

# JUVENILE JUSTICE INITIATIVE

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## REDEPLOY ILLINOIS HAILED AS MODEL FOR NATION

**Springfield, Illinois**—Illinois is one of five states that have become models for other states trying to reduce inefficient and ineffective juvenile justice systems, according to a new study released today by the Justice Policy Institute (JPI).

JPI cited **Redeploy Illinois** as example of the kind of program other states should embrace as a way to reduce prison costs and prevent young offenders from falling into futures dominated by criminal behavior and incarceration.

**Redeploy Illinois**, which began in 2004, gives financial support to counties that provide comprehensive services to delinquent youth in their home counties. Four **Redeploy Illinois** pilot sites are in operation in Macon County, Peoria County, St. Clair County and in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit, which covers 12 counties in southeastern Illinois.

“Where there are no local services, judges have few options and often sentence young offenders to the Illinois Department of Corrections,” said Judge George Timberlake, who is Chief Judge of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit. “That drives up the cost of running state prisons, but it also is costly to juveniles who often are not rehabilitated but return to their communities and commit even more crimes.

“**Redeploy Illinois** can break that cycle of crime and higher prison costs,” added Judge Timberlake, who is a member of the board of the Juvenile Justice Initiative.

In addition to the Illinois program, the national report highlighted similar reforms in Pennsylvania, California, Wisconsin and Ohio. The full report, “Cost-Effective Youth Corrections: Rationalizing the Fiscal Architecture of Juvenile Justice Systems,” can be found at [www.justicepolicy.org](http://www.justicepolicy.org). JPI is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting safe, fair and effective alternatives to incarceration that protect public safety and benefit communities.

“This new report confirms what we see everyday in our community based programs throughout Chicago,” said David Whittaker, Executive Director of the Chicago Area Project. “Exposing young people to the negative pressures of prison produces hardened criminals, but exposing young people who get off track to positive role models in the community produces better outcomes for kids.

“We need Redeploy to be expanded in Chicago and throughout the state so that all young people in Illinois can benefit from community based programming,” said Whittaker, who runs the nation’s first community-based delinquency prevention program.

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“**Redeploy Illinois** is a very necessary juvenile justice policy breakthrough,” said Gary Leofanti, President, Illinois Collaboration on Youth. “It has resulted in closer coordination between the juvenile court and the local youth services system. Young lives are being turned around.”

About \$1.4 million was spent in the first year of **Redeploy Illinois**, and the state projects a 33 percent drop in commitments to the Department of Corrections. The projected three-year savings for the four pilot sites, based on the first year of operation, would be approximately \$3 million.

Continuation of the four pilot sites will require an appropriation of \$1.5 million in FY 2007, the same as the current fiscal year. However, expansion of **Redeploy Illinois** to assist other parts of the state could be accomplished for an additional \$1.5 million.

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