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**NEW JERSEY A NATIONAL LEADER
IN REDUCTION OF IMPRISONMENT AND CRIME RATES**

New Jersey is once again recognized as a national leader in the reduction of both imprisonment rates and crime rates, as the Christie Administration continues to advance crime reform efforts and enhance law enforcement procedures.

According to a study recently released by the Pew Charitable Trusts, an independent non-profit, non-governmental organization, between 2010 and 2015, the Garden State's imprisonment rate was reduced by 19.8 percent, placing it among the top four states in the nation in terms of incarceration reduction. Nationally, the imprisonment rate lowered by 8.4 percent between 2010 and 2015.

In addition, the Pew study found that during that same time period, New Jersey's crime rate fell by 21.3 percent – the ninth-largest decline among all states.

New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC) Commissioner Gary M. Lanigan cited the leadership and support of Governor Chris Christie and his administration in areas such as drug addiction treatment, addressing mental health issues and expanding offender re-entry programs.

Under Governor Christie, a five-year phase-in of mandatory Drug Courts for non-violent offenders was instituted, giving those struggling with drug addiction the treatment they need to reclaim their lives. Drug Courts have been expanded to all 21 counties across the state and have diverted thousands of individuals from state prison into drug treatment programs designed to break the cycle of addiction. Governor Christie also is a strong proponent of state-funded one-stop centers that connect ex-offenders to a comprehensive array of services.

In addition, Commissioner Lanigan pointed to legislative initiatives such as “ban the box,” a mandate that assists former offenders in finding employment. Furthermore, the Commissioner cited his department’s extensive re-entry initiatives as well as its close working relationships with the State Parole Board, county jails and other law enforcement entities.

“The policies and improvements enable the NJDOC to operate as efficiently as possible as we fulfill our mission of protecting the public by operating safe, secure and humane facilities,” Commissioner Lanigan said. “By maximizing our efficiency, we are saving money for New Jersey’s taxpayers while supporting those who were incarcerated to re-enter society and live productive and healthy lives in our communities.”

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