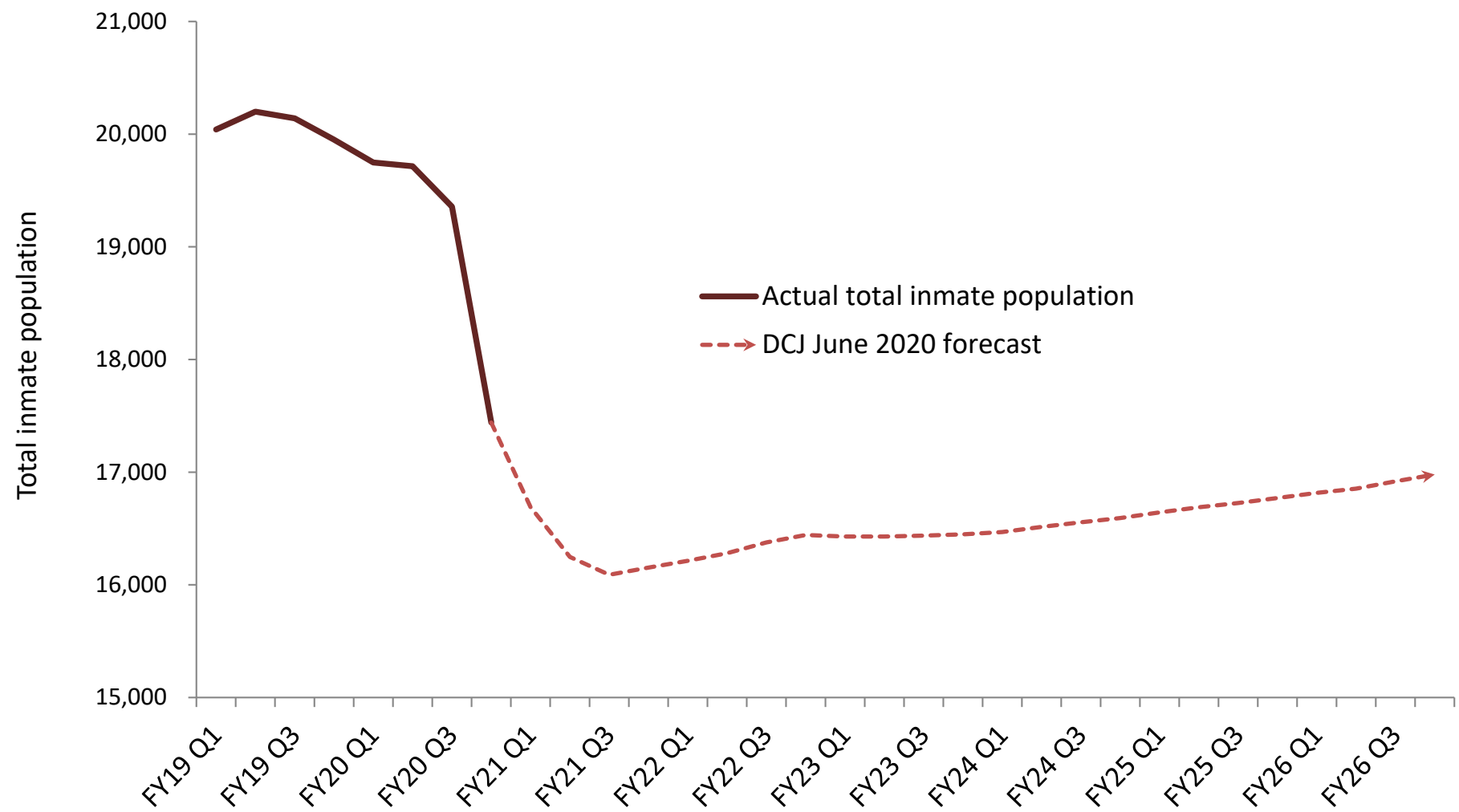


Data source: Actual population figures FY 2005 through FY 2020: Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Capacity and Population Reports.

# Why the return to growth?



# DCJ Summer 2020 prison population forecast



**Actual and projected total prison population FY 2005 through FY 2026: forecast predicts continuing decline throughout FY 2021, followed by slow growth through FY 2026**

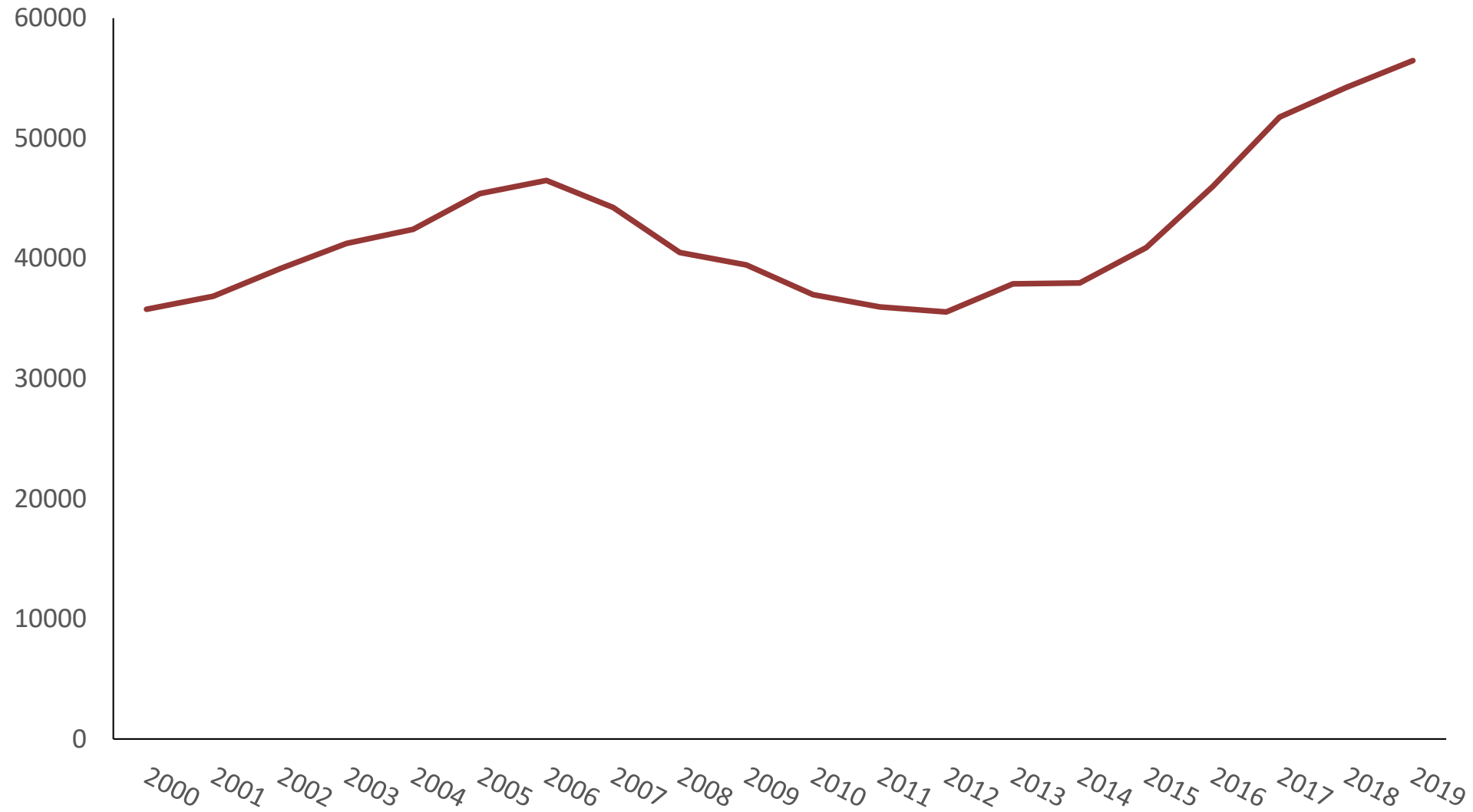
Data source: Actual population figures FY 2020: Colorado Department of Corrections Monthly Capacity and Population Reports.

# State population growth



- Very strong growth in the Colorado adult population is expected in upcoming years, particularly for those within the 24-44 year old age range.
- This growth is expected to accelerate through FY 2024 according to the state Demographer's Office.
- The Demographer's Office estimates growth in the overall Colorado Population at a rate of approximately 85,000 per year through at least 2028.

# Criminal filings increasing



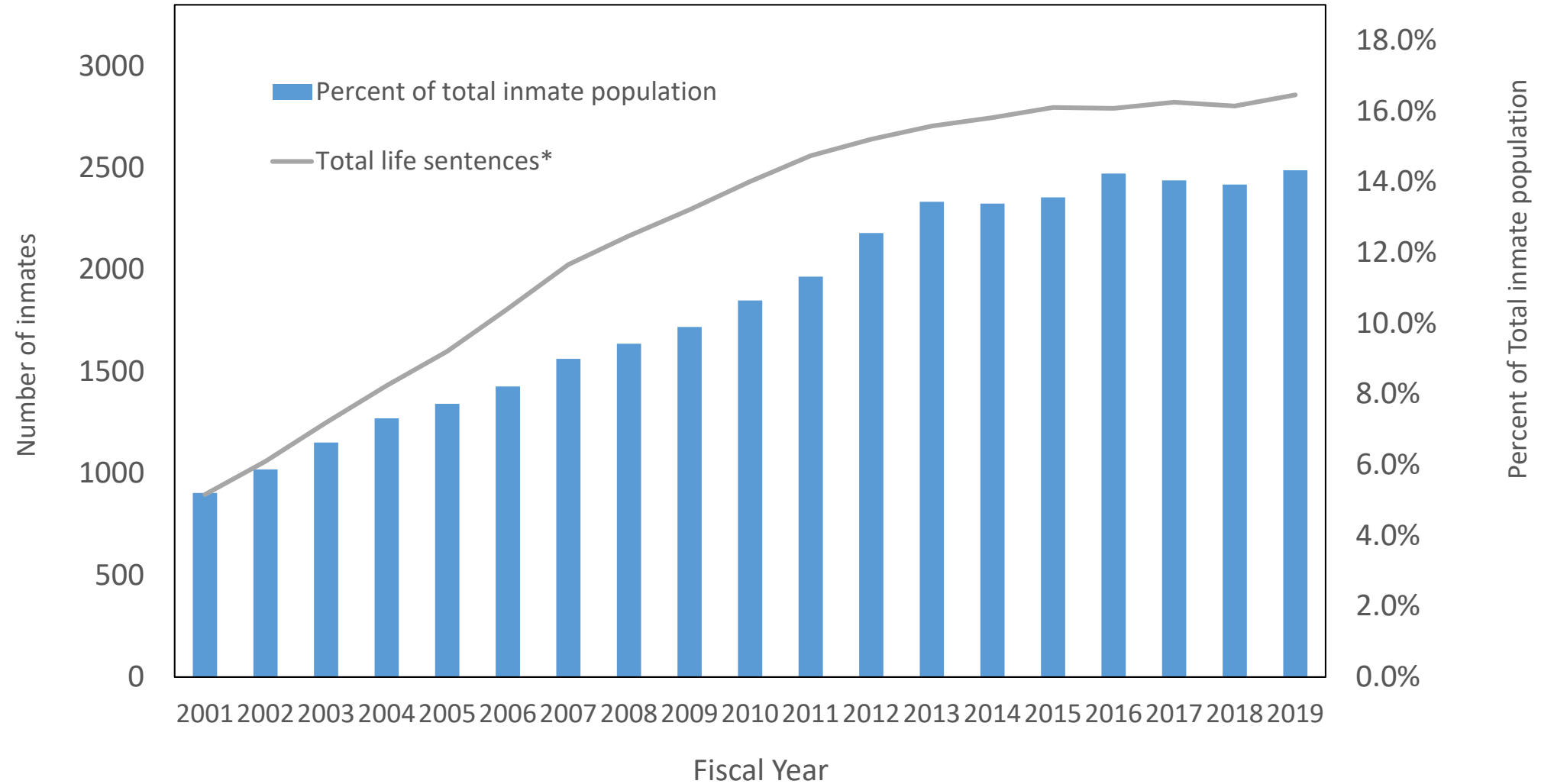
Data source: Colorado Judicial Branch

# Prior Legislation

- **HB 15-1043** created a class of felony DUI offenders
  - 100-200 new commitments per year since FY 2016
  - Median sentences of 3 years.
- **SB 19-143** – Aimed at reducing TV's
  - Did not have expected impact: appear to be circumventing the limitations
  - Eliminated determinate revo periods, have no mandatory rerelease
  - Did eventually reduce TV's, but are staying longer
  - Too early to determine impact

# Life Sentences

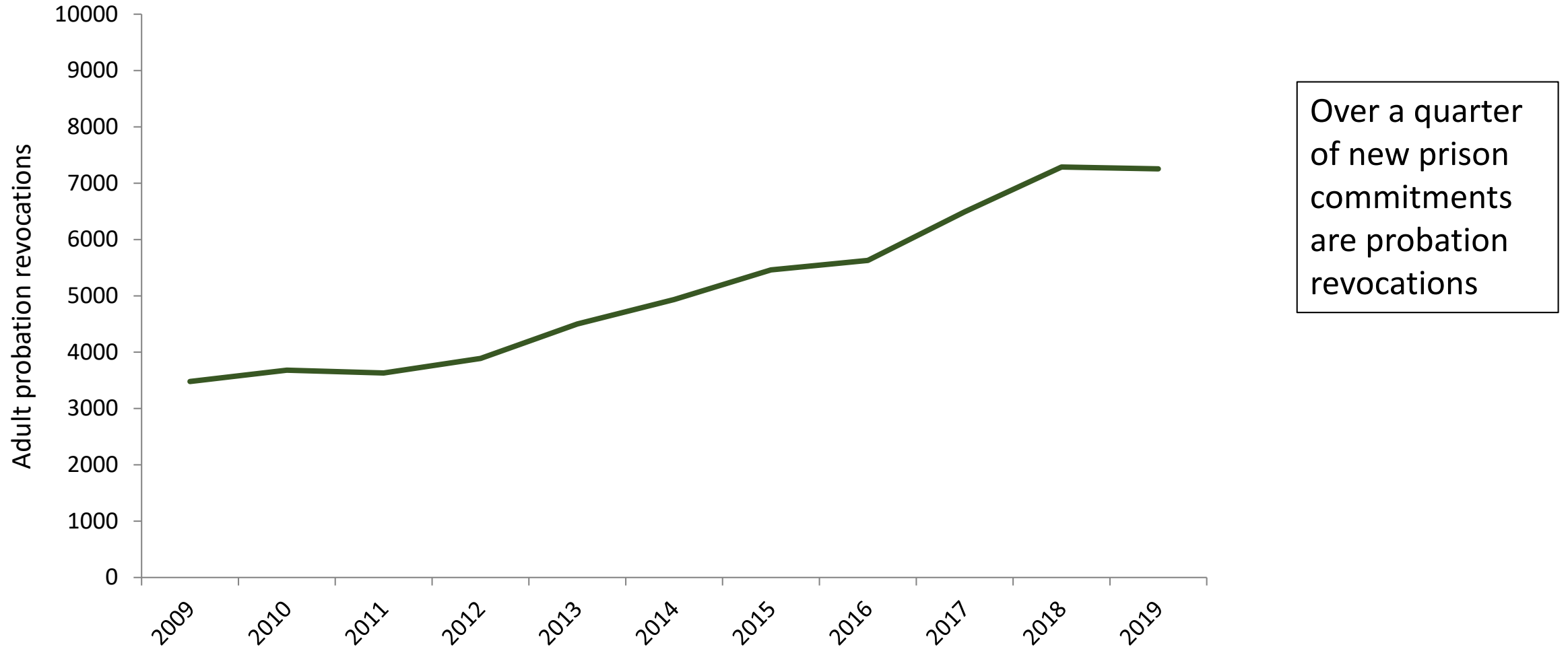
Inmates with life without parole or lifetime supervision sentences, June 2001-June 2019



Data source: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdoc/departamental-reports-and-statistics>



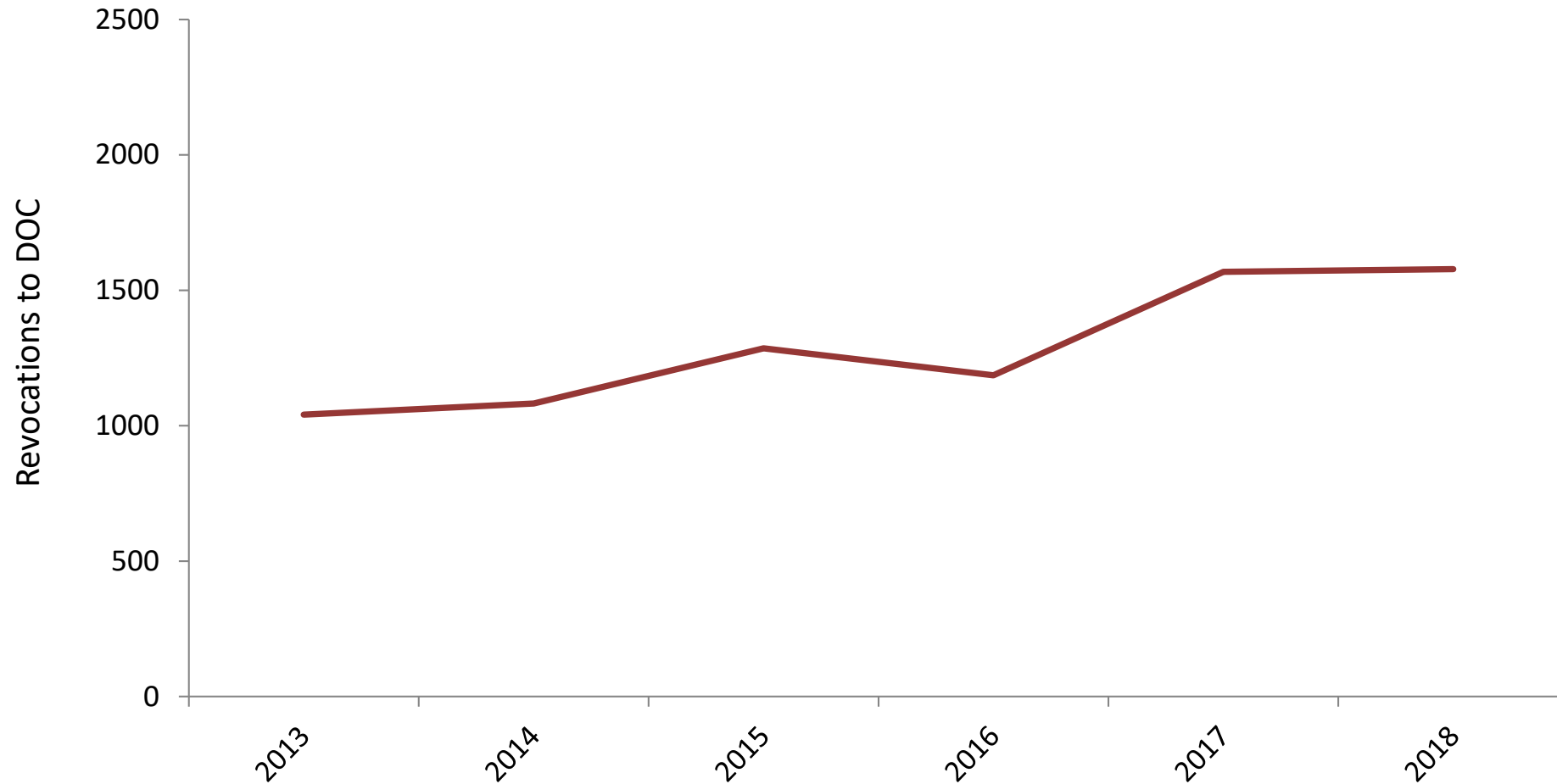
# Probation revocations increasing



Source: *Colorado Judicial Branch Annual Statistical Report*. Denver, CO: Colorado Judicial Branch.

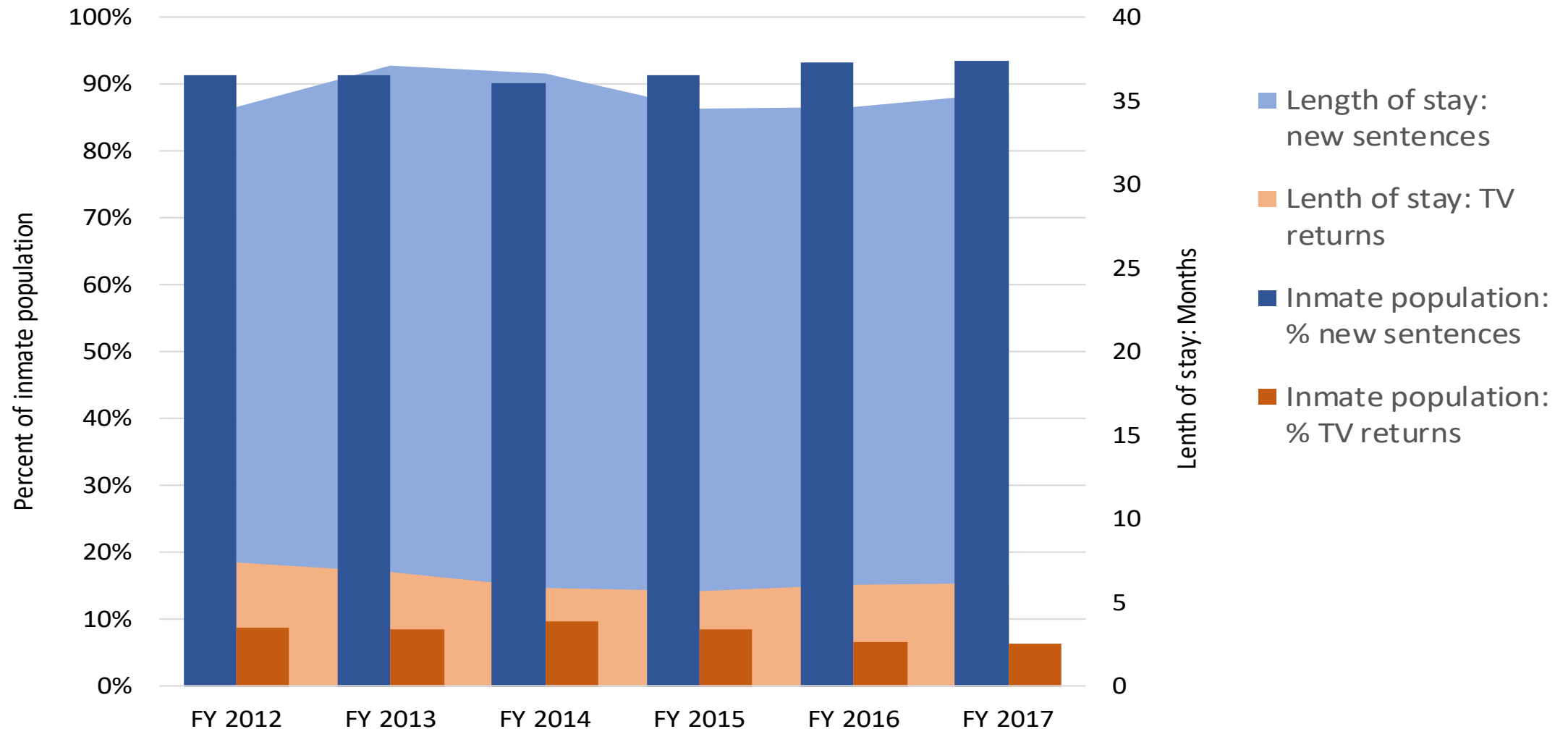
# Probation revocations to prison increasing

Adult probation revocations sentenced to DOC: FY 2006 – FY 2018



Source: Colorado State Judicial Branch. *Colorado Judicial Branch Annual Recidivism Reports*. Denver, CO: Colorado Judicial Branch, Division of Probation Services. Available at <http://www.courts.state.co.us/Administration/Unit.cfm?Unit=eval>

# Composition of inmate population and average length of stay



# Summary for slow growth

## Population momentum:

- State population growth
- Filings increasing (though slowing)
- Any legislation introduced increasing numbers and lengths of sentences
- Probation revocations increasing
- Life/indeterminate sentences stack up in prison
- TV's down but staying longer
- Court backlog bump – will be of NCC, so will stay approx. 3 years
- Releases will decline, those at PED already released, fewer will get to MRD