



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA
Carl Vinson
Institute of Government
*Georgia Workforce and
Economic Resilience Center*

**GEORGIA'S
WORKFORCE
CONFERENCE**

Creating and Implementing a Second-Chance Hiring Plan

**Brenda Smeeton, Shea Zwerver, &
Jonathan King**

Creating & Implementing a Second-Chance Hiring Plan

Georgia's Workforce Conference
November 12th, 2024

Panelists

Jonathan King

**Director, Workforce
Development**



Shea Zwerver

**Workforce Development &
Public Affairs Manager**



Reduce the number of Georgians under correctional control

Reduce reentry barriers for the formerly incarcerated & justice involved



- 1 INDIVIDUAL**
Legal representation and social services
- 2 POLICY & SYSTEMIC**
Working toward system change
- 3 COMMUNITY OUTREACH**
Building community awareness and creating partnerships

GEORGIA JUSTICE PROJECT'S INTERVENTION

HOLISTIC CRIMINAL DEFENSE

- Legal representation with social services
- Long-term support for clients
- Restorative justice

POLICY/22 LAWS CHANGED

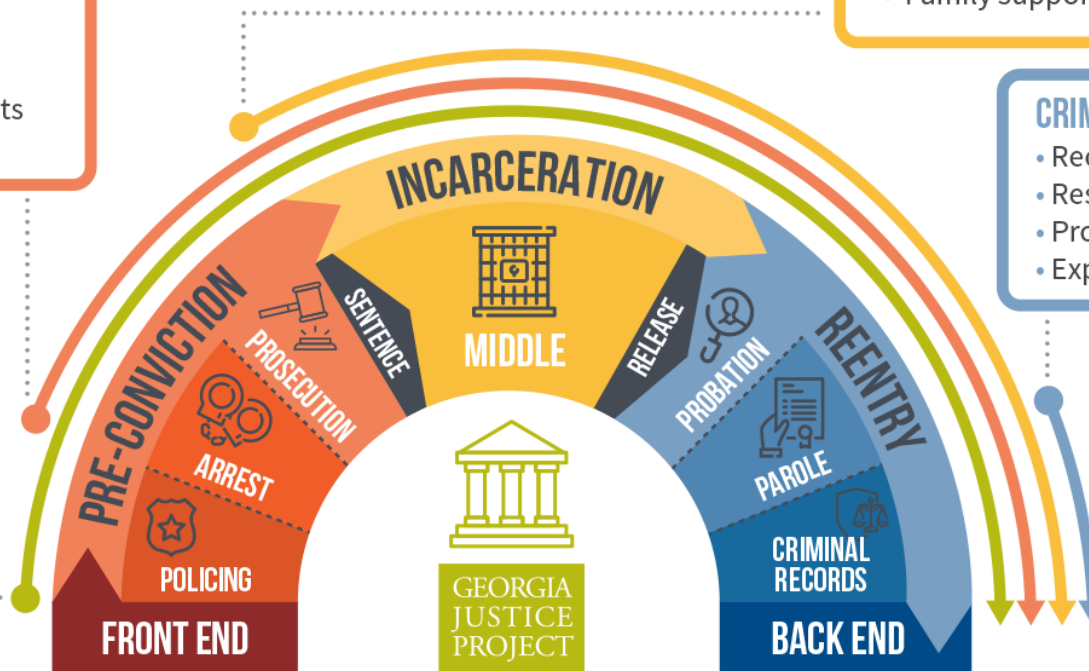
- Expanded expungement for convictions — impacts 1.5 million Georgians
- Early termination of probation
- Driver's license suspension reform

PRISON SUPPORT/REENTRY

- Metro Reentry Facility (MRF)- Reentry Lawyering
- Family support

CRIMINAL RECORDS/PROBLEMS

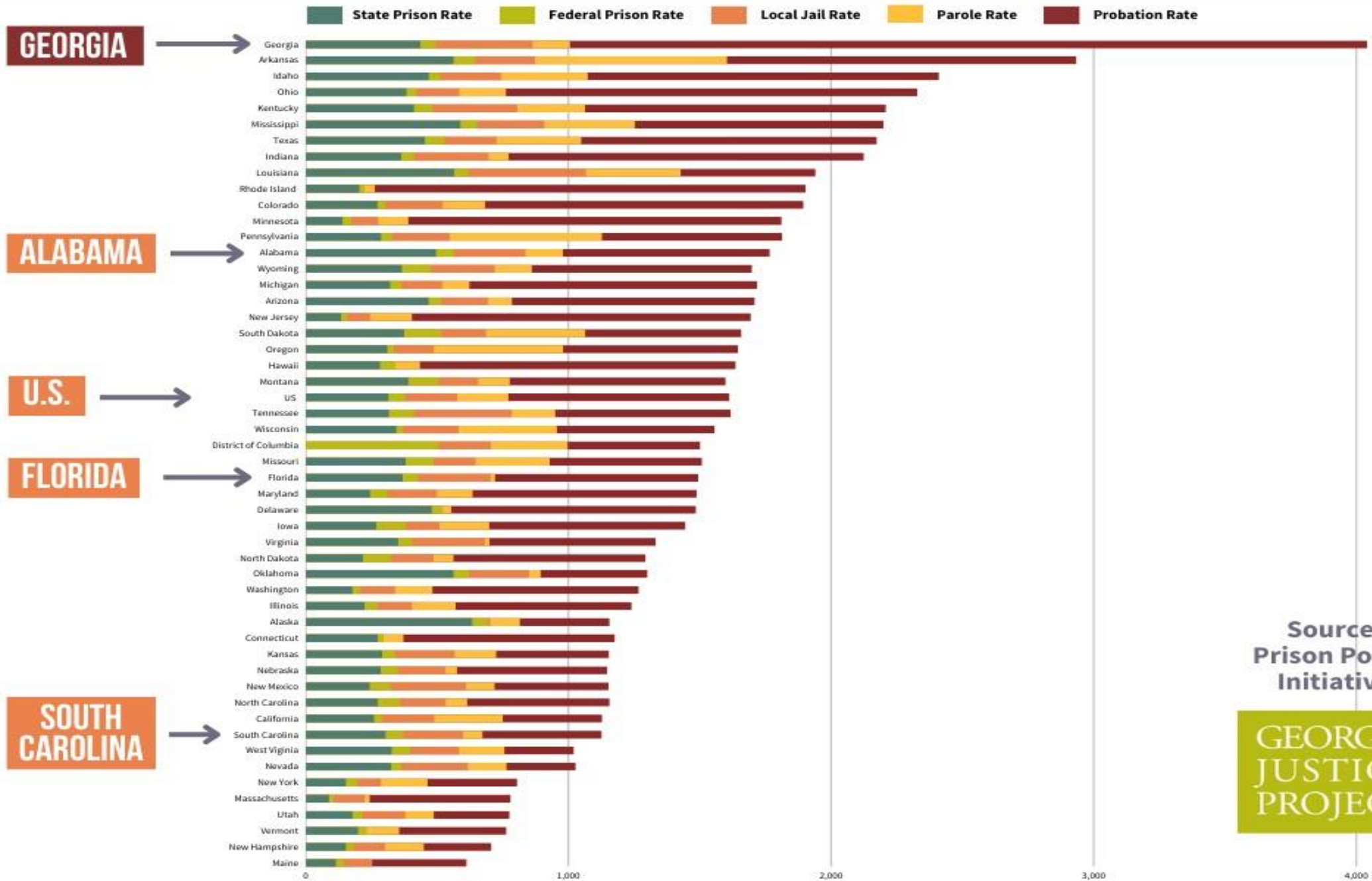
- Record restriction (expungement)
- Restriction summits
- Probation representation & policy
- Expungement Desks



GEORGIA'S CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM



RATES OF CORRECTIONAL CONTROL BY STATE



Source:
Prison Policy
Initiative

GEORGIA
JUSTICE
PROJECT

4.5 million with a Georgia Record

50%

were arrested once.

About **14%**

have a felony conviction.

Over **60%**

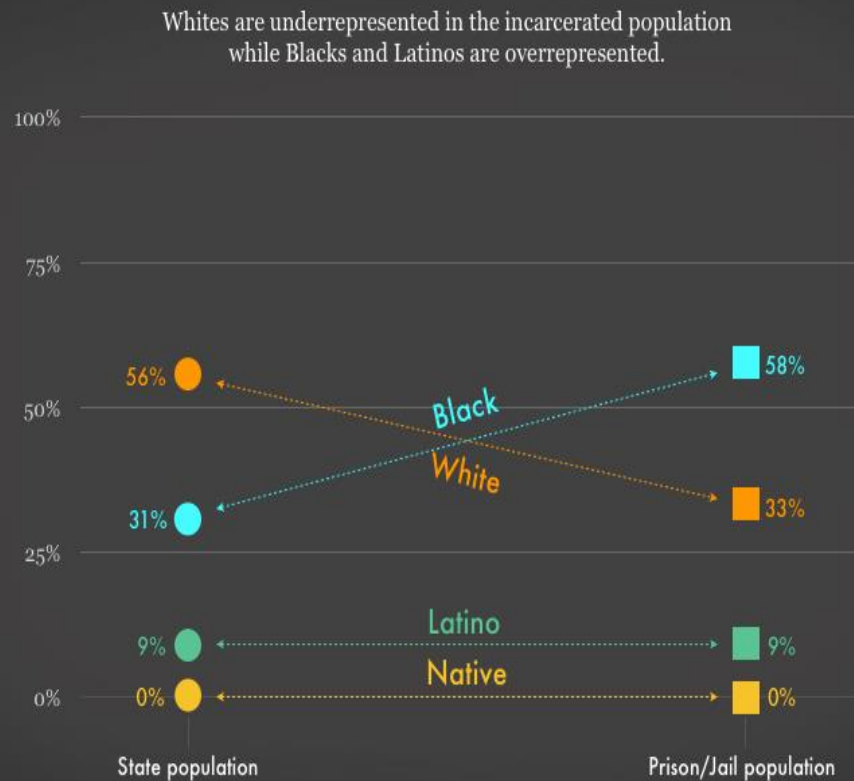
of those with a felony conviction were not sentenced to prison.

< 2%

were convicted of a serious violent or sexual offense.

RACIAL DISPARITIES exist at every step in the process

Racial and ethnic disparities in prisons and jails in Georgia



- **No equivalent disparities in actual behavior**
- **Having a record reduces likelihood of a callback after an interview by half**
- **Black applicants with a record suffer a penalty about twice as severe as their white counterparts**

Second Chance Hiring Resources

[GJP.org/employers/](https://gjp.org/employers/)

Research on the benefits

- **Better retention, less turnover, promoted faster**

Desistance research

- **Recidivism timeframes**

Negligent Hiring Protections

- **Georgia has some of the strongest protections**

Understanding Background Checks

- **Hard to understand & often wrong**

Governing Laws & Regulations

- **EEOC Guidelines, Ban the Box**

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GEORGIA
JUSTICE
PROJECT

The sign is white with a gold border and is mounted on a wall. The text is in a serif font, with horizontal lines separating the words. The background of the image shows a gallery with various artifacts on display.

THANK YOU.

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