

BALLOT INSIGHTS

Series on the 2018 Neighborhood Safety, Drug Treatment, and Rehabilitation Amendment Initiative

The *2018 Ohio Neighborhood Safety, Drug Treatment, and Rehabilitation Amendment* (Issue 1) is a ballot initiative aiming to reform Ohio's criminal justice system and reinvest millions of dollars into drug treatment and community-based recovery programs. The initiative would amend the Ohio Constitution to achieve four goals: (1) change drug possession felonies to misdemeanors, (2) prohibit prison sentences for non-criminal probation violations, (3) expand the ability of incarcerated people to earn up to 25% off their sentence, and (4) redirect funds saved from reduced incarceration to drug treatment and victims' services.

Our series, Ballot Insights, is designed to facilitate informed discussion about the policy proposals included in this constitutional amendment and their potential impact.

The Neighborhood Safety, Drug Treatment, and Rehabilitation Amendment: A Step in the Right Direction?

SEPTEMBER 13 | NOON – 1 P.M. | SAXBE AUDITORIUM

In recent years, criminal justice reform advocates have turned to ballot initiatives for a number of diverse issues, including victims' rights, sentencing reform, marijuana legalization, and favoring drug treatment over incarceration. But as the use of ballot initiatives has grown, so has a debate among scholars and government professionals about using direct democracy to legislate complex and nuanced policy matters. Please join our panel of experts as they discuss the ballot initiative's aims and objectives, and then draw on lessons from other states to discuss the pros and cons of harnessing the power of the people to achieve intricate policy changes.

Earning Freedom: Working Toward Sentence Reduction

OCTOBER 4 | NOON – 1 P.M. | DRINKO HALL 352

The state of Ohio currently allows inmates to earn up to 8% of their sentence via participation in approved rehabilitative programming. This is the lowest percentage of available "earned time credit" for any state prison system in the nation. The proposed amendment would increase this number to 25%, a significant change to someone's ability to shorten their time behind bars. Please join our panel of experts as they discuss the potential challenges associated with this type of prison reform.

For additional details and registration:
<https://moritzlaw.osu.edu/depc>

Devil in the Details: Funding Effective Rehabilitation and Treatment

OCTOBER 18 | NOON – 1 P.M. | DRINKO HALL 352

The cost of the opioid crisis has been well documented. One aim of the Amendment is to provide additional funding for treatment and rehabilitation of substance use disorders. However, not all treatment is created equal and the amendment is silent on how to ensure that funds go toward effective treatment programs. Please join our panel of experts as they discuss the possible challenges connected to implementing this initiative and the latest evidence on the effectiveness of various treatment programs and strategies.

Sentencing and Parole Reform in Practice: Insights on Implementation Challenges

NOVEMBER 1 | 10 – 11 A.M. | KIRWAN INSTITUTE

Sentencing reform focused on non-violent drug offenses has gained considerable support at the state and federal level. As policymakers seek ways to lessen penalties associated with these types of crimes and provide retroactive relief to people affected by the war on drugs, evidence from a number of states suggests that achieving this goal might be more challenging than previously imagined. Please join our panel of experts as they discuss the potential impacts of the ballot initiative on the criminal justice system and on communities disproportionately affected by the war on drugs.

The Passage or Failure of The Neighborhood Safety, Drug Treatment, and Rehabilitation Amendment: What Can We Learn from Ohio's Voting Patterns?

NOVEMBER 29 | NOON – 1 P.M. | SAXBE AUDITORIUM

Our series will conclude with a post-election analysis of voting patterns for and against the amendment as juxtaposed with our gubernatorial race results and data on the prevalence of drug overdoses at the county level. Please join us as we discuss what can be learned from Ohio's voting patterns and what, if anything, can we deduce about changing attitudes in respect to substance use disorder and criminal justice reform.

