

#SurvivorsSpeak Florida 2020 Safety Agenda

Reforms to Improve Public Safety & Support Crime Victims

#SurvivorsSpeak Florida, presented by Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice, brings together crime survivors from across the state at the Capitol to advocate for smart justice policies that make communities safer. It elevates the experiences and voices of diverse survivors to shape public safety policies, prioritizing crime prevention, rehabilitation, and better support for survivors and communities.

Most crime survivors want a public safety system in Florida that works and prioritizes their needs. People who survive a violent crime can face devastating, lifelong consequences. The resulting trauma, if unaddressed, can lead to emotional problems, addiction, challenges returning to work or maintaining housing, and can ultimately lead to someone being revictimized. This has costly consequences for communities. An estimated 2.8 million people in Florida have been the victim of violent crime in the last 10 years. Yet, only about 1 in 9 survivors of violent crime report receiving any services from a victim services agency. Federal reporting shows that, at best, 11,000 people in the state received victim compensation through federal Victims of Crime Act-funded services in 2018.

Crime survivors have won major victories in Florida to promote rehabilitation and help survivors access recovery services. Last year, hundreds of Florida survivors attended **#SurvivorsSpeak** and advocated in support of criminal justice reforms (HB 7125). HB 7125 improved probation by prioritizing rehabilitation, removed barriers that prevent victims from applying for and receiving support from the state's victim compensation program, and reduced the obstacles people living with a past conviction face in earning jobs, among other changes.

Building on HB 7125, crime survivors are this year supporting lawmakers continuing their commitment to build safer communities, promote healing, and increase access to rehabilitation.

Providing Crime Survivors with Job & Housing Protections

Most victims of violence and their loved ones have limited legal protection if they need to take leave from work or relocate in order to prioritize their safety. When a crime survivor misses work because they are coping with trauma or remains in an unsafe residence, it can further destabilize their life and create ripple effects of harm. Survivors are advocating for lawmakers to build on the reforms passed last year to support domestic violence victims, expanding housing and job protections for survivors of all violent crime.

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Incentivizing Completion of Rehabilitative Programs

Most crime survivors want individuals in the justice system to come out better than when they entered. Research shows that providing incentives for participation in rehabilitative programming reduces recidivism among people who will be eventually released. Nearly nine out of ten crime survivors support providing credit toward release for people in prison who participate in rehabilitation programs. In Florida, current laws limit the ability for someone to earn credits when they complete programs, treating people the same whether it is their first or fifth time sentenced to prison. This year, crime survivors want lawmakers to increase the availability of these credits in smart, targeted ways to promote rehabilitation that stops cycles of crime.

Improving Probation by Reducing Violations and Recidivism

A recent analysis showed that 7 percent of people in prison in Florida are there because of a technical violation of their supervision (like missing a meeting or a drug test), compared with less than one percent in neighboring Alabama. Last year, HB 7125 made a significant improvement in ensuring that fewer people land in prison for technical violations. This year, crime survivors are supporting an expansion of HB 7125's alternative sanctions for technical violations and the lowest level offenses to ensure people successfully complete probation. They also support reforms that ensure our justice system does not waste resources on incarcerating those who have caused the least harm in response to probation violations when there is practically no risk to public safety.

About Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice

Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice is a national network of over 40,000 crime survivors from across the country. It has nearly a dozen local chapters across the state, from the Panhandle to Miami, and over 4,000 members in the state. Each chapter works with communities most impacted by crime and violence to support survivors and advocate for smarter justice and safety priorities.

For more information, visit Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice.

Email: chapters@safeandjust.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/cssjustice

Twitter: @CSSJustice

Instagram: @Ccssjustice

Key Florida Resources:

- [Crime Survivors Speak: Florida Victims Views on Safety and Justice](#)
- [400 Florida Crime Survivors Applaud Passage of HB 7125 Criminal Justice Reform](#)
- [Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice Members Celebrate HB 7125 Reforms](#)

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