

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.acluohio.org/en/news/bail-reform-key-solving-jail-overcrowding>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

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On Wednesday, June 14th, Sheriff Jim Neil [declared a state of emergency](#) at the Hamilton County Justice Center due to jail overcrowding. The ACLU of Ohio has taken bail reform head on, and it is rapidly becoming one of our main criminal justice focus areas.

Given the alarming declaration of a state of emergency the ACLU of Ohio wrote a letter to Sheriff Neil and Commissioner Todd Portune to offer assistance in combating the overcrowding of Hamilton County Jails facilities, by recommending changes to the Countys pretrial criminal justice process and helping to implement reform measures aimed at reducing the size of the Countys jail population.

Read the [full letter](#) for more details.

In addition to the letter, we published an editorial in the Cincinnati Enquirer on the issue of jail overcrowding as well. We wanted residents of Hamilton County to understand how many innocent people needlessly sit in jail simply because they cannot afford bail. When freedom depends on how much money you have in your bank account, the overpopulation of county jails makes perfect sense. Studies show that at any given time across the country, approximately 60 percent of all persons held in county jails are there awaiting trial. Many of these people are charged with non-violent and misdemeanor offenses and have not been convicted of the crime.

Check out the [full op-ed](#) for further reading on bail reform in Ohio.

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