

# Ohio Justice and Policy Center

## Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://ohiojpc.org/2018/11/07/its-time-to-work-together-were-not-done-pushing-for-reform/>

## Public Facing Advocacy Writing

by [Marais Jacon-Duffy](#) | Nov 7, 2018 | [Blog](#), [Policy Reform](#)

We at the Ohio Justice & Policy Center are saddened by the results of tonight's election with regards to Issue 1. Our team worked tirelessly on this proposed amendment from the first draft to election night.

OJPC supported Issue 1 because we saw a problem with our criminal justice system. Our criminal justice system is one which chews people up particularly people with addictions and mental health disorders, as well as the poor and People of Color and spits them out with little preparation or opportunities to be a productive member of society post-incarceration. That's why we vehemently advocated on behalf of Issue 1: It promised to promote second chances, increase access to treatment and it incentivizes self-improvement.

The enormous support for Issue 1, even though it did not carry this vote, has sent a clear signal to policymakers at every level of government and practitioners in every part of the justice system that safety needs to look like *healing*.

The hundreds of organizers that built the Issue 1 movement, the hundreds of thousands of Ohioans that signed Issue 1 petitions, and the million-plus voters that said Yes to Issue 1 tonight are not going away. Their demands for a better public safety system are not going away.

While opposition to Issue 1 was loud, it often echoed the same apologetic response: I like the idea, and this is well-intended, but and, most often, this type of reform shouldn't be in the Ohio Constitution.

We won't forget those words and we won't forget who said them because, now, we want you to work with us to make reform happen.

Ohio can achieve meaningful criminal justice reform through a variety of means legislation crafted by the General Assembly, for example. But we can't enact reform that works for everyone if we don't bring diverse voices to the discussion table.

OJPC is ready to work, ready to talk and ready to listen. We want to continue the discussion of what justice should look like in Ohio, and we want to be part of the solution to end our skyrocketing overdose death count and incarceration rate.

If you also want to be part of the solution, contact your state legislators, law enforcement officials and judges and urge them to be an advocate for meaningful, smart criminal justice reform. Allowing people with addictions to get treatment instead of prison to stop the cycle of incarceration before it starts should be priorities of Ohio's next legislative session. But, in the meantime, local law enforcement, prosecutors and judges have the power to enforce the law in a more compassionate, redemptive and humane manner.

This fight isn't over we won't back down until transformational justice reform is a reality.

Register for one of OJPC's virtual legal clinics [here](#).

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