There is a prison crisis in Alabama.

- Alabama prisons are the most violent in the nation.
- State prisons are currently over 160 percent capacity, and are severely understaffed.
- It costs an average of $60 a day to incarcerate each person in Alabama prisons, which is over $22,000 a year. It costs twice as much to incarcerate someone over 50.
- In 2018, ADOC spent $495 million to incarcerate approximately 26,000 people. That money could instead fund public health, economic development, child development, mental health services and Medicaid.

After five years of declines, Alabama’s prison population has steadily increased since August 2018.

As of April 2019, there are more people entering ADOC custody than there are exiting.

By April 2019, the number of people admitted into custody is bigger than the number of people being released from custody.

For more information about the coalition, our sentencing recommendations, or these facts, please visit our website at alabamafairjustice.org.
Convictions for drug crimes are a major contributor to prison admissions.

- Drug offenses currently account for more new prison admissions than any other type of crime.
- Alabama spends $22 million per year enforcing marijuana possession laws.
- Drug possession and distribution are the top two convictions that result in new prison admissions in Alabama.
- Possession cases alone account for 30% of all convictions.

How do we fix it?

Modify marijuana laws and controlled substance laws.

Alabama must address drug addiction as a matter of public health concern, rather than with a punitive reaction.

Longer sentences keep our prisons unnecessarily overcrowded.

- Almost half (46.7%) of the people incarcerated in Alabama are serving sentences of 20 years or longer.
- 45% of the people incarcerated in AL prisons are over 40 years old.
- Close to 500 people are serving sentences of life without parole for non-homicide crimes under Alabama’s habitual felony offender law.
- 1 in 4 people in Alabama prisons are serving life or life without parole.
- Alabama has the highest per capita death sentencing rate in the nation.

How do we fix it?

Repeal or modify the Habitual Felony Offender Act, make guidelines fully retroactive, and redefine "violent offenses."

Alabama must recognize that lengthy sentences are costly, harmful, and ineffective, and shift priorities towards restorative justice, rehabilitative programming and accountability.

Alabama’s prison population disproportionately impacts Black people.

- Black men and women make up over half of Alabama’s prison population, even though only 26% of Alabama’s overall population is Black.
- 1 in 30 Black men was imprisoned in Alabama as of 2017.

How do we fix it?

Modify laws that are used to disproportionately target and profile Black communities, such as drug and property theft laws.