

JUSTICE

REFORM

PARTNERSHIP

ENGAGEMENT REPORT 2024-2025



JUSTICE REFORM PARTNERSHIP

Engagement Report 2024-2025

www.justicereformpartnership.org info@justicereformpartnership.org facebook.com/justicereformpartnership

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WHO We Are

Since 2015, the **Justice Reform Partnership (JRP)** has led Georgia's only statewide criminal justice reform coalition. The JRP has actively fostered and facilitated opportunities for community engagement and collaboration on critical issues affecting individuals, families, and communities impacted by the criminal legal system.

Our work is rooted in community engagement, policy advocacy, and leadership development to dismantle harmful legal systems and build equitable, restorative practices.

As a collective of over 90 diverse organizations and individuals from communities across Georgia —including Atlanta, Athens, Augusta, Columbus, Macon, Savannah, and Statesboro—the JRP works collaboratively to advance criminal justice reform at both the state and local levels. Our work is rooted in community engagement, policy advocacy, and leadership development to dismantle harmful legal systems and build equitable, restorative practices. By fostering strong partnerships and mobilizing directly impacted communities, JRP leads reform efforts statewide while amplifying the voices of those most affected by the criminal legal system.







OUR Aspirations

The JRP aspires to the following ideals:

- To center the experiences of those who have been directly impacted by the criminal legal system.
- To build power within and outside of the Atlanta Metropolitan area to end mass incarceration in our lifetime.
- To build a culturally diverse and informed coalition capable of educating communities about criminal justice reform.
- To embrace statewide and local grassroots advocacy as a means to catalyze change in the criminal legal system.
- To build allies across communities, including groups not typically aligned, where safe and feasible.

- To support community-based infrastructure that encourages transformation and rehabilitation, rather than incarceration.
- To establish JRP chapters outside of Atlanta capable of supporting community-specific initiatives.
- To run effective campaigns grounded in the leadership of directly impacted people in Georgia.
- To communicate narratives that acknowledge the racial impact of laws, policies, and practices in Georgia.



OUR CORE Values

We believe every Georgian should be treated with dignity and have the ability to thrive in safe and strong communities. We believe that justice should advance public safety; be fair; transparent and respectful; and support restoration of people in their communities. The following statements reflect the core values that further these beliefs and inform our policy goals.



JRP Justice Day 2025 Tree of Hope

- **A. Accountability:** A fair justice system is transparent and is accountable to all it serves.
- **B. Collaboration:** We can only be successful if we establish relationships of trust, respect and mutual commitment. Collaboration requires members who are willing to: actively listen; share information and insight; communicate concisely and clearly; have a genuine interest in different ideas and experiences; and engage in shared decision-making.
- **C. Compassion:** Trauma, substance abuse, poverty and medical or mental health disorders should receive compassionate care and effective treatment, not justice system involvement.
- **D. Dignity:** Georgia must protect public safety while addressing the needs and respecting the dignity of those involved in the justice system.
- **E. Equity:** Every Georgian should have access to the resources necessary to live a productive, safe and healthy life.
- **F. Fairness:** Georgia will be safer and stronger when the justice system treats every person without bias or prejudice– regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, income, national origin, race, religion, or sexual identity.
- **G. Forgiveness:** Our families and communities can only heal and thrive when restorative justice becomes the methodology and there are meaningful and accessible opportunities for those who have been involved in the justice system.



OUR CORE Values

- **H. Innovation:** Georgia must continue to identify and implement evidence-based policies that will increase public safety and help individuals and families succeed. Those directly impacted by the justice system should be engaged and lead in the identification of innovative strategies for reform.
- **I. Investment:** Resources for education, employment, housing, healthcare and transportation should be invested in communities disproportionately impacted by crime to help create equity, and build strong and thriving communities. We should also divest in ineffective criminal justice practices that perpetuate the cycle of poverty and crime.
- **J. Justice:** Justice should not be reserved for the wealthy. The rights of every person in Georgia must be protected and every crime survivor deserves to participate in the justice process.
- **K.** Persistence: There is much work to be done in Georgia to meet the needs of those involved in the justice system and to make communities safer and stronger. We will maintain focus and drive in any political or economic climate.
- **L. Potential:** Georgia will have safer communities and healthier families when every person has the resources and opportunities necessary to reach their fullest potential and are encouraged to express their skills and talents.
- M. Respect: Georgia must acknowledge the value, potential, and dignity of every person when developing and implementing policies and practices that impact our communities and families.



JUSTICE MEANS ADVOCATING FOR SAFE, SUPPORTIVE

Communities for All

Despite numerous challenges throughout the year, the Justice Reform Partnership (JRP) remained steadfast in its mission to advance criminal justice reform across Georgia. By fostering strong leadership and deepening collaborations with partner organizations, the JRP continued to build momentum and achieve impactful outcomes. Through strategic partnerships and unwavering commitment, we focused on addressing systemic inequities while actively engaging communities statewide.



ReNforce - "In Their Shoes" Reentry Simulation Event - Augusta, GA



Deep Center Members & WREP Youth Engagement - Justice Day at the Capitol 2025



Women on the Rise GA Team spearheading their "More Than A Number" Parole Campaign - Justice Day at the Capitol 2025



Charlotte Garnes, Founder & Executive Director -ReNforce



JUSTICE DAY

Rooted in Justice, Thriving Together Day at the Capital XXX

Justice Day at the Capitol: Where Impacted Voices Lead

Since 2010, JRP partners have come together to sponsor Justice Day at the Capitol, an annual event designed to empower everyday people to learn about criminal legal reforms, build relationships, and advocate for change directly with elected officials. Justice Day centers the voices of directly impacted individuals, ensuring their stories and experiences lead the movement for meaningful policy change.

The 14th annual Criminal Justice Advocacy Day at the Capitol took place on February 25, 2025, with over 380 registrations and 268 attendees, including community members, advocates, and leaders. This year's theme, "Rooted in Justice, Thriving Together," was especially significant after a difficult election season, emphasizing the need for the justice reform community to stay grounded as we face challenging years ahead. The theme resonated strongly throughout the day, from the grounding remarks to the closing, emphasizing that this is a critical moment for our communities and the need for us to remain steadfast in our advocacy and commitment to change.

Honoring the Noah Bush Family



JUSTICE DAY

Rooted in Justice, Thriving Together out the day, participants 1

Throughout the day, participants heard from experts on panels and roundtables and participated in two activity sessions:

Morning Sessions

- · Legislative Panel & Call to Action
- Capitol visits with team leads guiding legislative engagement.
- · Workshops on civic engagement, letter-writing, and efforts to end prison slavery in Georgia
- Recognition: The JRP honored the family of Noah Bush.
- WREP Youth Performance
 - The day was highlighted by a skit performed by our Youth Ambassadors from the Work Readiness Enrichment Program (WREP) of the Deep Center

Afternoon Sessions

- Parole Reform Panel
- Advocating for Incarcerated Loved Ones
- World Cafe Roundtables
- Alternative Responses to Policing
- Political Education on Felony Disenfranchisement
- Advocacy for Directly Impacted People

The day concluded with closing remarks from Representative Tanya Miller. The event was also livestreamed for attendees who could not attend in person.

Capitol visits advocating for HB 123 (GA Intellectual Disability Law)



TALK JUSTICE TUESDAY

Year-Round Advocacy Series

In January 2025, the JRP sponsored the fourpart virtual Talk Justice Tuesday (TJT) discussion series, which kicked off on January 14 and concluded on April 8. TJT is a state legislative series designed to address key issues and solutions important to communities impacted by the criminal legal system.

This year, Talk Justice Tuesday welcomed 445 registrations and 246 participants actively engaged in the discussions. We heard from a diverse group of advocates from across the state, who shared their insights and strategies for transformative legislative action.

Additionally, the series included non-policy discussions, such as the last Talk Justice Tuesday on avoiding burnout, providing a well-rounded approach to both advocacy and personal well-being.



The goal of the TJT series is to support the broader objectives of the JRP: breaking down complex policy issues, amplifying the voices of impacted communities, and identifying actionable advocacy strategies to improve jail and prison conditions, promote successful reintegration, and advance youth justice reforms. Partner organizations assist in achieving these goals by addressing both policy-related and non-policy issues that affect justice-impacted individuals and communities through the TJT community events.



Beginning in May 2025, and based on feedback and discussions with Steering and Anchor partners, the Talk Justice Tuesday (TJT) series transitioned into a year-round advocacy series. Hosted on the second Tuesday of each month, TJT continues to provide space for policy education, community dialogue, and action planning beyond the legislative session.





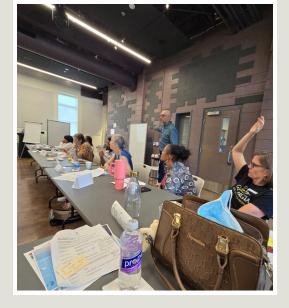
Strengthening the Foundation: Our Roadmap to Growth and Impact

In November 2024, the Justice Reform Partnership (JRP) completed an intensive strategic planning process in partnership with Advantage Consulting LLC. This marked a defining moment for our coalition's growth, setting a clear direction for how we collaborate, advocate, and lead reform across Georgia.

Following the strategic planning sessions and recommendations, the consultants provided a framework centered on three pillars:

- ◆ Coalition Building: We are refining our internal infrastructure—enhancing member engagement, streamlining communication, and updating our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to foster stronger collaboration across our diverse partners.
- Revenue Generation: We are committed to developing sustainable funding strategies, sharpening our grant-writing capacity, and building meaningful relationships with new and existing donors with our Development Committee.
- Organizing: We are expanding beyond Metro Atlanta by deepening partnerships with grassroots organizations and empowering directly impacted communities to lead local advocacy campaigns.

To guide our implementation of **Goal One** - **Coalition Building**, our Fall strategy session will prioritize revising our MOU, finalizing a coalition engagement roadmap, and revising membership tiers with clearer expectations.





Modeled for Impact

JRP's strategic planning process has drawn interest from other state-based coalitions. Advantage Consulting LLC is now referencing our model in conversations with justice reform collaboratives in Connecticut, demonstrating the ripple effect of our work beyond Georgia.



SOUTHEAST CHAPTER

Highlights

Strengthening Local Reform Through Community-Led Advocacy

This year the JRP continued to assess and support the expansion of its Coastal/Southeast Georgia Chapter. The chapter remains grounded in four core priorities that support transformative justice through regional partnerships, community engagement, and policy advocacy:

1. Reentry Support & Expungement Advocacy

- 11 successful expungement clinics.
- The launch of the "Welcome Home" Reentry Mentorship Program which pairs justice-impacted individuals with mentors.
- The chapter now operates year-round clinics with wraparound support from local employers, housing authorities, and healthcare providers.

2. Rapid Response & Mobile Justice Support

- Rapid Response Teams remain on-call to address urgent issues, including state-sanctioned violence.
- Key partnerships with JUSTGeorgia and Solidarity Committees supporting the Noah Bush and Marc Wilson families.

3. Policy Education & Advocacy

- Monthly Just Us Academy teach-ins and barbershop conversations continue to serve as community
- New collaborations with the Neighborhood Safety & Engagement Office, the Mediation Center, and others are deepening regional strategy.

4. Youth Justice & Leadership Development

- Just Us Academy monthly mentoring, legal education, and service projects.
- Work Readiness Enrichment Program (WREP) youth remain central to the chapter's leadership development work, engaging annually in events like Justice Day.

These integrated efforts ensure the Coastal/Southeast Chapter remains a model of transformative, community-driven justice reform in Georgia.



Deep Center's lead organizer Omari Fox continues to steward the Southeast chapter's strategic work.



Community barbershop conversations facilitated by chapter lead, Omari Fox.

OUR MEMBERSHIP

& Tiers

In 2025, the Justice Reform Partnership continued to grow, welcoming eight new organizations and individuals to our coalition. These new partners bring diverse perspectives and a shared commitment to advancing criminal justice reform in Georgia.

The JRP is organized by a tiered membership system, based on partner capacity to attend monthly membership meetings. This structured membership ensures focused advocacy, diverse resource allocation, and impactful community engagement. Recent updates include enhanced engagement strategies and revised partner roles to better meet coalition goals.



Steering Partners

Steering partners attend at least 8 meetings annually, in addition to actively participating & engaging in advocacy events and voting privileges.



Anchor Partners

Anchor partners attend at least 4 meetings annually, in addition to actively participating & engaging in advocacy events and voting privileges.



General Partners

General partners attend at least 4 meetings, in addition to providing general support & resources to the coalition.



Supporting Partners

Supporting partners provide & resources to the coalition based on their capacity.
Supporting partners network and offer engagement to promote the coalition's advocacy day events.









OUR Partners

Our partners are deeply engaged in transforming systems through advocacy, organizing, and education, and are aligned across three priority areas:

- Advancing Youth Justice
- Improving Prison and Jail Conditions
- Eliminating Barriers to Reintegration
- 31.Foreverfamily (SP)
- 32. FWD.us (SP)
- 33. GA Coalition for the People's Agenda (G)
- 34. Georgia Alliance for Social Justice (G)
- 35. Georgia Appleseed Center for Law and Justice (G)
- 36. Georgia Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (S)
- 37. Georgia Budget and Policy Institute (S)
- 38. Georgia Coalition for Higher Education in Prisons (G)
- 39. Georgia Equality (G)
- 40. Georgia Innocence Project (G)
- 41. Georgia Interfaith Public Policy Center (S)
- 42. Georgia Justice Project (S)
- 43. Georgia NAACP (G)
- 44. Georgia Public Policy Foundation (SP)
- 45. Georgia Shift (SP)
- 46. Georgia State University College of Law (SP)
- 47. Georgia Statewide After school Network (SP)
- 48. Georgia Task Force for the Homeless (SP)
- 49. Georgia Youth Justice Coalition (G)
- 50. Georgians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty (S)
- 51. Gideon's Promise (G)
- 52. Girls Breaking Chains (G)
- 53. John Harrison (G)
- 54. Igniting Hope Georgia (S)
- 55. Inner-City Muslim Action Network (IMAN) (G)
- 56. Interfaith Children's Movement (S)
- 57. Jewish Community Relations Council of Atlanta (S)
- 58. Legal Action Center (S)
- 59. Liberty County Re-Entry Coalition (SP)
- 60. Michael Owens (SP)

- 1. ACLU of Georgia (G)
- 2. Albany Second Chance (SP)
- 3. All of Us or None Atlanta Chapter (S)
- 4. Asian-Americans Advancing Justice (SP)
- 5. Athens Reentry Collaborative (SP)
- 6. Atlanta Community Support Project (A)
- 7. Atlanta Jobs with Justice (SP)
- 8. Atlanta Public Defender's Office (SP)
- 9. Barred Business (A)
- 10. Barton Child Law and Policy Center at Emory (G)
- 11. Black Lives Matter Atlanta (SP)
- 12. Black Male Initiative GA (G)
- 13. Center for Access to Justice (SP)
- 14. Central Outreach & Advocacy Center (G)
- 15. CEO Works (A)
- 16. Change In Motion (A)
- 17. Color of Change (G)
- 18. Common Cause Georgia (G)
- 19. Common Good Atlanta (SP)
- 20. Community Council of Metropolitan Atlanta (SP)
- 21. Cory Clevenger (G)
- 22. Council on American-Islamic Relations (SP)
- 23. David Cloud (SP)
- 24. Deep Center (S)
- 25. Donna Marain (S)
- 26. Elizabeth Taxel (G)
- 27. End Mass Incarceration Georgia Network (S)
- 28. Equity in Education (S)
- 29. Faith in Public Life (SP)
- 30. First Corinth MBC (SP)



S- Steering Partners A- Anchor Partners

G- General Partners SP- Supporting Partners

OUR

Partners

- 61. Motherhood Beyond Bars (S)
- 62. Multi-faith Initiative to End Mass Incarceration (S)
- 63. National Incarceration Association (S)
- 64. Necessary Trouble (SP)
- 65. New Georgia Project (SP)
- 66. New Life-Second Chance Outreach (S)
- 67. Policing Alternatives & Diversion Initiative (A)
- 68. Presbyterians for a Better Georgia (SP)
- 69. Prison Reform Advocates of America (G)
- 70. Probation Information Network (S)
- 71. Project South (G)
- 72. Reform Georgia (SP)
- 73. Rehoboth Family and Community Services (A)
- 74. ReNforce (G)
- 75. Repair the World (SP)
- 76. Resilient Georgia (A)
- 77. Restore Georgia (G)
- 78. RestoreHER (S)
- 79. Returning Her Home (SP)
- 80. Shanequa Levin (S)
- 81. Southern Center for Human Rights (S)
- 82. Southerners on New Ground (SP)
- 83. Southern Poverty Law Center (S)
- 84. Sur Legal (G)
- 85. The Dekalb County Library-Wesley Chapel (SP)
- 86. The King Center (SP)
- 87. The Power of Peace Project (SP)
- 88. The Wren Collective (SP)
- 89. Tzedek Georgia (S)
- 90. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta (S)
- 91. United Way of Greater Atlanta (SP)
- 92. Urban League of Greater Atlanta (SP)
- 93. Voice of the Experienced (SP)
- 94. Voices for Georgia's Children (S)
- 95. Women on the Rise (S)
- 96. Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor (SP)























LEGISLATIVE Updates



This year, JRP made considerable strides in legislative advocacy, engaging actively with policymakers to influence crucial criminal justice reforms. We supported several progressive bills while effectively opposing harmful legislation. Our proactive strategies included rigorous tracking of bills, providing expert public testimonies, and mobilizing community voices. Looking ahead, JRP remains committed to prioritizing reforms that address systemic inequities and promote restorative justice.

WE SUPPORTED



PASSED

HB 81 - Provides interstate compact for school psychologists.

HB 123 - Provides for pretrial proceedings in capital offense cases where the death penalty is sought when the Accused has an intellectual disability. The bill also changes the standard of proof for proving intellectual disability from beyond a reasonable doubt to preponderance of the evidence.

HB 176 - Improves procedures related to out-of-time motions for new trials and appeals in criminal cases.

HB 582 - Provides survivors of domestic violence increased opportunities to argue that they acted in self-defense, fairer sentences if they are convicted of a crime related to their abuse, and the ability to apply for a sentence reduction if they are currently serving time in prison.

SB 85 - Provides a grant program to former foster youth.

SB 244 - Allows defendants to collect reasonable attorney fees and costs if a prosecutor is disqualified from the case for misconduct and the case is dismissed. The bill also establishes a new procedure for exonerated people to receive compensation for the years they spent in prison.



DID NOT PASS

HB 162 - Would provide for automatic restriction and sealing of court and arrest records when someone is sentenced under the First Offender Act.

HB 283 -Would ensure that people pulled over for traffic violations are not required to sign traffic tickets and would not be taken to jail for refusing to sign.

HB 535 - Would ensure "time served" credit for the time someone is incarcerated while awaiting a probation revocation hearing.

SB 207 - Would remove barriers in occupational licenses and expand access to record restriction.



LEGISLATIVE Updates

WE OPPOSED



DID NOT PASS

HB 125 - Would make it a felony to post online the "personal information" about a cop or their family "coupled with any threat or suggestion of or request for physical injury, serious physical injury, or violence of any kind."

HB 171 - Would make distributing, soliciting, or even possessing AI-generated depictions of someone who appears to be a child "engaging in sexually explicit behavior" a felony punishable by 1-15 years of imprisonment & increase the minimum sentence for several dozen other offenses if AI was used during the commission of the offense.

HB 602 - Would penalize students for political speech by denying state funds for any loans, grants, or scholarships to students who engage in "materially and substantially disruptive conduct" on campus that results in any criminal conviction.

SB 7 - Would allow the Fulton County Sheriff to seize space at the Atlanta City Detention Center at will, even as he is unable to staff current facilities.

SB 27 - Would create new criminal offenses for doxing and aggravated doxing, which involve posting someone's personally identifiable information online with reckless disregard or intent that that person suffers from fear, mental anguish, or economic injury.

SB 29 - Would require law enforcement to collect the DNA of every adult arrested for a serious violent felony for a statewide database.

SB 177 - Would expand the state's oversight of individual and organizational political activity. It would grant the Attorney General unqualified discretion to investigate, penalize, and criminalize grassroots advocacy organizations.

SB 204 - Would allow for a large portion of felonies to be charged by accusation of the district attorney rather than indictment by a grand jury.



PASSED

HB 268 - Expands exclusive adult court jurisdiction over children to include "aggravated assault if committed with a firearm," "attempt to commit murder," and "terroristic act upon a school.

SB 185 - Prohibits the use of state funds or resources for gender affirming care in Georgia prisons.



