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East Baton Rouge Parish 2018 Safety and Justice Challenge Fact Sheet

We've got a problem to fix:

- Though progress has been made, there is still an over-reliance on incarceration for low-risk, non-violent offenders.
- At any given time approximately 20% of those in jail population have been identified as having a serious mental illness.
- The average length of stay in 2017 was 53.1 days.
- The misuse of the jail takes an especially heavy toll on people of color. Despite making up 45.9% of the local population, African Americans and Hispanics make up 75.3% of the jail population, on average.
- Overuse of detention causes disruption in the stability of arrestees' families and communities; it leads to higher re-arrest rates; and produces worse case outcomes with more back-end incarceration.

There are proposed solutions to create a fairer, more effective local justice system:

- Supported with \$350,000 from the Safety and Justice Challenge, East Baton Rouge Parish will implement forward-looking, smart solutions to address the misuse and overuse of jails in the parish and further reduce the local jail population over the next two years.
- To continue safely reducing the jail population, the parish plans to implement strategies aimed at better meeting the needs of those with behavioral health and substance abuse issues, addressing system inefficiencies and disparities, instituting non-jail options for lower-risk offenders, and more deeply engaging the community through a Justice System Change Workgroup.
- Key strategies the parish will implement may include deflection at arrest and booking, diverting individuals to behavioral health and substance abuse treatment, and increasing efficiencies in case processing.

Who is helping to affect change?

- The strategies and initiatives supported by the Safety and Justice Challenge are being led by the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, in partnership with the District Attorney's Office, the Sheriff's Office, the Office of the Public Defender, the East Baton Rouge Parish Jail, the 19th Judicial District Court, the Baton Rouge City Court, Louisiana State University, and the Bridge Center for Hope.

