REFORMING OHIO’S FAILING “MONEY BAIL” SYSTEM

WHY IT MATTERS

Ohio’s cash bail system makes Ohio a more dangerous place to live.

Under the current system, accused murderers, child rapists, and armed robbers are arrested and released into our communities because they have access to money, while citizens accused of jaywalking, violating dress-codes, or failing to pay traffic tickets sit in jail for days, weeks, or even months because they have little or no access to cash.

Ohio’s cash bail system is an arbitrary approach that is inherently prejudiced against poorer defendants and does little to protect communities from truly dangerous defendants.

Ohio’s cash bail system is inefficient, expensive, and unfair. It has proven to be no guarantee to thwarting repeat offenders.

83% of OHIOANS support ending Ohio’s CASH BAIL only SYSTEM

FIXING THE SYSTEM

1. LEVERAGE PROVEN TOOLS
   Amend Ohio law to provide judges with proven tools to make better-informed pretrial detention and release decisions.

2. KEEP COMMUNITIES SAFE
   Give judges greater flexibility and resources to hold defendants accountable and to deny pretrial release when the accused poses significant risks to the community.

3. BETTER RESULTS FOR LESS MONEY
   Save taxpayer dollars by creating a system where more defendants are safely released before trial, more defendants appear for trial, and less crime is committed by those awaiting trial.

ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS TO CASH BAIL

- ELECTRONIC MONITORING
- MANDATORY COUNSELING
- ROUTINE CHECK-INS

DETERRMINING FACTORS FOR CASH BAIL

Judge-assessed risk factors

1. What is the defendant’s criminal history?
2. What has the defendant been charged with?
3. Has the defendant missed prior court dates?

Learn more at: BUCKEYEINSTITUTE.ORG

1. Survey of Ohio Voters, February 5-6, 2018, Public Opinion Strategies. Additional citations can be found in The Buckeye Institute’s report “Money Bail: Making Ohio a More Dangerous Place to Live.”
Markus Brown spent nine days in jail after being arrested for violating the Dayton Regional Transit Authority’s (RTA) dress code. RTA rules require patrons to dress and act in a certain way. Violating those rules amounts to trespassing. After his arrest, Brown’s bail was set at $150, which Brown and his family could not afford. Brown sat in jail until his mother secured a car title loan nine days later. He pleaded guilty and was assessed $111 in court costs and banned from RTA buses.

Edward Lee Wright IV, Cleveland father of three, failed to pay a $375 traffic ticket and it cost him a week in jail. Wright was ticketed for driving on a suspended license due to a lapse in car insurance. Wright could not afford the ticket, but the court agreed to accept $50 per month until the ticket was paid. After forgetting to make two monthly payments, the court issued a warrant for Wright’s arrest. He was arrested and given a choice of sitting in the Solon jailhouse or paying $1,100 for bail. After sitting in jail for seven days, Wright pleaded no contest to a new charge of contempt of court for skipping out on his monthly court payments.

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