

Arizona's Imprisonment Crisis: The Price of Prison Growth

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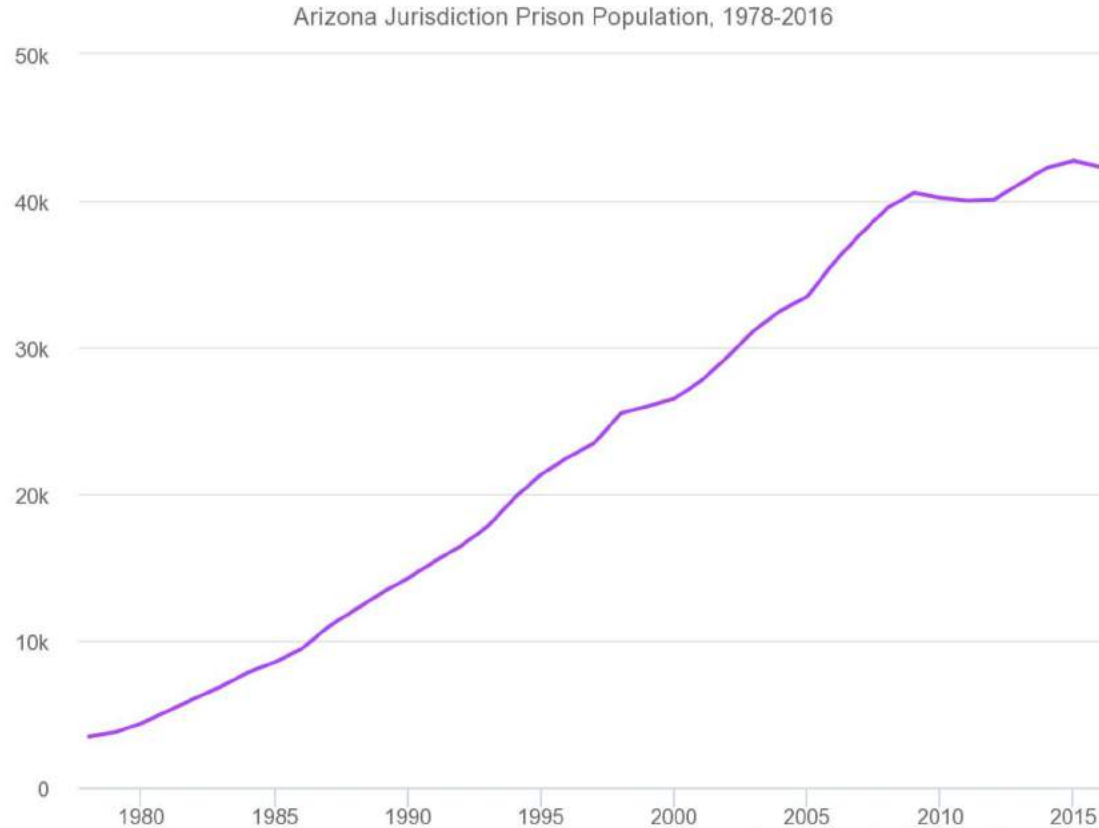
- + The price of Arizona's prisons
- + What is driving prison growth?
 - Non-violent and first time offenses
 - Long prison terms

The Price of Arizona's Prisons

Public safety and criminal justice policy is at a crossroads in Arizona. Despite overwhelming evidence that states can safely reduce crime and incarceration through common-sense reforms, Arizona continues to be a national outlier with high imprisonment rates and rising corrections spending.

This is no small matter. Arizona's imprisonment crisis removes thousands from the economy and costs taxpayers more than \$1 billion each year — preventing the state from investing in other critical priorities like education, social services for families, and child safety. Despite this steep price, the system does not make Arizona safer. Simply put, the state's high imprisonment rate is hurting Arizona's economy, communities, and families.

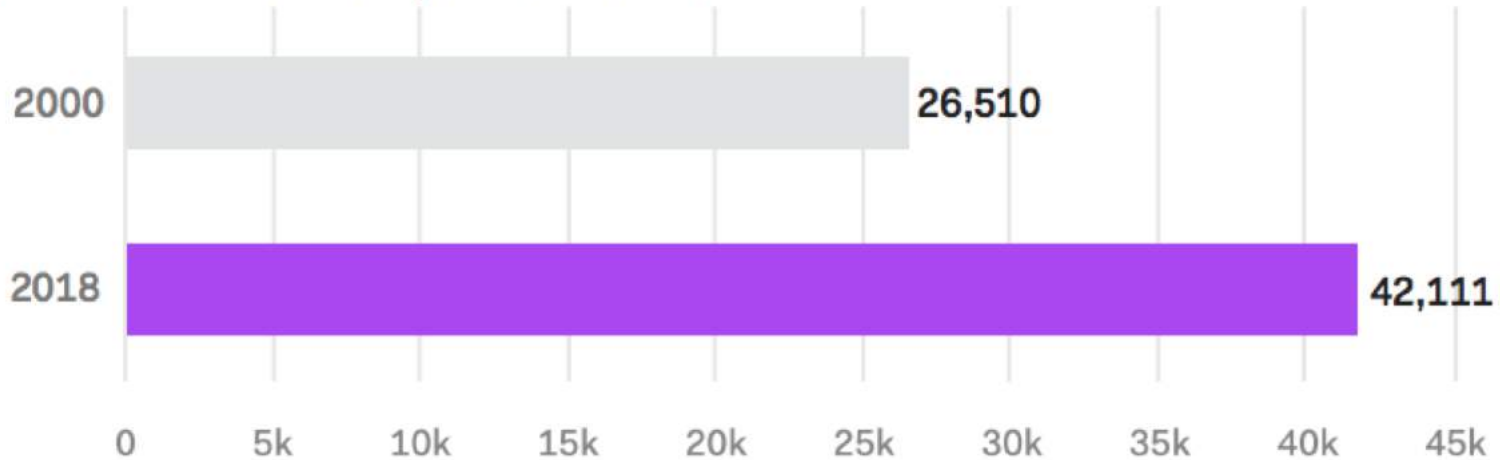
Arizona's prison population is more than 12 times larger today than it was 40 years ago.



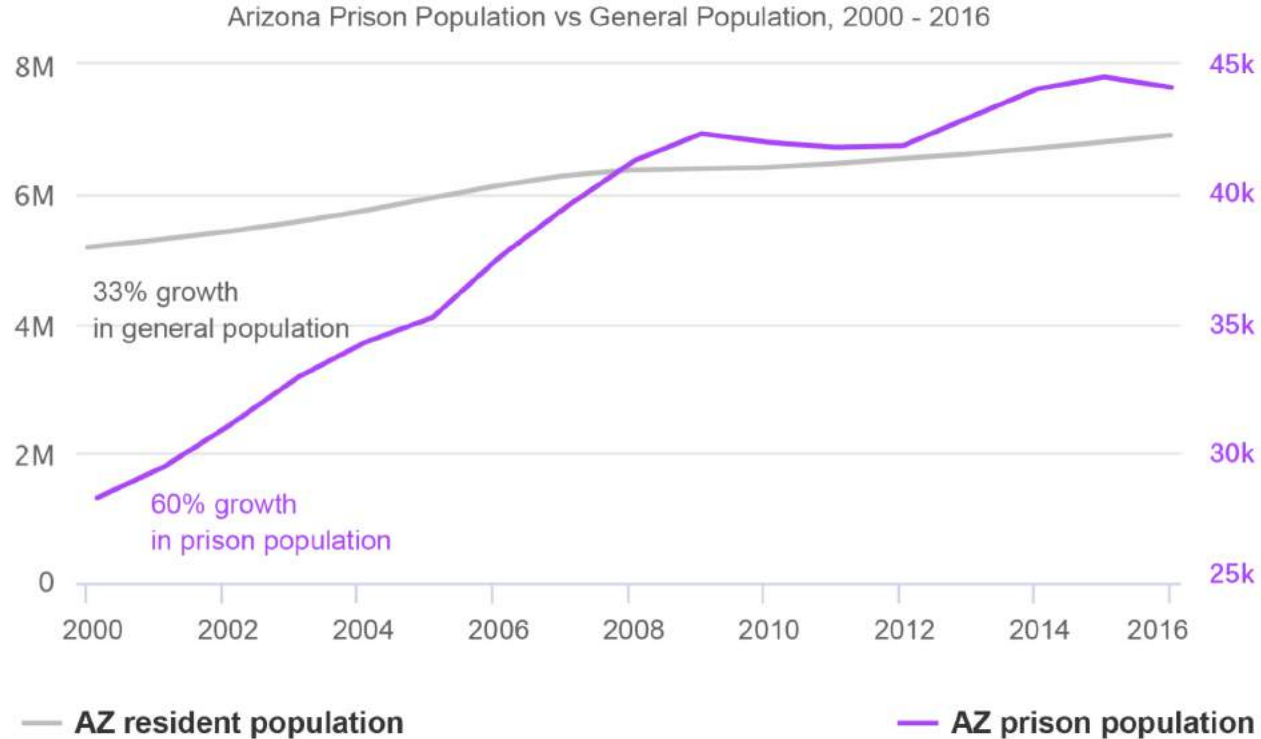
Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Prisoners* series

Since 2000, Arizona's prison population has grown by more than 15,000 people — a 60 percent increase.

Arizona State Prison Population, 2000 vs. 2018

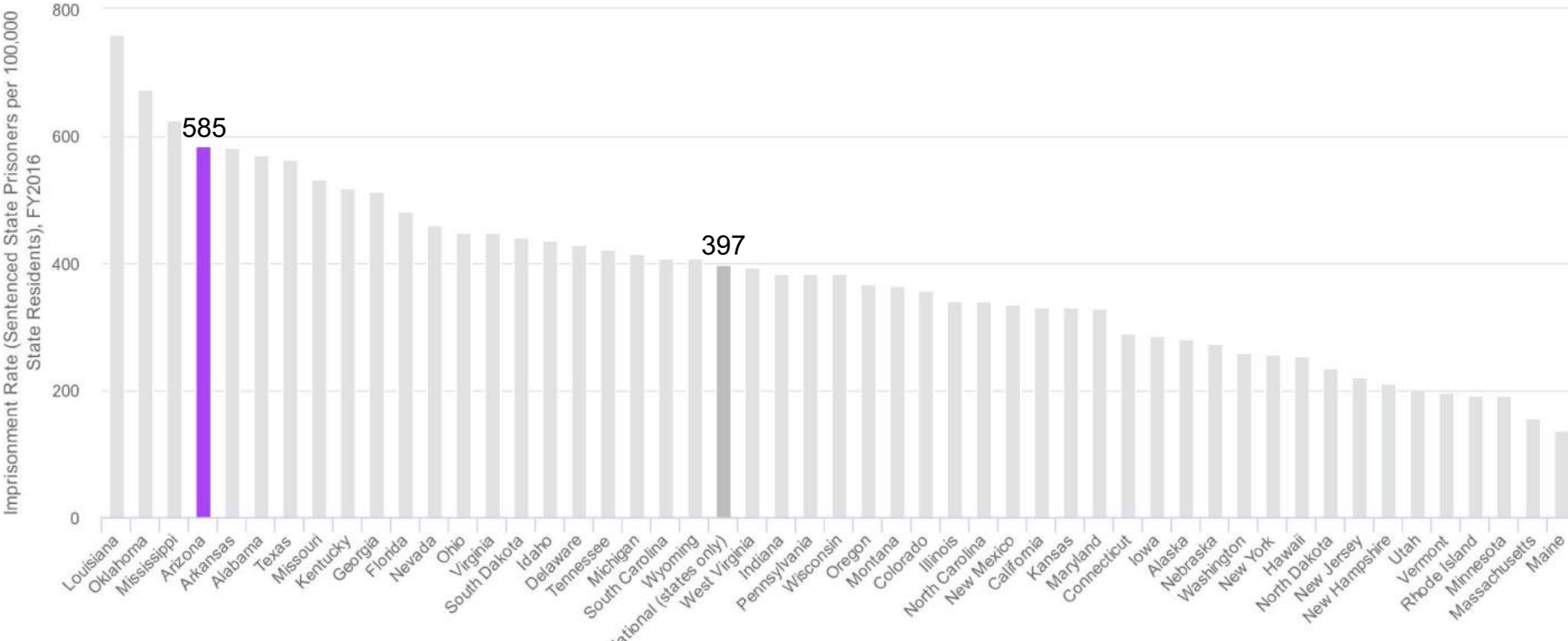


Growth in Arizona's prison population since 2000 has outpaced growth in the resident population.

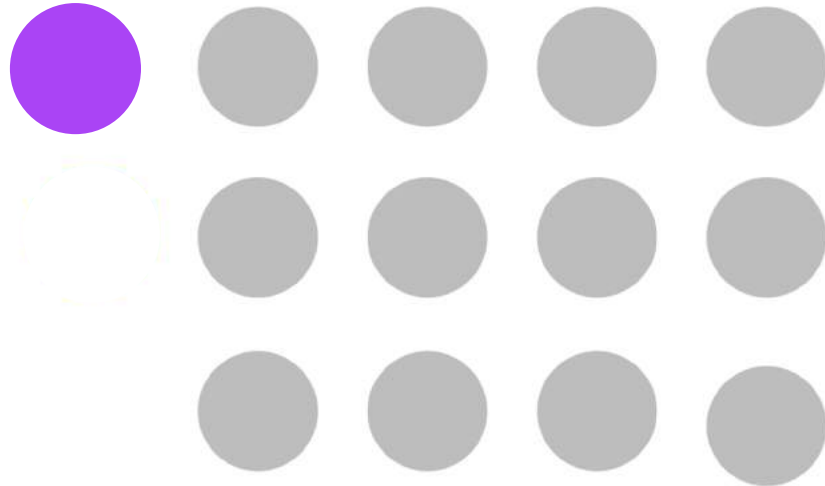


Today, Arizona has the fourth highest imprisonment rate in the United States.

State Imprisonment Rates (Sentenced State Prisoners per 100,000 State Residents), FY2016



1 in 13 Arizonans has a current or prior felony conviction.



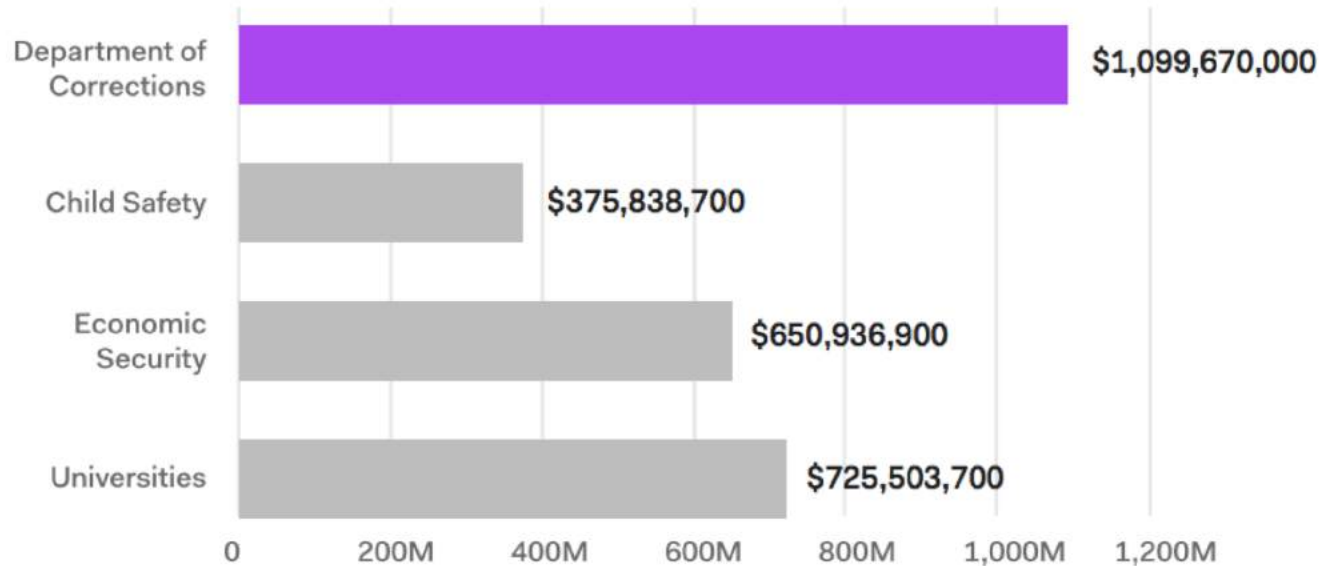
Prison population growth has come at extraordinary cost to Arizona's taxpayers.

Arizona Department of Corrections Approved Budget,
FY2000 vs. FY2019



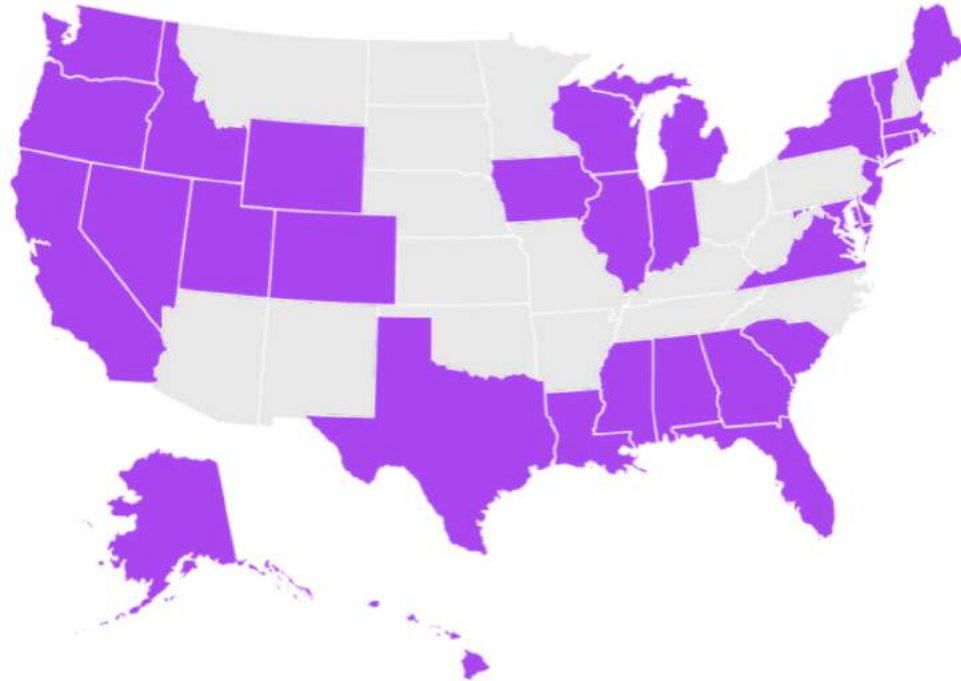
State spending on prisons in Arizona far exceeds spending on universities and other critical state priorities.

Arizona General Fund Expenditures, FY2019



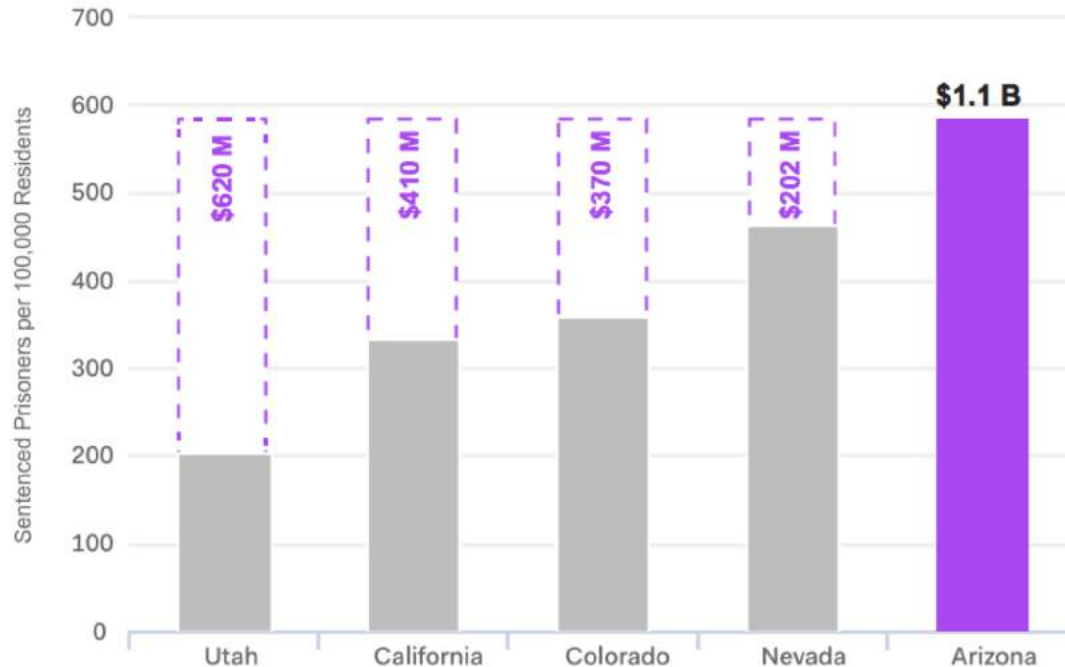
Arizona is a national outlier for its continued reliance on over-imprisonment.

States That Reduced Both Crime and Imprisonment Rates Between 2006 and 2016



Arizona could save hundreds of millions of dollars every year by reducing imprisonment to the level of neighboring states with similar crime rates.

Arizona vs. Neighboring State Imprisonment Rates (Sentenced Prisoners per 100,000 Residents) and Potential Cost Savings, 2016



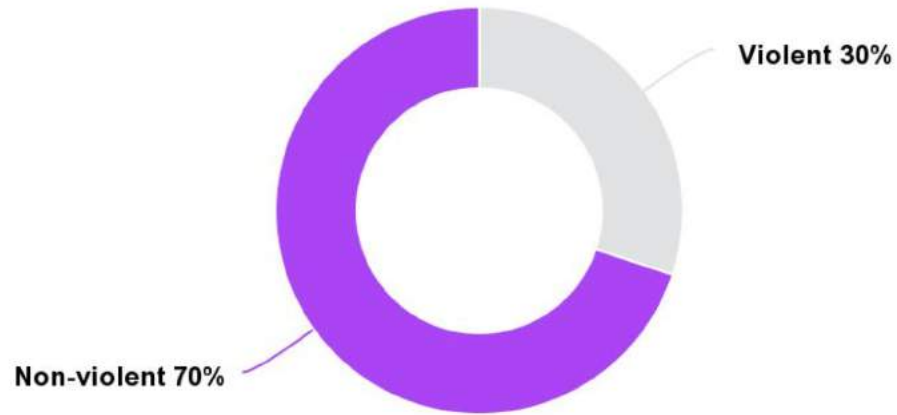
What is Driving Arizona's Prison Population?

To understand what drove this growth, FWD.us conducted an analysis of individual-level data acquired from the Arizona Department of Corrections (ADC) covering over 30 years and nearly half a million records.

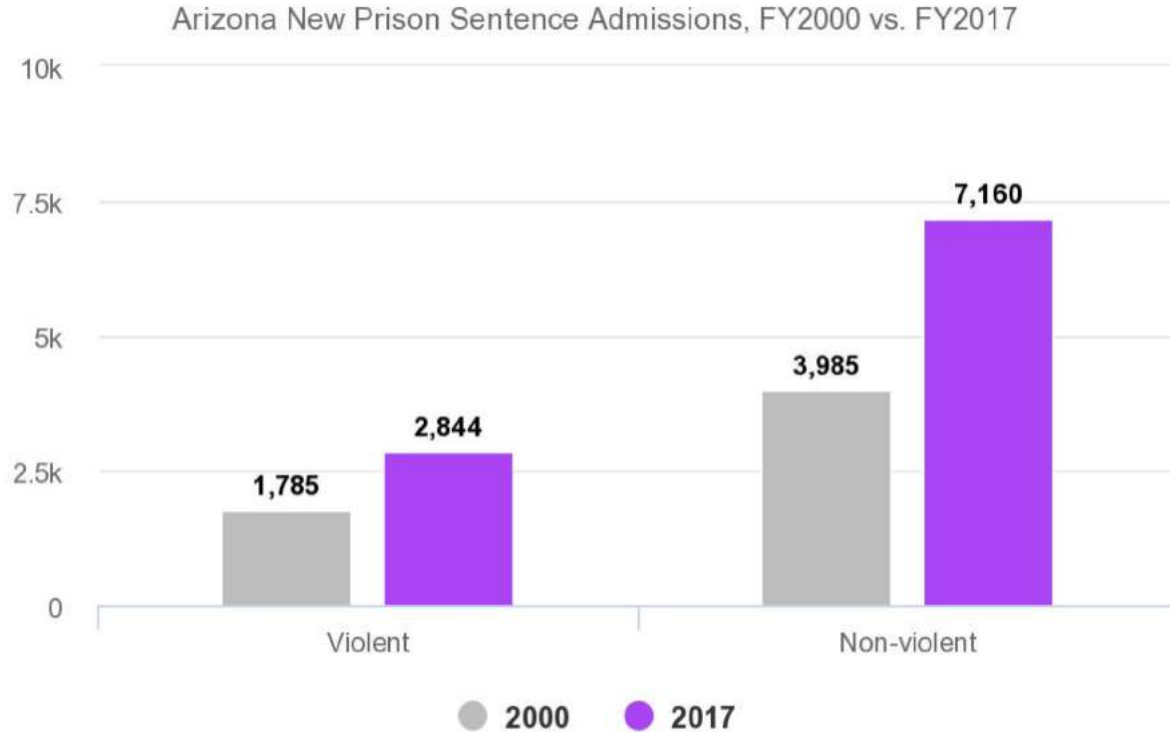
The number of people sentenced to prison for non-violent and first-time felony convictions has grown dramatically.

Seven in 10 prison admissions in Arizona are for a non-violent crime.

Arizona Prison Admissions, FY2017

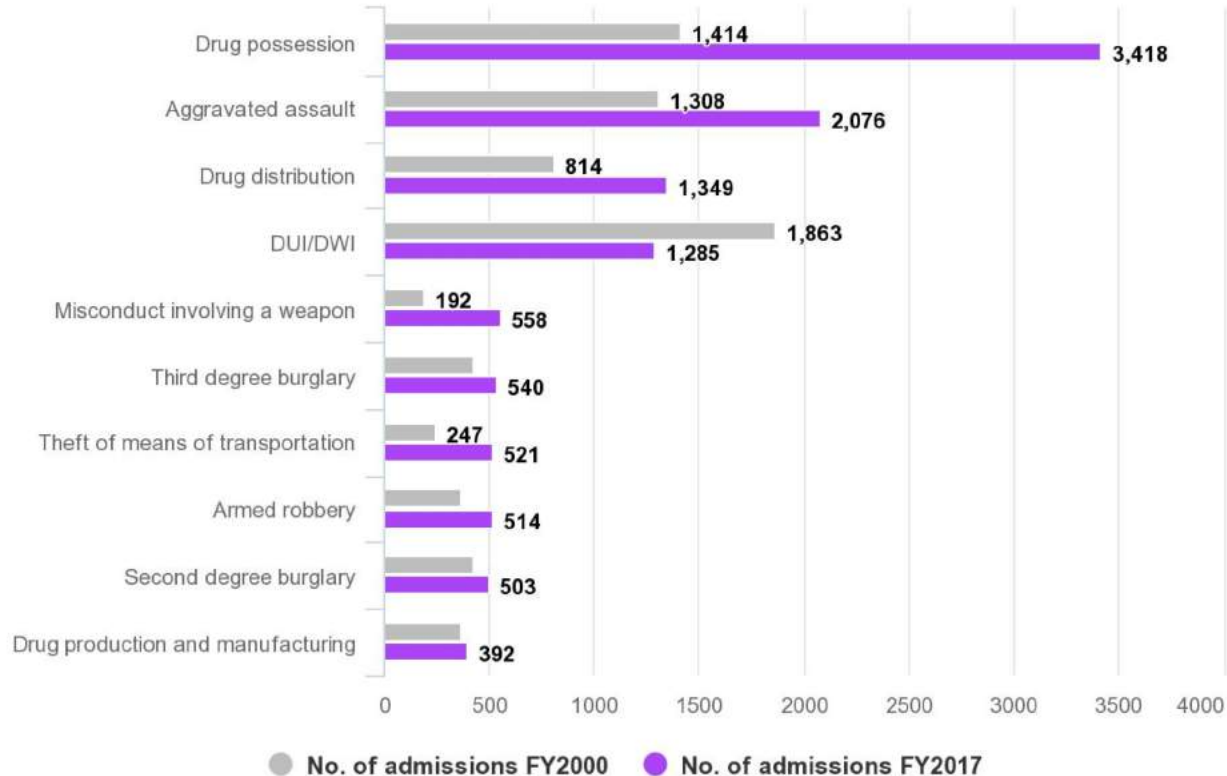


The number of people sentenced to prison for non-violent crimes in Arizona has grown by nearly 80 percent since 2000.

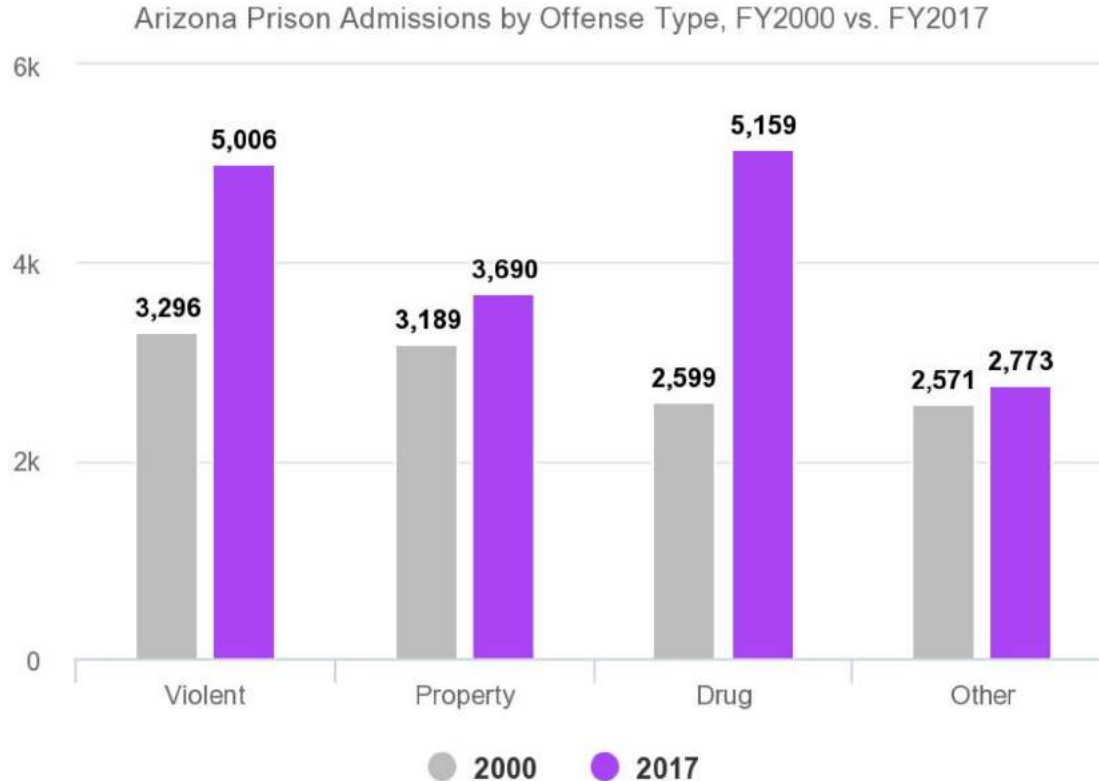


Eight of the top 10 offenses for which people are sent to prison in Arizona are non-violent.

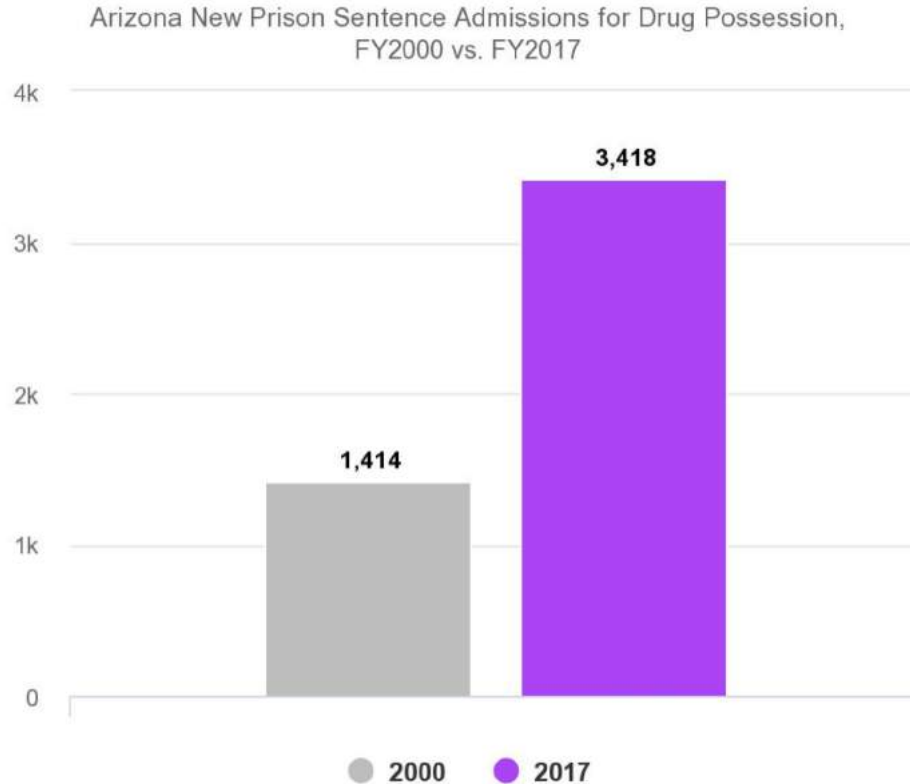
Top 10 Most Serious Offenses for People Sentenced to Prison in Arizona, FY2000 vs. FY2017



Admissions to prison for drug offenses in Arizona have nearly doubled, by far the largest increase of any offense type.

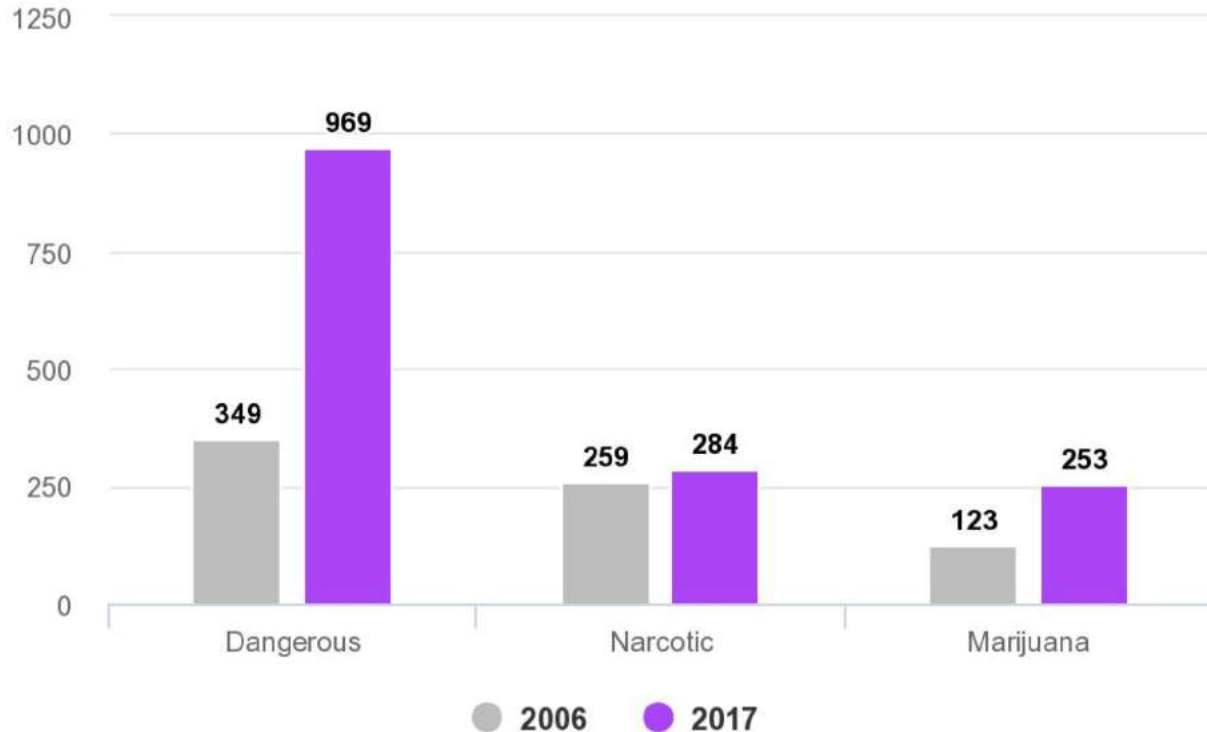


The number of people sentenced to prison for drug possession in Arizona has grown 142 percent.

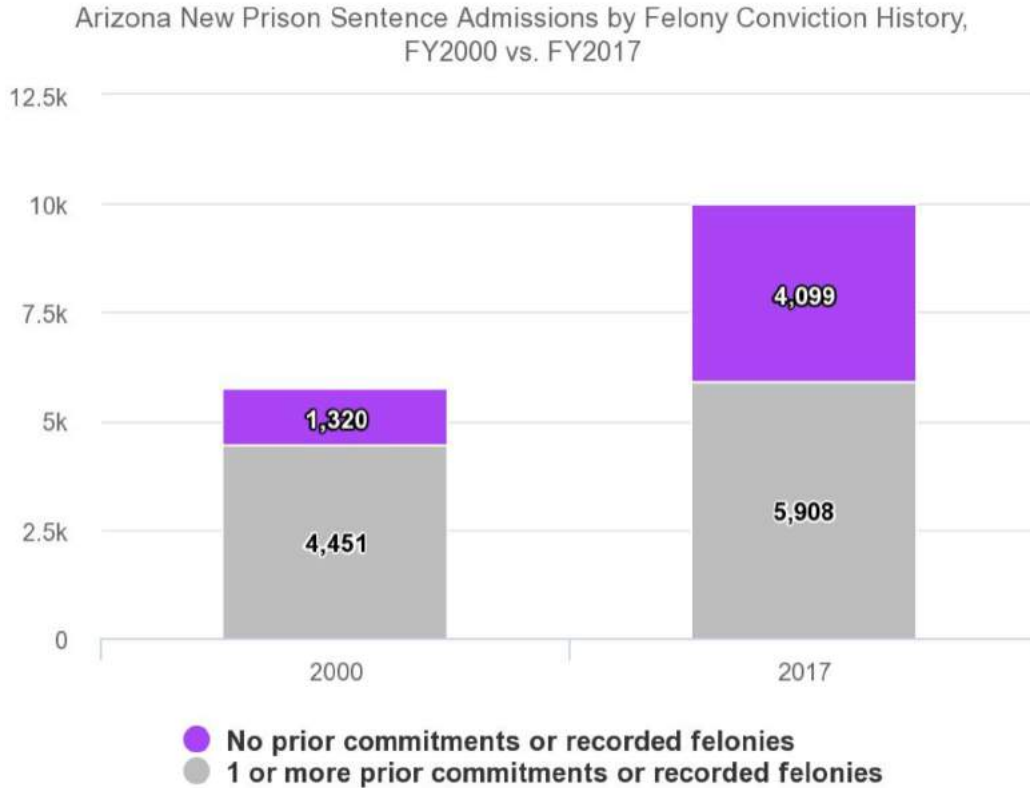


Growth in number of people sentenced to prison for drug possession in Arizona is driven by policy changes, not drug use.

Arizona New Prison Sentence Admissions for Drug Possession by Drug Type, FY2006 vs. FY2017

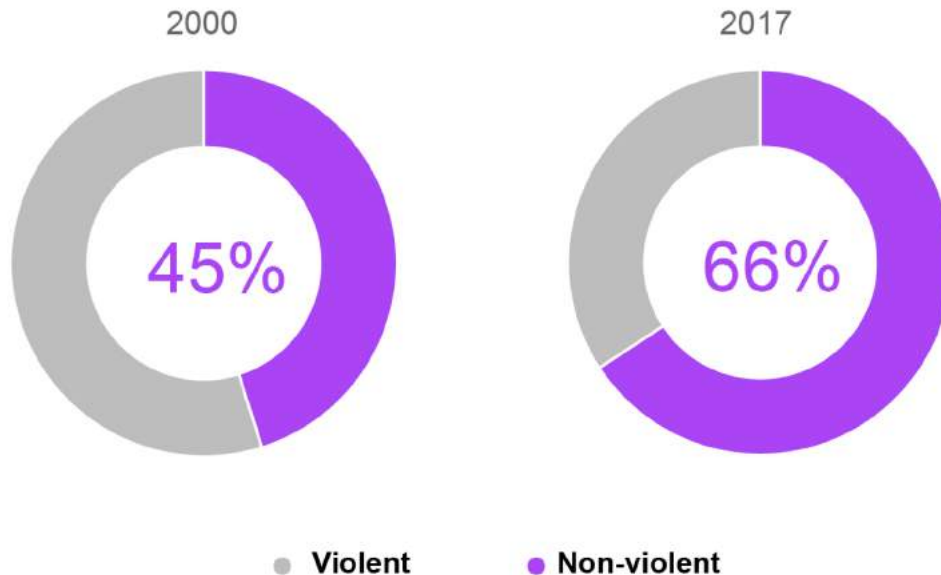


The number of people sent to prison on their first felony conviction in Arizona has tripled since 2000.



Two-thirds of people admitted to prison on their first felony conviction in Arizona were sentenced for non-violent crimes.

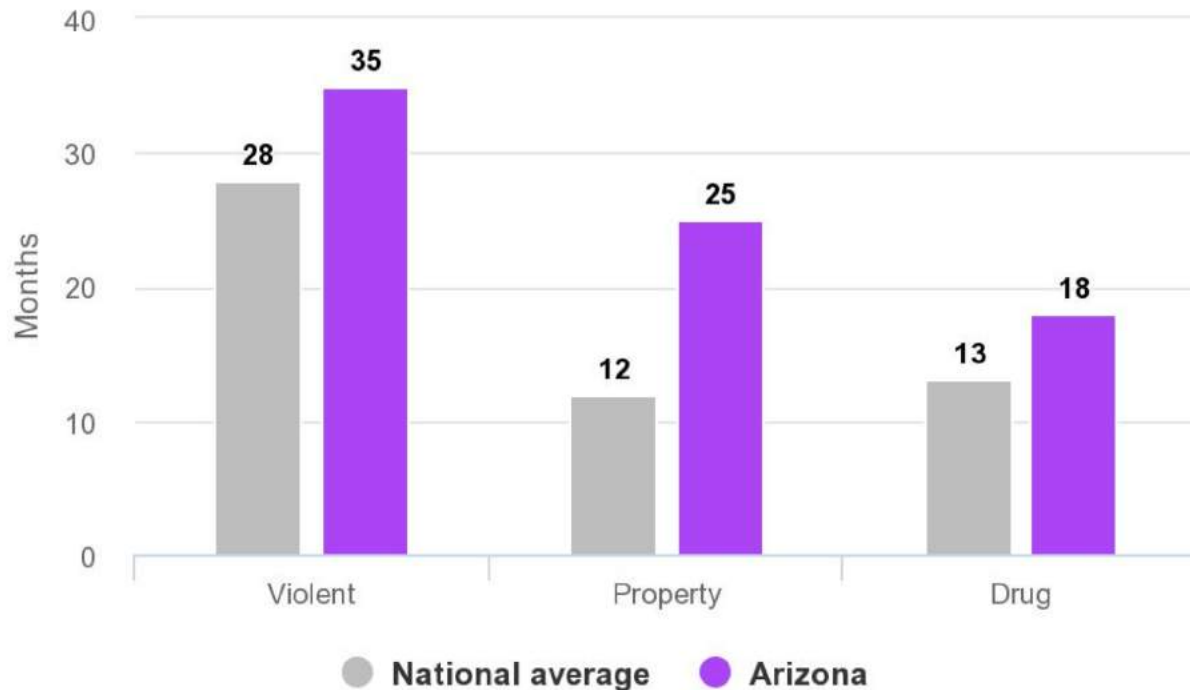
Arizona New Prison Sentence Admissions by Felony Conviction History and Violent or Non-Violent, FY2000 vs. FY2017



Arizona's prison sentences are longer than in other states, despite research showing no benefit to longer prison terms.

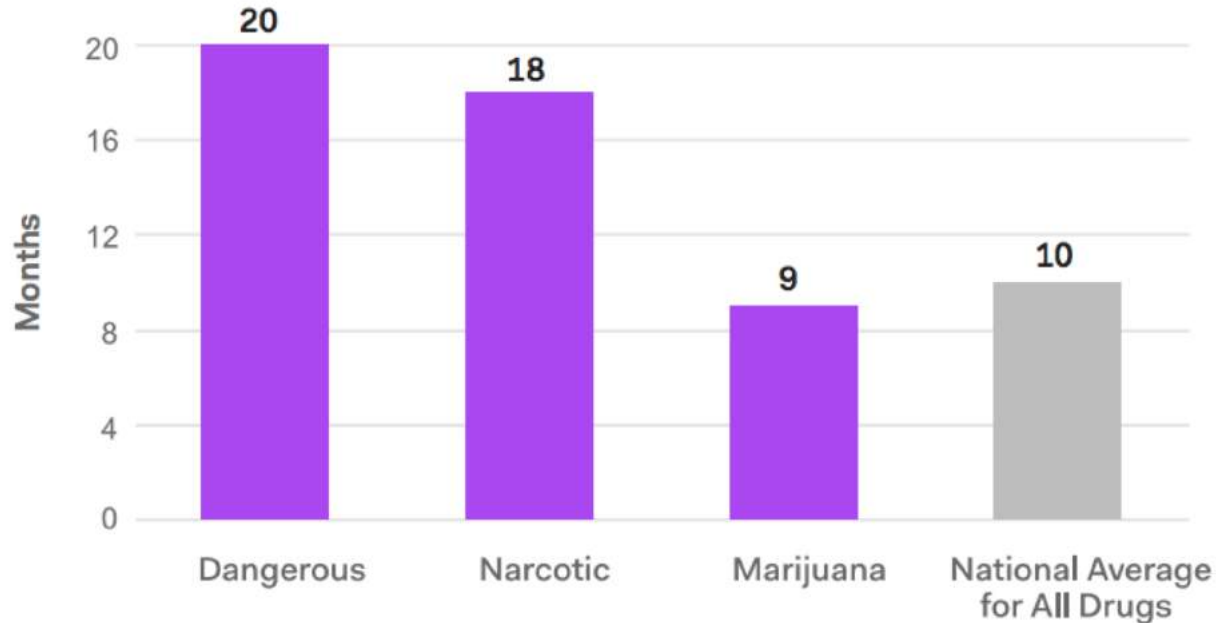
People stay in prison in Arizona significantly longer than in other states, particularly for property crimes.

Median Length of Stay by Offense Type, Arizona New Court Commitments, FY2017 vs. National Average 2012



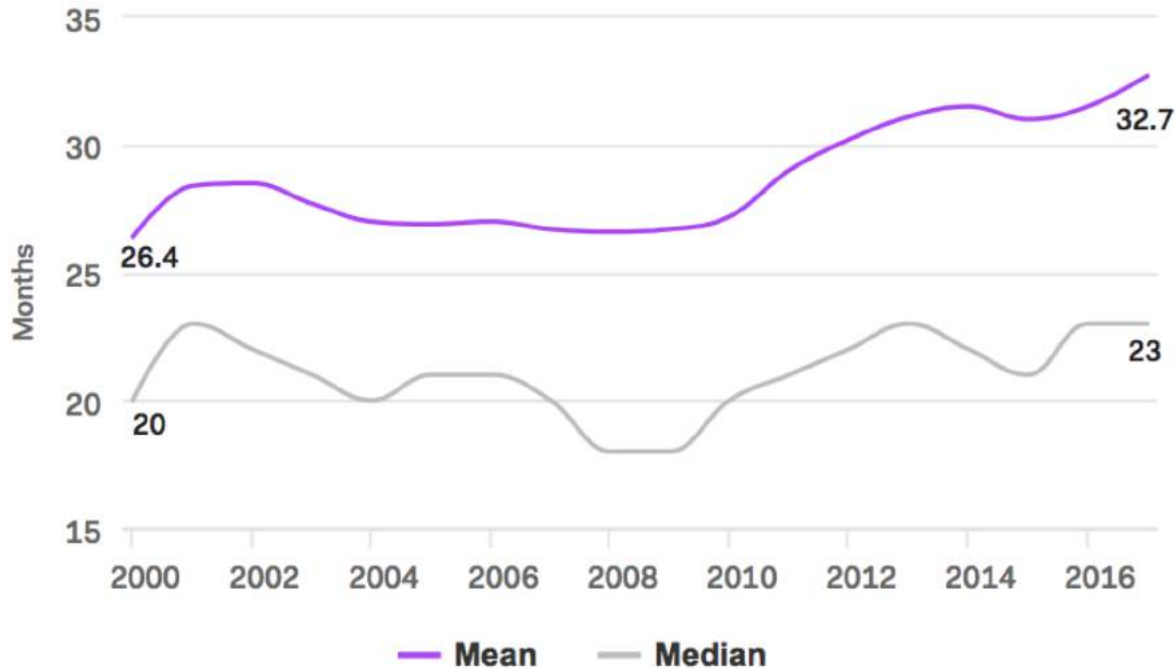
For certain types of drugs, people sentenced to prison for possession in Arizona stay twice as long as the national average.

Median Length of Stay for Drug Possession by Drug Type, Arizona New Court Commitments, FY2017 vs. National Average, 2012

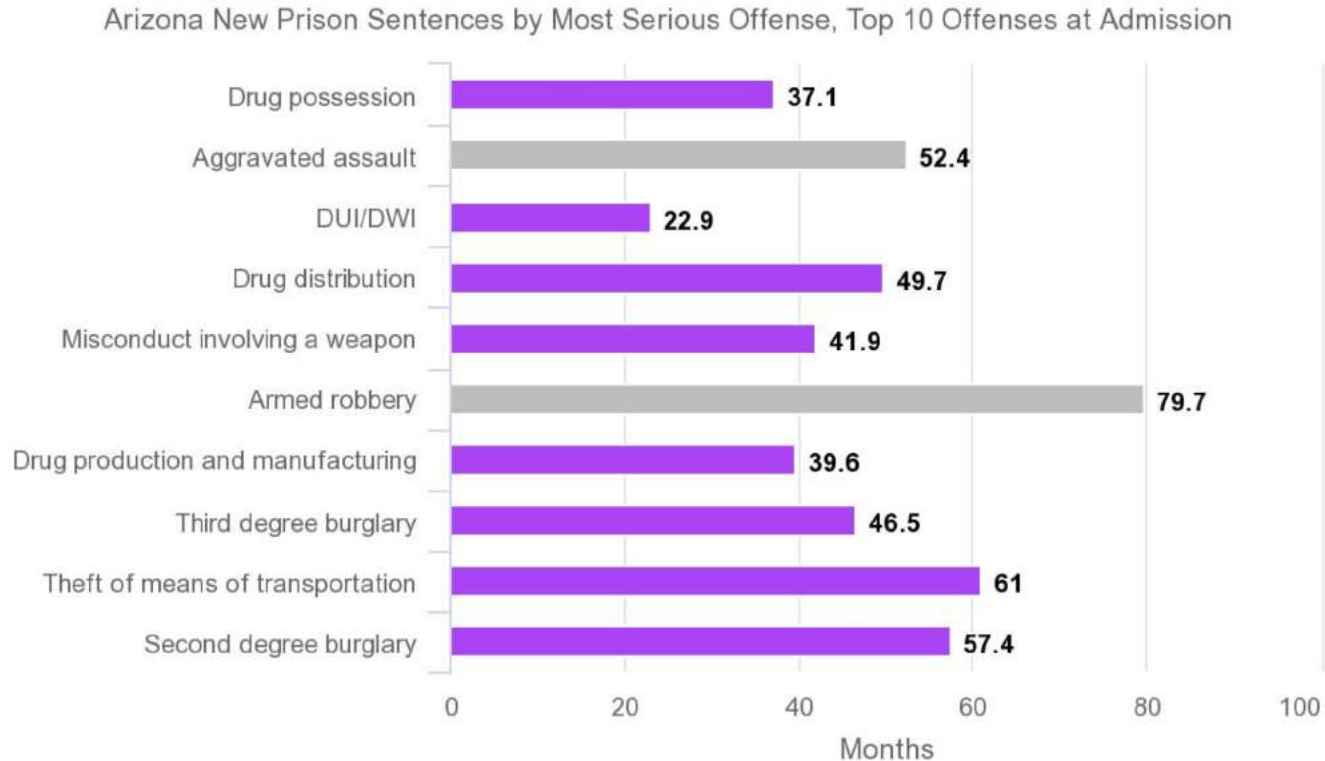


Even as people enter Arizona's prisons for less and less serious offenses, the length of time spent in prison continues to rise.

Mean and Median Length of Stay, Arizona New Court Commitments, FY2000 - FY2017

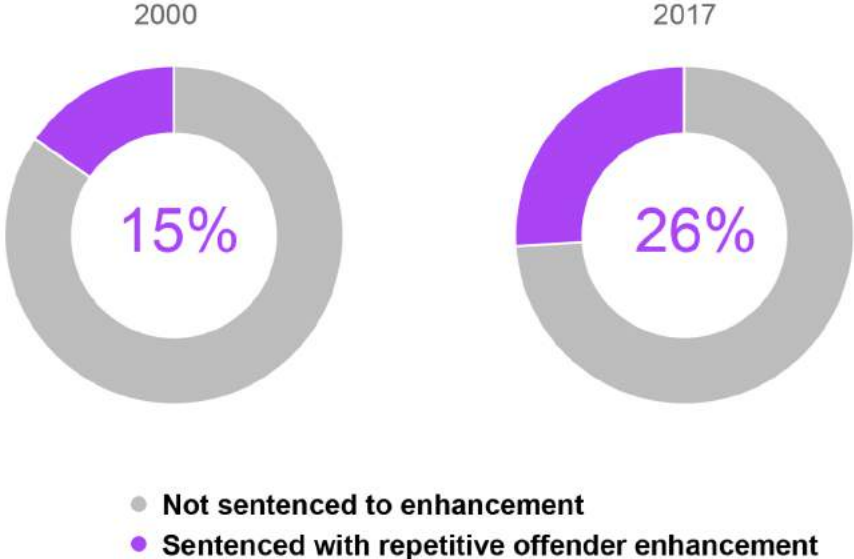


For most common crimes in Arizona, average prison sentences vary between three and five years.

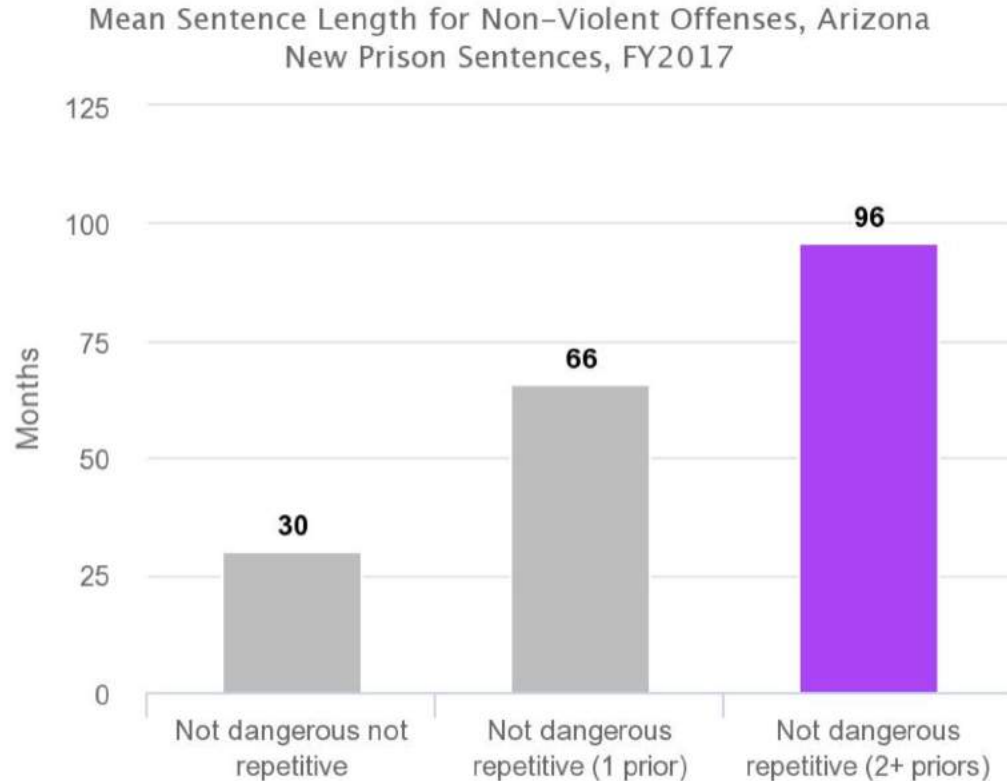


Use of the “repetitive offender” enhancement in Arizona is growing.

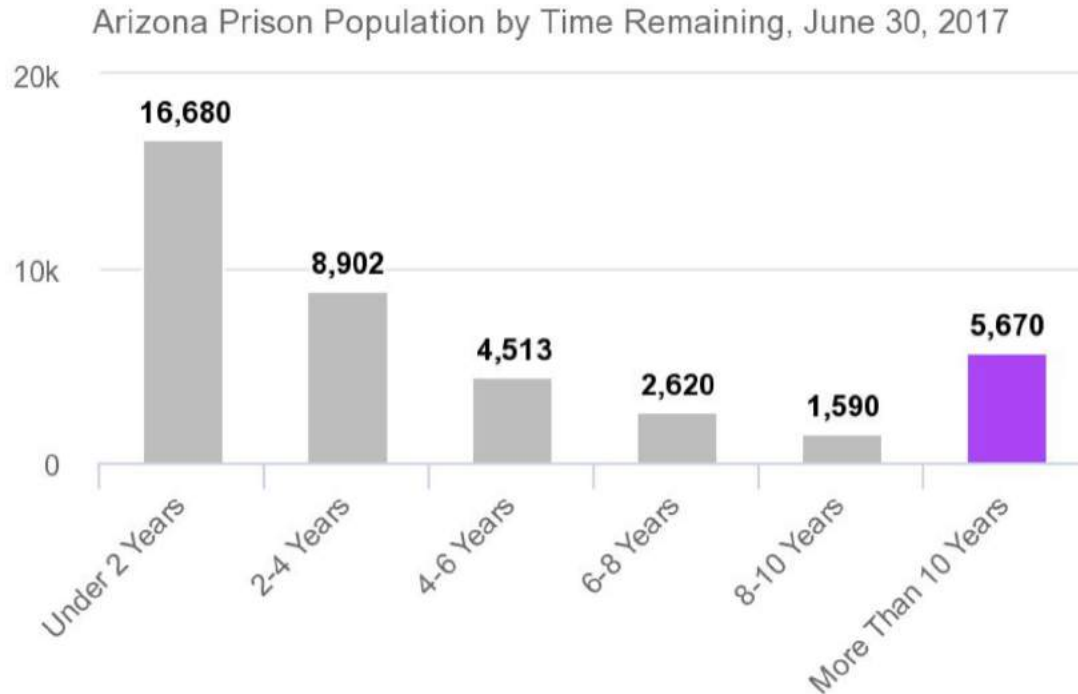
Arizona New Prison Sentences for Non-Violent Offenses,
with Prior Convictions, FY2017



People convicted of non-violent crimes but sentenced with the “repetitive enhancement” in Arizona serve more than twice as long.



While many people cycle in and out of prison on shorter terms, more than 5,500 people in Arizona prisons have more than 10 years remaining until their expected release.



\$1.1 BILLION

Spent on corrections each year

42,000 PEOPLE

In prison in Arizona

7 in 10

People sent to prison for non-violent offenses

Coming up...



1

Causes of Arizona's prison population growth and the consequences for Arizona's economy

2

How Arizona's imprisonment crisis affects some communities more than others

3

Dire consequences for Arizona's women and families



THANK YOU

Questions?

Get in touch: felicity@fwd.us