

To support our Safe Communities policy priorities this legislative session, the Oklahoma Policy Institute is focused on bills designed to reduce the state's reliance on court fines and fees, reform pretrial incarceration, and help reverse Oklahoma's expensive incarceration crisis. These measures would potentially help thousands of Oklahomans receive better access to justice — particularly those in rural Oklahoma and from low-income communities of color.

These bills would also potentially save taxpayers millions in incarceration costs. These savings would provide much needed resources for law enforcement and courts to implement evidence-based services proven to reduce crime, while also allowing meaningful investments that improve supports for victims.

Communities are only safe when everyone trusts that the justice system works for them. Oklahoma's tax dollars are too often wasted on policies that sound tough on crime but that do little to address the root issues that threaten the safety of our communities.



- **HB1795** - Authored by Rep. Nicole Miller. This bill will decrease driver's license suspensions for non-driving infractions and increase access to provisional driver's licenses. Nearly 20,000 Oklahomans lost their drivers license because of failure to pay court fines and fees in 2018 alone.
- **SB362** - Authored by Sen. Roger Thompson. This bill creates the Council on Justice System Funding to study an alternative to funding the court system other than through fines and fees.
- **SB 704** - Authored by Sen. Dave Rader. This bill limits the use of sentence enhancements for nonviolent offenses. In Oklahoma, these sentence enhancements can lead to people spending decades in prison for relatively low level nonviolent offenses. Passage of this bill would lead to an estimated \$137 million in reduced incarceration costs when fully implemented, which would be used to support and protect the survivors of domestic violence through the funding measure HB 2879.
- **SB35** - Authored by Sen. Michael Brooks. This bill would require courts to consider the financial situation of defendants who receive federal benefits like SNAP when setting fines, bail, and eligibility for a public defender.
- **HB 1811** - Authored by Rep. Melodye Blancett. This bill would require courts to consider the parenting or caregiving status of defendants when setting bail or in the pre-sentencing process. Eighty percent of incarcerated women in Oklahoma are mothers, and 1 in 6 children in Oklahoma have incarcerated parents. These family separations cause harm to children and working families, strain the state foster care and adoption system, and leave taxpayers to shoulder considerable costs.

Please contact your legislator to express your support for these bills.

The "Find My Legislator" tool at [OKPolicy.org](https://okpolicy.org) can help connect you with your legislator.