



**PRESS RELEASE**

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Contact: Matt Mayer, 614-224-4422

**NEW REPORT IDENTIFIES KEY CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS**

**COLUMBUS** – With Ohio facing an estimated \$8 billion budget deficit, the Buckeye Institute for Public Policy Solutions today released a report on criminal justice reforms that would decrease the annual spending on rehabilitation and corrections without sacrificing public safety. The report, “**Smart on Crime: With Prison Costs on the Rise, Ohio Needs Better Policies for Protecting the Public,**” details the reforms across the United States and in Ohio that are lowering criminal justice costs without decreasing the security of citizens.

Ohio taxpayers’ spending on corrections has grown five-fold since 1983, even after adjusting for inflation. Undoubtedly, locking up dangerous violent offenders for long periods, though costly, is a sound use of taxpayers’ dollars. However, the recent growth in Ohio’s prison population and costs is largely the result of an increasing number of nonviolent offenders being incarcerated for short periods of time, including 10,000 for an average of nine months. In 2008, almost half of those admitted to Ohio prisons were assessed as low risk, and half received prison sentences of 12 months or less.

“With Ohio entering a difficult budget-cutting cycle, the report is intended as a reference guide for policymakers that helps them to replicate programs proven to be effective and replace those that have not worked,” said the report’s author, Marc Levin, Director of Texas Public Policy Foundation’s Center for Effective Justice.

Matt A. Mayer, President of the Buckeye Institute, stated, “As with every government-run program, we must rigorously analyze what we do and how we do it to ensure taxpayers funds are spent efficiently and effectively. Being smart on crime is the right approach for Ohio, especially given the enormous budget deficit.”

The report can be viewed on **The Wire** at [www.buckeyeinstitute.org](http://www.buckeyeinstitute.org).