How Private Prisons Take Tax Dollars Away From Fixing Our Criminal Justice System

Every year private prison companies collect thousands of tax dollars in profit for every incarcerated person in their facilities. If our criminal justice system stopped sending people to private jails and prisons, these tax dollars could be spent on programs that prevent incarceration and support prisoner rehabilitation.

Cost of Treatment and Rehabilitation Programs (per prisoner per year)

- $1,000 Community-Based Services for Arrested Teenagers
- $1,200 Resources and Support for Released Prisoners
- $1,600 Math, Reading, and Writing Classes in Prison
- $1,700 Police Training and Hospital Support for Mental Health Crises
- $2,000 Vocational Training in Prison
- $2,700 Substance Abuse Counseling for Released Prisoners
- $5,000 College Education in Prison
- $10,000 Support for Released Prisoners with Mental Illnesses
- $17,000 Residential Drug Treatment as an Alternative to Prison

The costs for many programs listed above are annual, but for programs shorter than one year, the total cost is listed. The listed programs refer to specific programs that have been implemented or proposed. Other programs, similar to the specific ones listed here, may have different costs. Data on profits per prisoner are derived from companies’ 10-K forms.