

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.acluohio.org/en/news/sb-3-and-hb-1-comparing-ohios-two-leading-criminal-justice-reform-bills>

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Right now, [Ohio spends over \\$1.8 billion every year](#) to hold nearly 50,000 people in prison. Many of those prisoners struggle with addiction, and many are locked up for simple drug crimes.

Throwing people in prison has not solved our states drug problems but it has hurt thousands of Ohio families. Its (way past) time to focus on treatment, recovery, and programs that keep people out of prison once theyre released.

There are two bills moving through the Ohio Statehouse right now that would lower Ohios prison population: Senate Bill 3 (SB 3) and House Bill 1 (HB 1). Some people think the bills are at odds with each other, and that only one will make it to the finish line; but heres the truth: SB 3 and HB 1 are completely different bills there isnt much overlap. Legislators can *and should* pass both.

See our [one-pager](#) for a quick analysis on each bill.

SB 3 AT A GLANCE:

Sponsors: John Eklund (R), Sean OBrien (D)

Committee: Senate Judiciary Committee

Where is it now? As of 6/17/19, SB 3 has had six hearings in Senate Judiciary Committee.

[More Information](#)

The ACLU of Ohio supports SB3.

SB 3 is a drug sentencing reform bill. Its goal is to punish people selling drugs and help people struggling with drug use. In short, SB 3:

Additionally, SB 3 Would:

HB 1 AT A GLANCE:

Sponsors: Phil Plummer (R), Paula Hicks-Hudson (D)

Committee: House Criminal Justice Committee

Where is it now? HB1 passed the House, 90-6, on 6/19/19. It now moves to the Ohio Senate (no committee assignment yet)

[More Information](#)

The ACLU of Ohio supports HB1.

HB 1 expands the use of drug treatment rather than conviction for people struggling with drug or alcohol addiction, works to seal old records of nonviolent crimes, and increase other non-incarceration support. Its goal is to get people struggling with addiction the help they need, and allow them to rebuild their lives.

In short, HB1 would:

**Offenders charged with felony sex crimes would not be eligible for "Intervention in Lieu of Conviction"*

SB3 AND HB1 BOTH PRIORITIZE:

Sealing records: The main overlap between SB3 and HB 1 involves sealing records for people who are no longer in the court/prison system. If we allow people to have their records sealed, they will have a much better chance at getting good jobs, rebuilding their lives, and ending the cycle of incarceration.

Treatment over jail time: Both bills encourage treatment rather than jail time for low-level drug possession charges. HB1 requires a hearing to determine if treatment is a good fit when a person claims drugs and/or alcohol were involved in their case. Also, SB 3 assumes treatment over jail time for low-level drug possession charges.

BOTTOM LINE: There is not enough overlap between these bills to only pass one of them. With a relatively small number of changes, these two bills would address very different, but equally important, pieces of the sentencing reform puzzle.

Together, these two bills can help lower Ohios prison population, save the state millions of dollars, and help more Ohioans rebuild their lives after going through the court system. Tell your Ohio legislators to pass both.

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