

# Addressing Crime in Colorado

Paul M. Pazen  
Chief of Police



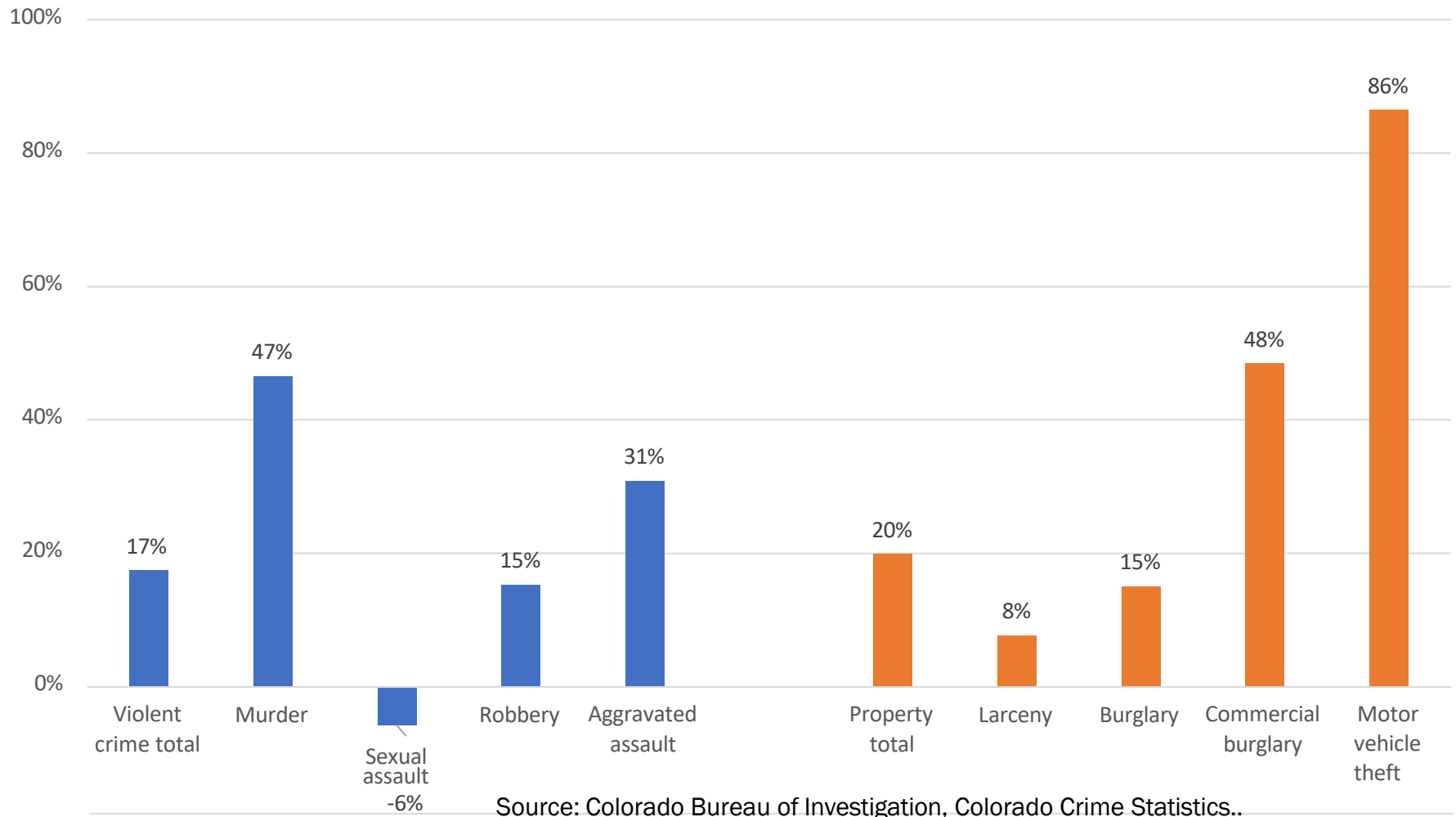
# Outline

- Crime Trends
- Recidivism
- Additional Factors / Considerations
- Call to Action

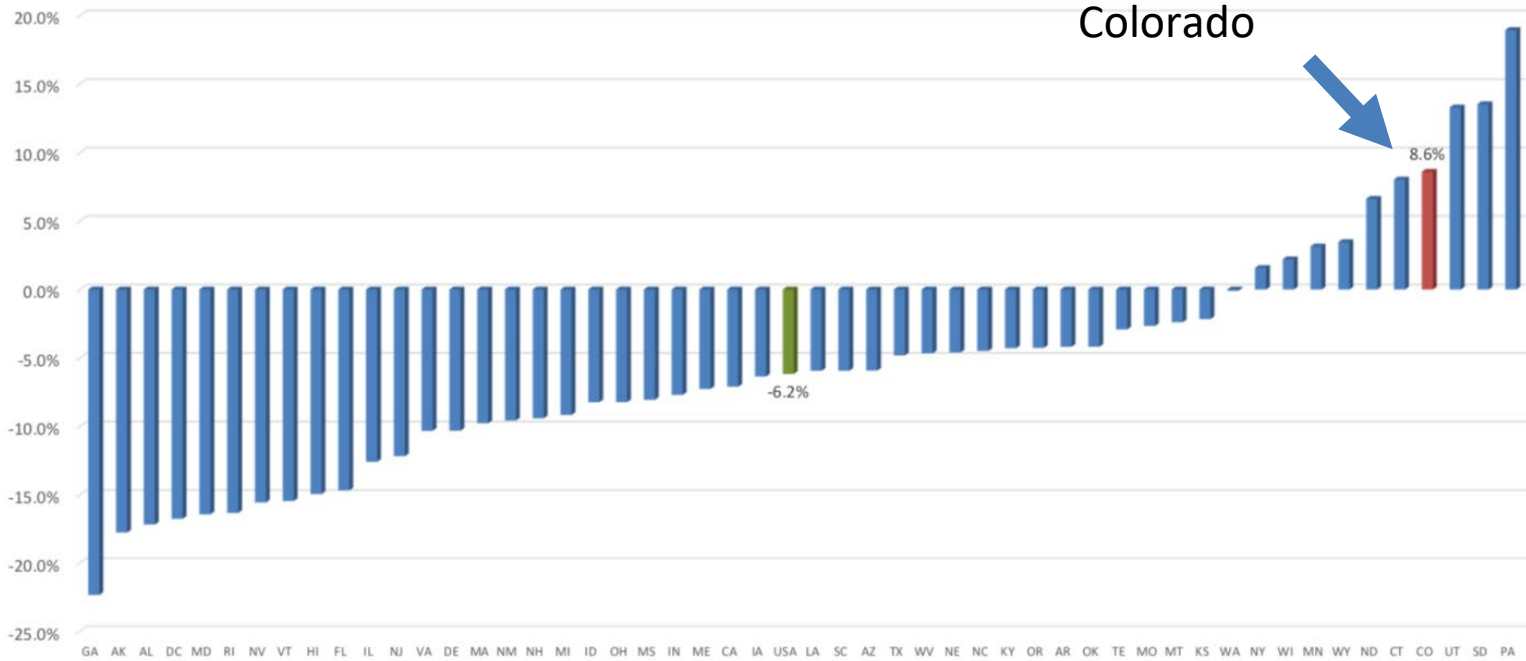


# Crime Trends

# Colorado Crime Rate Change, 2019 to 2021



# Total Crime Rate Change in USA, 2019 to 2020 (FBI)



Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime Explorer-Crime in the United States Annual Reports*, <https://crime-data-explorer.app.cloud.gov/pages/downloads>

# Where does Colorado Rank in Property Crime Rates?

2010: CO was 23<sup>rd</sup> for rate of property crime in the country

2015: CO was 28<sup>th</sup> in the country

2020: CO is 48<sup>th</sup> in the country – only New Mexico and Louisiana are worse

Source: FBI Crime Data Explorer 2010, 2015, & 2020

# Rate of Property Crime

## States doing better than Colorado

Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Idaho, Maine, New Jersey, Vermont, Rhode Island, Michigan, West Virginia, New York, Virginia, Wisconsin, Illinois, Connecticut, Maryland, Wyoming, Pennsylvania, Iowa, Florida, Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Nebraska, Nevada, South Dakota, Delaware, Georgia, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, Minnesota, Alabama, California, Kansas, North Carolina, Arizona, Texas, Alaska, Hawaii, Utah, Tennessee, Missouri, Arkansas, Oregon, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Washington

## States doing worse

New Mexico, Louisiana

Source: FBI Crime Data Explorer 2020

# Where does Colorado Rank in Violent Crime Rates?

2010: CO was 26<sup>th</sup> for rate of violent crime in the country

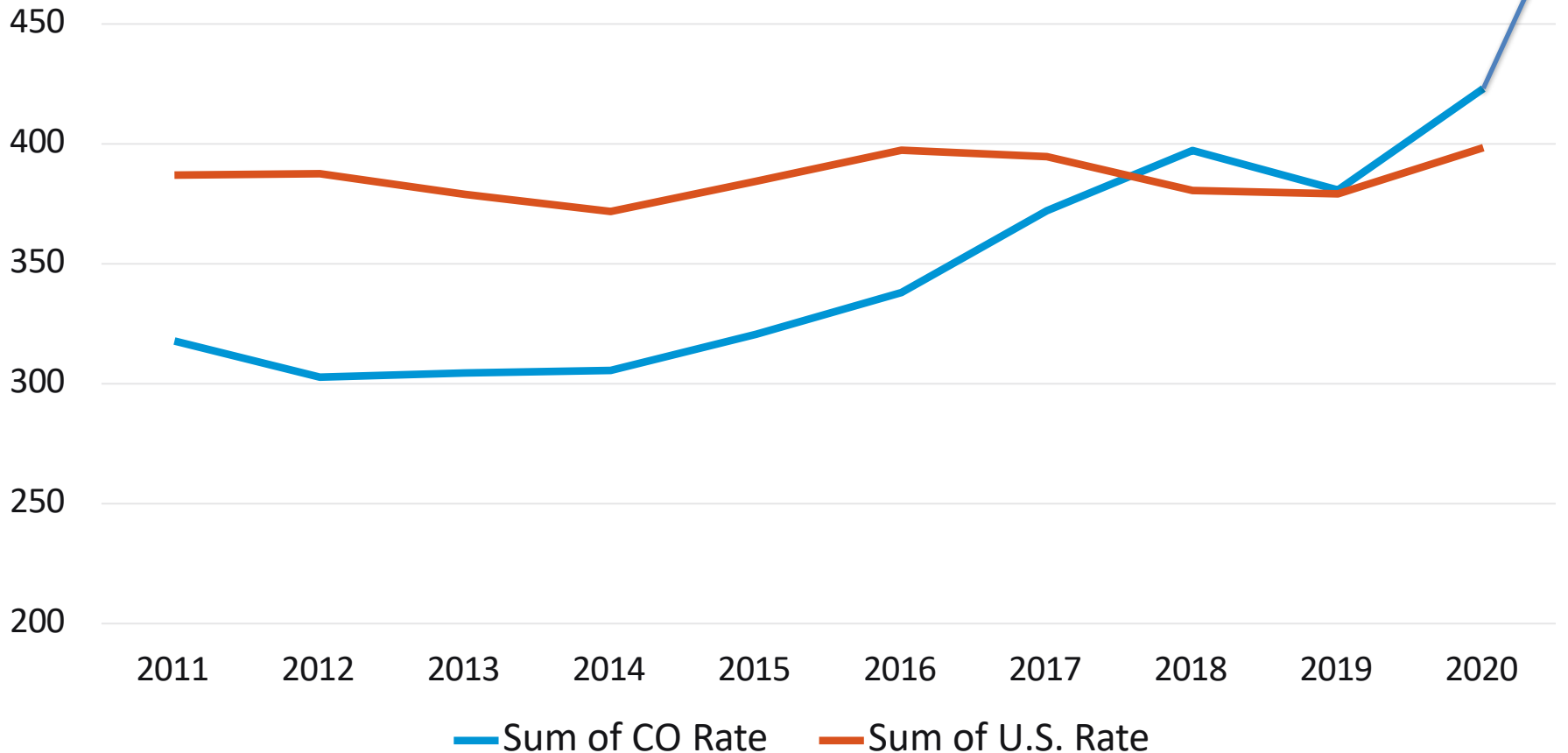
2015: CO was 23<sup>rd</sup> in the country

2020: CO is 31<sup>st</sup> in the country

Source: FBI Crime Data Explorer 2010, 2015, & 2020



# Violent Crime Rates - Colorado and U.S. Compared



# Recent Homicide Totals

## Statewide totals

2010: **101**

2015: **174**

2020: **304**

2021: **364**



Source: <https://coloradocrimestats.state.co.us/>

# Where does Colorado Rank in Auto Theft Rates?

2010: CO was 31<sup>st</sup> for rate of auto theft in the country

2015: CO was 45<sup>th</sup> in the country

2020: CO is 50<sup>th</sup> in the country

Source: FBI Crime Data Explorer 2010, 2015, & 2020

# Rate of Auto Thefts

**States doing  
better than  
Colorado**

Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire, Idaho, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, Rhode Island, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Delaware, Illinois, Ohio, Maryland, Florida, Michigan, North Carolina, Iowa, Mississippi, Alabama, Indiana, Connecticut, Georgia, Arizona, Montana, Kansas, Minnesota, Kentucky, South Dakota, Nebraska, Arkansas, Louisiana, Alaska, North Dakota, South Carolina, Texas, Tennessee, Utah, Nevada, Washington, Oklahoma, Hawaii, Oregon, Missouri, New Mexico, California

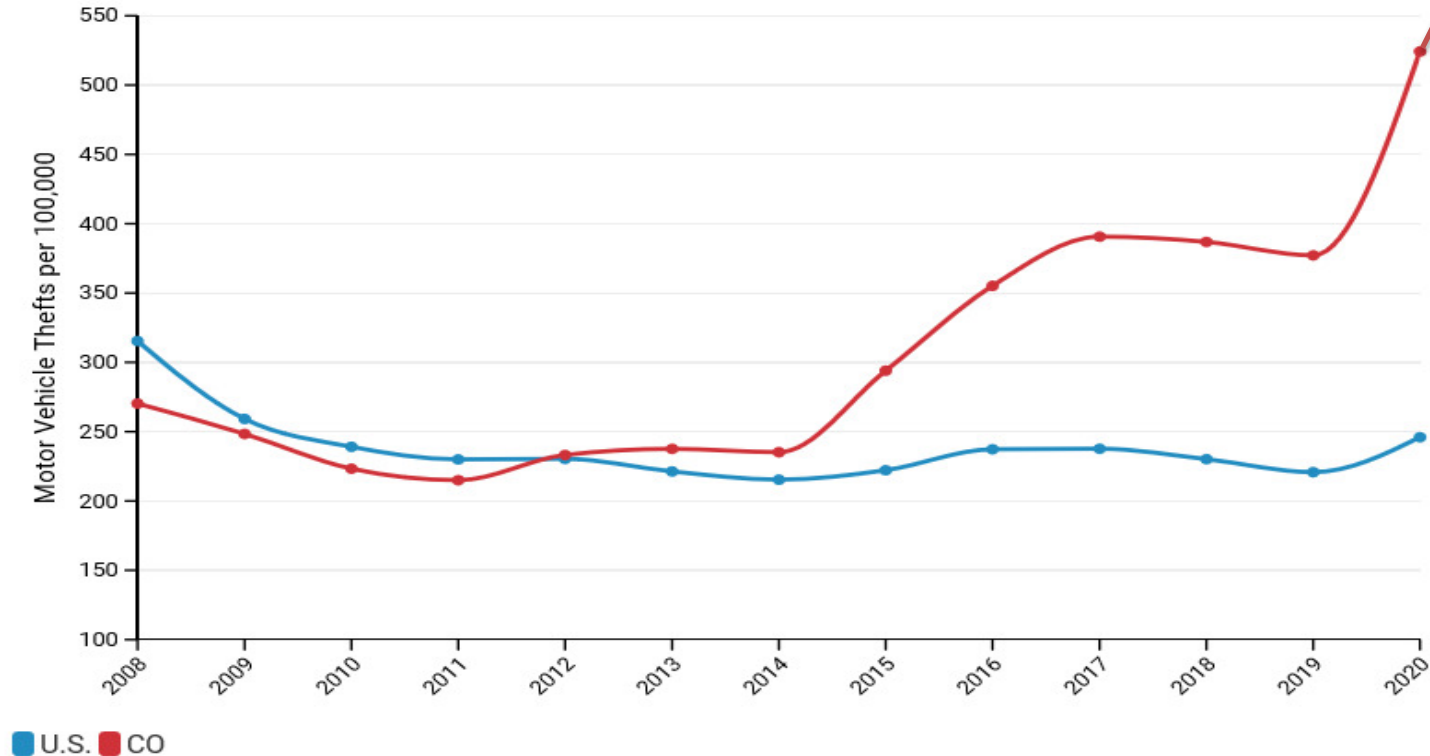
**States doing  
worse**

Source: FBI Crime Data Explorer 2020

# Motor Vehicle Thefts in State of Colorado

**723.73**  
(2021)

## Motor Vehicle Theft Rates in Colorado and the U.S.



Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation

# Where does Colorado Rank in Total Crime Rates?

2010: CO was 22<sup>nd</sup> for rate of auto theft in the country

2015: CO was 25<sup>th</sup> in the country

2020: CO is 47<sup>th</sup> in the country

Source: combined rates of violent and property crime using FBI Crime Data Explorer 2010, 2015, &2020

# Rate of Total Crime

## States doing better than Colorado

New Hampshire, Maine, New Jersey, Idaho, Massachusetts, Vermont, Rhode Island, Virginia, Connecticut, West Virginia, New York, Wisconsin, Michigan, Wyoming, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Indiana, Florida, Ohio, Nebraska, Nevada, Mississippi, Delaware, Minnesota, Georgia, North Dakota, South Dakota, California, Alabama, Montana, Kansas, North Carolina, Hawaii, Texas, Arizona, Utah, Oregon, Washington, Missouri, Alaska, Oklahoma, Tennessee, South Carolina

## States doing worse

Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico

Source: combined rates of violent and property crime using FBI Crime Data Explorer 2020



# Recidivism



# Recidivism Rate

## States doing better than Colorado

Utah, Texas, Tennessee, Oregon, Hawaii, Georgia, California, Virginia, West Virginia, South Carolina, Florida, Oklahoma, Minnesota, Nebraska, Wyoming, Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, Ohio, Maine, Idaho, Alabama, Washington, Massachusetts, Louisiana, Mississippi, Indiana, Iowa, North Carolina, Kansas, Connecticut, Wisconsin, Arizona, Illinois, South Dakota, Maryland, Montana, New York, Missouri, Vermont, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, North Dakota, Kentucky, New Mexico, Rhode Island

## States doing worse

Arkansas, Alaska, Delaware

Source: <https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/recidivism-rates-by-state>



# Legislative Challenges

# There is a need for reflection, evaluation, and action


We have seen multiple instances of changes in crime rates, mental health rankings, and drug-related deaths that correlate with various legislative changes.

We must pause and evaluate the impacts of previous efforts if we are to right the ship in Colorado – before we continue this concerning slide.

# The Evidence is Building

David Mitcham  
First Assistant Chief of Courts


Vivian King  
First Assistant Chief of Staff



Harris County District Attorney's Office  
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HARRIS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
KIM OGG

## Bail, Crime & Public Safety




A report by the Harris County District Attorney's Office  
to the Harris County Commissioners Court

September 2, 2021

S.J. QUINNEY COLLEGE OF  
LAW

LEGAL STUDIES RESEARCH PAPER  
SERIES



**Does Bail Reform Increase Crime?  
An Empirical Assessment of the Public  
Safety Implications of Bail Reform in  
Cook County, Illinois**

Paul G. Cassell & Richard Fowles

S.J. Quinney College of Law research paper No. 349

S.J. Quinney College of Law  
University of Utah  
Salt Lake City, UT 84112

DOI: 10.1111/1745-9131.12597

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

CRIMINOLOGY  
& Public Policy

## De-prosecution and death: A synthetic control analysis of the impact of de-prosecution on homicides

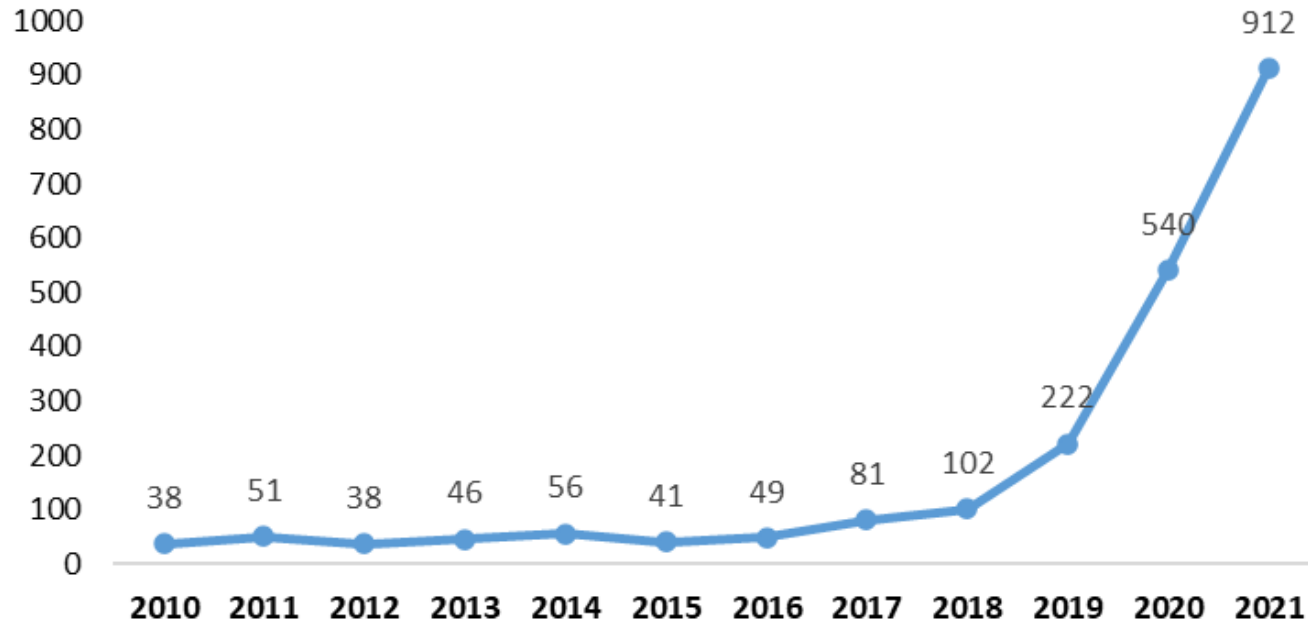
Thomas P. Hogan

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**Abstract**  
**Research Summary:** De-prosecution is a policy not to prosecute certain criminal offenses, regardless of whether the crimes were committed. The research question here is whether the application of a de-prosecution policy has an effect on the number of homicides for large cities in the United States. Philadelphia presents a natural experiment to examine this question. During 2010–2014, the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office maintained a consistent and robust number of prosecutions and sentences. During 2015–2019, the office engaged in a systematic policy of de-prosecution for both felony and misdemeanor cases. The city recorded the fewest number of criminal prosecutions in modern history, with a 70% reduction in the number of criminal sentences. Philadelphia experienced a concurrent and historically large increase in homicides. This article employs a difference-in-differences analysis using a synthetic control method to estimate the effects of de-prosecution on the number of homicides in Philadelphia. The potential donor pool is composed of the prosecutors' offices for the 100 largest cities in the United States over a 10-year period, with a quantitative categorization of the prosecutors' offices used both as a variable and to exclude cities that may have been subject to a similar de-prosecution treatment. The synthetic control model

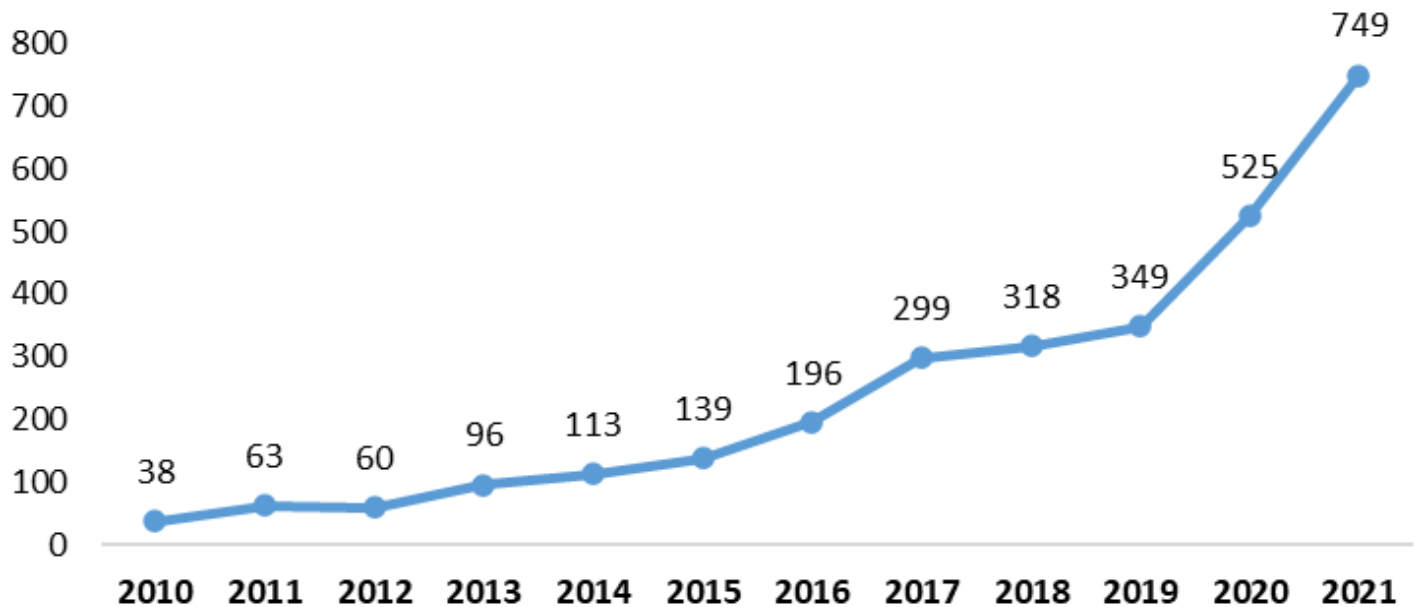
Criminology & Public Policy, 2021, 46, | www.onlinelibrary.com/journal/cpp | © 2022 American Society of Criminology | 1

# Total number of drug overdose deaths due to synthetic opioids mentioning fentanyl per year



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

# Total number of drug overdose deaths due to methamphetamine per year



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment



# Additional Factors/ Considerations

# State of Mental Health in Colorado

## Where Colorado Ranks:

2015: 32  
2016: 22  
2017: 25  
2018: 40  
2019: 32  
2020: 29  
2021: 48  
2022: 51

## The 7 measures that make up the Adult Ranking include:

- Adults with Any Mental Illness (AMI)
- Adults with Substance Use Disorder in the Past Year
- Adults with Serious Thoughts of Suicide
- Adults with AMI who Did Not Receive Treatment
- Adults with AMI Reporting Unmet Need
- Adults with AMI who are Uninsured
- Adults with Cognitive Disability Who Could Not See a Doctor Due to Costs

Source: Adult ranking from mhanational.org



# State of Mental Health in Colorado

## Where Colorado Ranks:

2015: 39  
2016: 14  
2017: 16  
2018: 17  
2019: 10  
2020: 17  
2021: 31  
2022: 21

## The 9 measures that make up the Access Ranking include:

1. Adults with Any Mental Illness (AMI) who Did Not Receive Treatment
2. Adults with AMI Reporting Unmet Need
3. Adults with AMI who are Uninsured
4. Adults with Cognitive Disability who Could Not See a Doctor Due to Costs
5. Youth with MDE who Did Not Receive Mental Health Services
6. Youth with Severe MDE who Received Some Consistent Treatment
7. Children with Private Insurance that Did Not Cover Mental or Emotional Problems
8. Students Identified with Emotional Disturbance for an Individualized Education Program
9. Mental Health Workforce Availability

Source: Adult ranking from mhanational.org

# Alternative Responses – False Narrative

Significant progress is being made to send the right response to calls for service, including:

- Co-Responders
- **STAR**
- Outreach Case Coordinators
- Crash Report Technicians
- Property Report Technicians

These responses may improve Mental Health outcomes, but **are not intended to – nor do they – address violent crime Repeat - No Impact on Violent or Property Crime**

## A Community-Response Approach to Mental-Health and Substance-Abuse Crises Reduced Crime

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Jaymes Pyne\*

*Stanford University*

June 10, 2022

### Abstract

Police officers often serve as first responders to mental-health and substance-abuse crises. Concerns over the unintended consequences and high costs associated with this approach have motivated new emergency-response models that augment or completely remove police involvement. However, there is little causal evidence evaluating these programs. This pre-registered study presents quasi-experimental evidence on the impact of an innovative “community response” pilot in Denver that directed targeted emergency calls to health-care responders instead of the police. We find robust evidence that the program reduced reports of targeted, less serious crimes (e.g., trespassing, public disorder, resisting arrest) by 34 percent and had no detectable effect on more serious crimes. The sharp reduction in targeted crimes reflects both that health-focused first responders are less likely to report individuals they serve as criminal offenders and the program’s spillover benefits (e.g., reducing crime during hours when it was not in operation).

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# Economic Opportunity

## Colorado's Economic Rankings:

- 2010: 3
- 2015: 4
- 2022: 4

Sources: <https://www.cnbc.com/top-states-2010-overall-rankings/> ; <https://www.cnbc.com/2015/06/24/americas-top-states-for-business.html> ; <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/07/13/americas-top-states-for-business-2022-the-full-rankings.html>

# Income Inequality – False Narrative

Gini Index measures income inequality

High Gini scores (coefficient of 1) do not consistently correlate to crime rates

Fact: the most disadvantaged in our community do not commit crime

Fact: most crime is opportunistic and spans socioeconomic status

Fact: small number of offenders are committing disproportionate amount of harm to society

Fact: Crime disproportionately impacts disadvantaged and minority populations



# Call to Action

# A Path Forward – Improved Safety

## Supporting and Resourcing Policing:

- 1 to 3 vs. 3 to 1
- What worked/what didn't work in the 1990's
- NYPD Example
- U.S. Military Comparison

AMERICAN JOURNAL  
of LAW and EQUALITY

### THE INJUSTICE OF UNDER-POLICING IN AMERICA<sup>1</sup>

Christopher Lewis and Adaner Usmani

#### INTRODUCTION

Since 2014, viral images of Black people being killed at the hands of the police—Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Breonna Taylor, and many, many others—have convinced much of the public that the American criminal legal system is broken. In the summer of 2020, nationwide protests against police racism and violence in the wake of George Floyd's murder were, according to some analysts, the largest social movement in the history of the United States.<sup>2</sup> Activists and academics have demanded defunding the police and reallocating the funds to substitutes or alternatives.<sup>3</sup> And others have called for abolishing the police altogether.<sup>4</sup> It has become common knowledge that the police do not solve serious crime, they focus far too much on petty offenses, and they are far too heavy-handed and brutal in their treatment of Americans—especially poor, Black people. This is the so-called paradox of under-protection and over-policing that has characterized American law enforcement since emancipation.<sup>5</sup>

The American criminal legal system is unjust and inefficient. But, as we argue in this essay, over-policing is not the problem. In fact, the American criminal legal system is characterized by an exceptional kind of *under-policing*, and a heavy reliance on long prison sentences, compared to other developed nations. In this country, roughly three people are incarcerated per police officer employed. The rest of the developed world strikes a diametrically opposite balance between these twin arms of the penal state, employing roughly three and a half times more police officers than the number of people they incarcerate. We argue that the United States has

<sup>1</sup> Last updated February 13, 2022. Thanks to Randall Kennedy, Tara Menon, Seanna Shiffrin, and participants at the UCLA Legal Theory Workshop for incisive comments.

<sup>2</sup> Larry Buchanan et al., *Black Lives Matter May Be the Largest Movement in U.S. History*, N.Y. TIMES (July 3, 2020), <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/07/03/us/george-floyd-protests-crowd-size.html>.

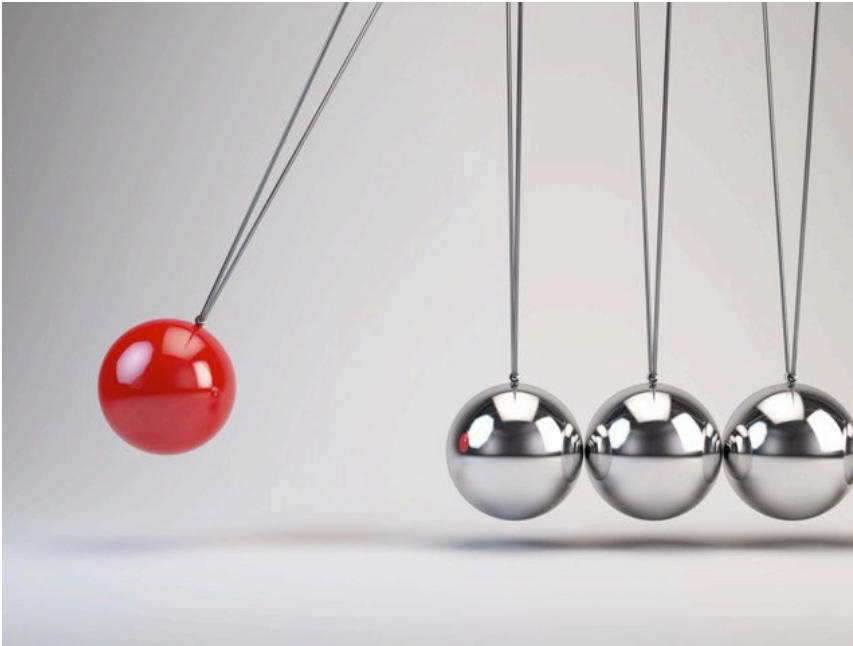
<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., Jennafer Cobbina-Dungy et al., "Defund the Police": Perceptions Among Protesters in the 2020 March on Washington, 21 CRIMINOLOGY & PUB. POL'Y 147 (2022).

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., Amina Akbar, *An Abolitionist Horizon for (Police) Reform*, 108 CAL. L. REV. 1781 (2020).

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., RANDALL KENNEDY, RACE, CRIME, AND THE LAW 19 (1997); Alexandra Natapoff, *Underenforcement*, 75 FORDHAM L. REV. 1715 (2006).

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# What role do we all play?



- Legislature and other Elected Officials
- Law Enforcement
- District Attorneys
- Judges
- Community Members



- We must take a statewide, holistic approach to address acute and long-term issues.

- Impacts where people live, work, and play.

- Engaged communities are safe communities

- Talk with elected officials about legislation – what is working and what needs to be addressed?

## Public Safety Takes All of Us



# Questions?

*Work Hard, Work Smart,  
& Treat People Right*

