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# Poverty to Prison Pipeline

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# POVERTY TO PRISON PIPELINE

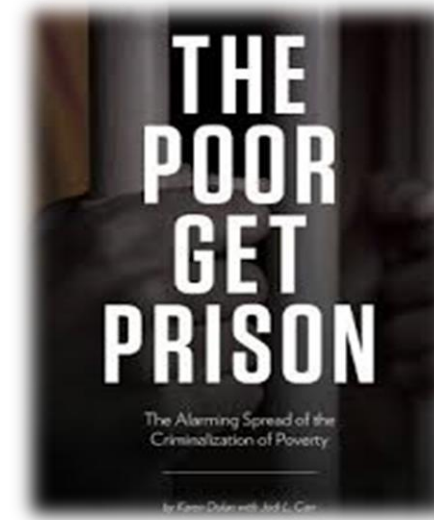
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## UNDERSTANDING THE CASH BAIL SYSTEM

CAROLINA  
JUSTICE POLICY CENTER

**BAIL (n.):** Money given to the court by someone arrested for a crime. If paid, it allows the person to leave the custody of police until their court date.

**BUT IF YOU CAN'T AFFORD BAIL, YOU STAY IN JAIL.**



### Effects of Incarceration:

- **Employment:** Unemployment rate is 5x greater for former inmates.
- **Housing:** Almost 50,000 people exit enter homeless shelters upon release from jail or prison.
- **Education:** 60% of colleges screen applicants for criminal records.

Crime offers a way for impoverished people to obtain material goods they cannot attain through legitimate means. They are drawn to commit drug offenses and robbery to make up for the lack of income.

	Incarcerated people (prior to incarceration)		Non-incarcerated people	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
All	\$19,650	\$13,890	\$41,250	\$23,745
Black	\$17,625	\$12,735	\$31,245	\$24,255
Hispanic	\$19,740	\$11,820	\$30,000	\$15,000
White	\$21,975	\$15,480	\$47,505	\$26,130

Figure 1. Median annual incomes for incarcerated people prior to incarceration and non-incarcerated people ages 27-42, in 2014 dollars, by race/ethnicity and gender.

The U.S. economy more than doubled in the three decades prior to the Great Recession, but the poverty rate remained largely unchanged. At the same time, incarceration rates increased rapidly by 342%, from 111 to 491 for every 100,000 citizens.

### Recommendations:

- **Eliminate** prison sentences for non-violent crimes
- **Eliminate** the cash bail system
- **Invest** more money into prison alternatives (drug treatment & job training programs)