2. WHAT ABOUT PUBLIC SAFETY?

Cash bail reform is often cited as a cause for increased crime and a loss of public safety. Do the data bear this out? There is evidence that neither claim is accurate—pretrial release does not increase crime and it actually increases public safety. While there are highly publicized cases of a person who is bailed out committing a serious crime, these are rare. Their freedom was based on a judge's decision regarding their potential danger to the community, not on the bail being paid. The person would have been released If they could afford to pay their own bail and the result would have been the same.

The resources below outline the basis for these conclusions and highlight the factors that contribute to public safety.

How does cash bail reform affect public safety?

- For a high-level summary of the facts related to cash bail and rising homicide rates read What You Need to Know About Cash Bail and Crime Rates (ACLU, March 25, 2022) American Progress, 2022).
- To learn how reforming cash bail and pretrial practices would promote public safety and decrease harm for those who are arrested read these articles from the Center for American Progress:
    - Cash Bail Reform Is Not a Threat to Public Safety (September 19, 2022) and
    - 5 Ways Cash Bail Systems Undermine Community Safety (January 27, 2022).

What happens if people are released pretrial?

- The Prison Policy Initiative addresses the public safety question in Releasing people pretrial doesn't harm public safety (July 6, 2023).
- For an in-depth study of the effect on crime bail-reform policy changes had in numerous jurisdictions read Bail Reform and Crime (The Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, January 2023).

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