

CASE STUDY: Pretrial Release Programs

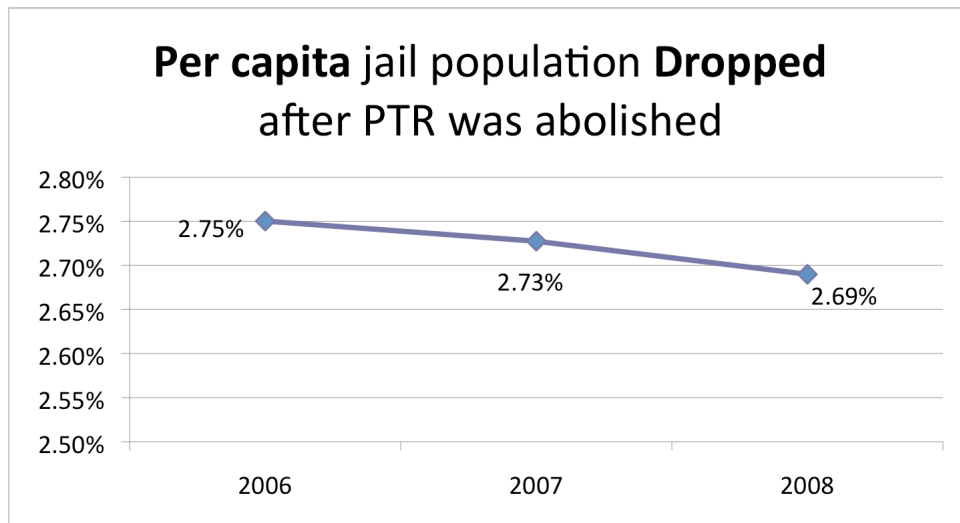
Pasco County Eliminates Pretrial Release

Overview

SB 782 (Thrasher) and HB 445 (Dorworth) put modest limits on who is eligible for government funded pretrial release (PTR) programs. Opponents of this bill have said that these limits would increase the county jail population. This is not true.

Pasco County Findings

Due to budget constraints, in 2007 Pasco County **completely eliminated** its government run PTR program, **saving taxpayers \$348,000 per year**. In 2008, the county's jail population increase was a negligible 5 bed days per year (an increase from 1,262 to 1,267)...a less than 0.4% increase. However, when considering the population growth of the county during that same time, there was a **net decrease of 2.2% in per capita bed days. Per capita occupancy went DOWN, not up!**



Sources: Florida Department of Corrections, Index to Statistics and Publication; US Census population estimates.

“Due to budget cuts, we completely cut out the pretrial release program in Pasco County. As a result, we saved taxpayers nearly \$350,000 last year and haven’t seen any noticeable change in our jail population. I have had great success in doing away with the pretrial release program.”

--Pasco County Sheriff Bob White

“We have had great success with the Pre-trial Program being eliminated in Pasco County.”

--Pasco County Commissioner Michael Cox

Conclusion

The complete elimination of the taxpayer financed pretrial release program in Pasco County **had no significant impact on jail population**. If *any* impact must be drawn, one could conclude that eliminating the program **actually reduced the per capita jail population** while saving taxpayers nearly \$350,000 per year.