

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

[**https://www.vera.org/research/weve-got-the-power**](https://www.vera.org/research/weve-got-the-power)

Campaign and Advocacy

District attorneys wield enormous power in the criminal legal system. They have the power to decide the fate of people accused of crimes at every stage of a criminal case. They have tremendous sway over other actors throughout the criminal legal system, including policing practices and enforcement. We, the people, have the power to influence how they operate. On July 15, 2020 the Vera Institute of Justice was joined by Big Freedia, prosecutors, public defenders, advocates, organizers, and others for an interactive virtual event with music, art, and discussion.

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A laundry list of minor traffic violations can lead to tickets and even jail time. In the worst cases, police stops for trivial infractions turn deadly. But stops for those offensestinted windows, a missing inspection sticker, an air freshener dangling from the rearview mirrordont make us safer. They do, however, drive racial disparities: study ...

Decades of these policies failed our communities and our nation. From 1970 onward, decisions made to sharply increase the use of jail and prison throughout the countryand to impose harsher sentences for many criminal convictionsare now commonly referred to as the era of mass incarceration. Today, nearly 2.3 million people are behind bars. Mass in ...

The risk to justice is real. Since 1989, at least 12 people in Louisiana have been exonerated who were convicted by a non-unanimous verdictand there may be more. In June 2018, Senator JP Morrell led the state legislature sending this fundamental issue of justice to the people to approve a constitutional amendment. The Unanimous Jury Coalitiona c ...

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