



Senate Bill 3 is Commonsense Safety and Sentencing Reform

Over the past decade, Ohio lawmakers have been national leaders in showing the country how to take bold, important steps to improve the operation of Ohio's justice system to target and scale back excessively harsh and wasteful policies in best-practice ways that improve public safety overall.

Faced with an unprecedented addiction and overdose crisis, Ohio legislators have the opportunity to respond with best practice approaches that prioritize recovery, rehabilitation, and public safety by advancing policies that lower recidivism rates and break the cycles of addiction and crime.

Ohio legislators and stakeholders have developed Senate Bill 3 to address these issues. Senate Bill 3 contains a smart, comprehensive set of reforms and a new, solutions-focused approach to drug issues in the criminal justice system.

Senate Bill 3

A comprehensive reform of sentencing practices for low-level drug offenses designed to ensure people with drug problems do not end up warehoused in state prisons and marked for life with felony records.

This means quicker access to treatment, a path to employment, and greater stability without the hundreds of collateral consequences caused by a felony conviction. SB 3's core components were developed by a commission of legislators, law enforcement leaders, and policy experts. It includes a number of reforms, including but not limited to the following:

- » **Reclassifying first and second offense low-level drug possession as a misdemeanor instead of felony (except for fentanyl and date-rape drugs).**
- » **Giving local stakeholders the authority to charge misdemeanor drug possession in courts that normally handle felonies in order to ensure access to services like drug court.**
- » **Allowing judges to pause drug possession prosecutions to offer someone treatment alternatives.**
- » **Updating other drug offenses' quantity thresholds and creating a new crime of possession with intent to sell, which allows prosecutors to charge a felony when someone possesses a small amount of drugs that they do not possess for personal use and intend to sell.**
- » **Giving family members greater access to legal proceedings that allow a judge to require treatment for someone shown to have a serious drug problem without a criminal prosecution.**

