

# THE IMPACT OF OUR WORK

AUGUST 2023

Established in 2019, the nonpartisan Council on Criminal Justice works to advance understanding of the criminal justice policy choices facing the nation and build consensus for solutions that enhance safety and justice for all. We equip policymakers and advocates at the federal, state, and local levels with information and ideas they need to adopt reforms grounded in facts, evidence, and fundamental principles of justice.

## Driving the National Conversation

CCJ has quickly become a trusted, go-to resource for leaders, journalists, and advocates across the political spectrum, from the White House to Fox News. Reporters rely heavily on CCJ findings and recommendations and turn to us frequently for expert commentary. Since our launch, our work has appeared in more than 16,000 stories in a wide array of national, local, and international outlets. CCJ products are top hits on Google searches for "[recidivism](#)," "[homicide trends](#)," and other key topics.

- In a [White House press briefing](#), Fox News correspondent Peter Doocy cited CCJ's [crime trend reports](#) in a question challenging President Biden's response to violent crime.
- In a [fact-checking analysis](#) of Biden's State of the Union Address, a Washington Post reporter said the administration had referred him to CCJ reports and experts to assess the veracity of the President's comments.
- An ideologically diverse range of prominent media outlets routinely [publish commentaries](#) from the founders of our [Centering Justice](#) initiative, Marc A. Levin and Khalil A. Cumberbatch.
- CCJ reports and experts appear regularly in leading media, including The New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, ABC News, the Associated Press, The Atlantic, Axios, CBS News, CNN, Forbes, Fox Business, Fox News, MSNBC, National Public Radio, NBC News, Newsweek, PBS, Reuters, Slate, TIME, USA Today, U.S. News & World Report, Vox, and The Washington Times.

## Driving Policy Change in Washington

CCJ has established itself as an essential and authoritative resource at the highest levels of government. We provide testimony and briefings to Congress, the White House, and senior administration officials, and inform key policy decisions on a broad range of criminal justice and public safety issues.

"Two former Attorneys General – one Democrat, and the other Republican; one Black, the other Latino – they have come out with a great report. Let's use that report as a foundation upon which to build back our judicial system."

– **U.S. Rep. James Clyburn (D-SC), [The Atlantic](#), 12/17/20, re: CCJ COVID Commission**

- The White House cited briefs from CCJ's Veterans Justice Commission and Health and Reentry Project (HARP) in its [strategic plan](#) to improve post-incarceration outcomes, and used two other CCJ reports in developing its [gun violence reduction strategy](#).
- The Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs is producing a "Violent Crime Reduction Playbook" that organizes the Justice Department's funding, reports, research, and training and technical assistance in alignment with the CCJ Violent Crime Working Group's strategic blueprint, [10 Essential Actions to Reduce Violence Now](#). As part of the effort, the Bureau of Justice Assistance released a [new solicitation](#) for technical assistance based on the strategy.
- The chair of the U.S. Sentencing Commission cited research from CCJ's Task Force on Long Sentences in [announcing amendments](#) to federal sentencing guidelines.
- CCJ Senior Fellow Thomas Abt [testified before the House Judiciary Committee](#) on evidence-based strategies to reduce violent crime.
- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services used two HARP briefs as support for its landmark decision to approve state Medicaid waivers to provide coverage to people exiting prisons and jails.
- In spring 2023, a bipartisan group of U.S. senators was preparing legislation based on a recommendation from the Veterans Justice Commission to create a National Center on Veterans Justice; the center would fund research, identify best practices, and coordinate support for veterans nationwide.

## Driving Policy Change in State Capitols and City Halls

Despite geographic and ideological differences, state and local leaders have demonstrated a common trust in CCJ's work. Our crime trend reports, violence reduction and policing blueprints, COVID-related recommendations, and other products are serving as roadmaps for policymakers tackling some of the most difficult challenges of the day.

- A sheriff in Michigan, the Connecticut governor, and the mayor of Pittsburgh are among officials using CCJ's 10 Essential Actions violence reduction strategy as a roadmap toward safer communities.
- Shortly after the police killing of Tyre Nichols in Memphis, the Shelby County Commission directed its sheriffs department to follow the reform strategies developed by the CCJ Task Force on Policing.
- In Seattle, a City Council committee chair cited guidance from CCJ's National Commission on COVID-19 and Criminal Justice in calling for greater community resources for behavioral health care and homelessness.
- Lawmakers in Alabama used CCJ data showing an increase in domestic violence at the start of the pandemic to fend off budget cuts to programs.
- The House Speaker in Texas cited analysis by CCJ Chief Policy Counsel Marc Levin during consideration of state legislation targeting the use of charitable bail funds.
- The chair of the Fulton County (Atlanta, GA) Commission cited CCJ's Task Force on Long Sentences in explaining his opposition to the construction of a new county jail.
- The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) has adopted several CCJ task force recommendations as ALEC model policies and resolutions, including those on veterans justice, mental illness and diversion; co-responding; corrections; and police decertification, training, and wellness.

"CCJ has been doing very needed research and serving as an important convenor for conversations like this one on the most pressing challenges we're facing with regard to crime and our criminal justice system."

- **Chiraag Bains, Special Assistant to President Biden for Criminal Justice and Guns Policy, CCJ webinar, 5/21/21**

## A Credible Voice in the Business Community

Our research on crime and other issues, along with our commitment to building common ground to drive progress, make CCJ a highly credible and frequently sought collaborator in the business community.

- Our corporate partners include Bank of America, Georgia Power/Southern Company, Microsoft, and the National Football League; we brief corporate leaders on overall trends and specific policy issues.
- Developing responses to the city's violent crime problem, Greater St. Louis Inc. and the Regional Business Council [relied on recommendations](#) from CCJ's Violent Crime Working Group in advocating for a regional strategy, including setting an annual homicide reduction goal of 10%.

"CCJ's efforts to reimagine the criminal justice system have already borne invaluable fruit."

- **Middlesex County (MA) Sheriff Peter Koutoujian, 9/19/22**

## Membership and Engagement

CCJ's [boards](#) and 275 elected Council [members](#) comprise a broad cross-section of the nation's top leaders, experts, and innovators from law enforcement, corrections, courts, communities, advocacy, and academia, as well as formerly incarcerated people, crime victims and survivors, and others directly impacted by the system. CCJ members are routinely tapped to lead high-level initiatives, deliver keynote addresses, and serve in senior executive administrations. By engaging members in multiple collaborative activities over time, the Council builds increasingly potent pathways for diffusion of our work and helps forge the lasting and trusting relationships that are essential to driving large-scale change.