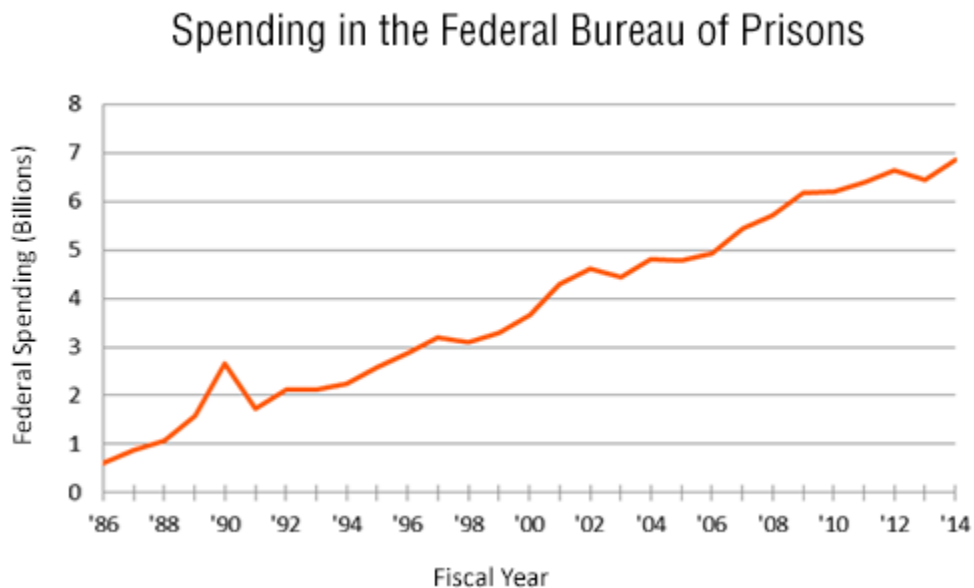


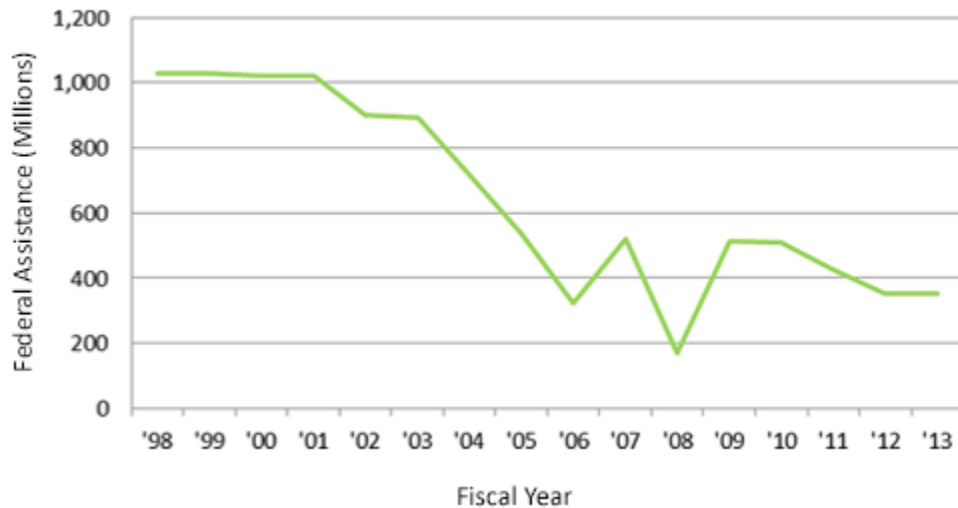
How Federal Mandatory Minimums for Nonviolent Drug Offenders Make Us Less Safe

In an era of tight budgets, Congress must make tradeoffs between competing spending priorities. In the area of public safety, Congress has made a clear – and incredibly dangerous – tradeoff over the last 20 years.

Since fiscal year 1998, Congress has increased spending on federal prisons by 45 percent. Over the same period, Congress has slashed spending on state and local law enforcement by 76 percent.



Federal Assistance to State & Local Law Enforcement



Given the front-line role played by police and the makeup of our prison populations, this tradeoff is making us less safe. More than half of all state prisoners (53.4%) are serving time for violent crimes. Only 16 percent are serving drug sentences. The federal system is quite different. Only 10 percent of federal prisoners are being held for violent offenses, while 56 percent committed drug offenses. At the end of 2012, states were holding 707,000 violent felons behind bars, while the federal government held less than 14,000.

State Prisoners



Federal Prisoners



■ Drug Sentences ■ Violent Crimes ■ Other

Because state and local law enforcement arrest, charge, prosecute, and detain the vast majority of dangerous criminals in this country, Congress provides important grant funds to the states for these anti-crime purposes. Over the past two decades, however, Congress has drastically cut spending for state and local law enforcement in order to divert more funds to keeping nonviolent federal drug offenders behind bars.