



# CASH BAIL'S IMPACT ON CRIME: A META-ANALYSIS PROPOSAL

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# Presentation Overview

- **Background of Bail, Criminology Framing, and Political Framing as Crime Prevention**
- **Existing Reviews**
- **Research Question**
- **Search Strategy**
- **Inclusion Criteria**
- **Analytic Strategy**

# BACKGROUND: OVERVIEW

## Post-Charge Hearing:

- Cash bail: Monetary guarantee ensuring that the accused, once released from custody, will show up for trial.
- Recognizance bond
- Denied bail

## Judge makes the decision:

- Risk Assessment Tool
- Judicial discretion varies by state and county

## Role of bail bond companies

- Only allowed in USA and Philippines



(Sawyer & Wagner, 2023)



# BACKGROUND: THEORETICAL FRAMING BY CRIMINOLOGISTS

*01* **Specific Deterrence**

*03* **Crime Control**

*02* **General Deterrence**

*04* **Social Control**

(Goldkamp & White, 2006; Monaghan, et al., 2002; Page & Scott-Hayward, 2022)



# BACKGROUND: RECENT POLITICAL FRAMING AS CRIME PREVENTION

● Increase in violent crime combined with bail reforms led to state lawmakers blaming bail. (Keck, 2022; McCullough, 2021; Ruiz, 2023)

● Bail bond industry claims that reducing pretrial detention will increase crime rates (Wilson, 2018).

● "Revolving Door"

**TAKE BACK NEW YORK**

RESTORING COMMON SENSE  
TO PUBLIC SAFETY

SENATE REPUBLICANS ARE FIGHTING FOR A SAFER NEW YORK:

- ✓ Close the revolving door of violent criminals
- ✓ End cashless bail and restore judicial discretion
- ✓ Support and defend our brave men and women in law enforcement

**KEEP Santa Clara County SAFE**

**Dangers of Bail Reform**

The Dangers of Bail Reform Across the US

Posted May 2, 2018

Cindy Chavez Santa Clara County bail reform will inevitably bring more risk for local law enforcement who have to deal with repeat criminals

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**California violent crime tripled as suspects walked free without bail: reform study**

# BACKGROUND: LAWS RECENTLY PASSED AS CRIME PREVENTION



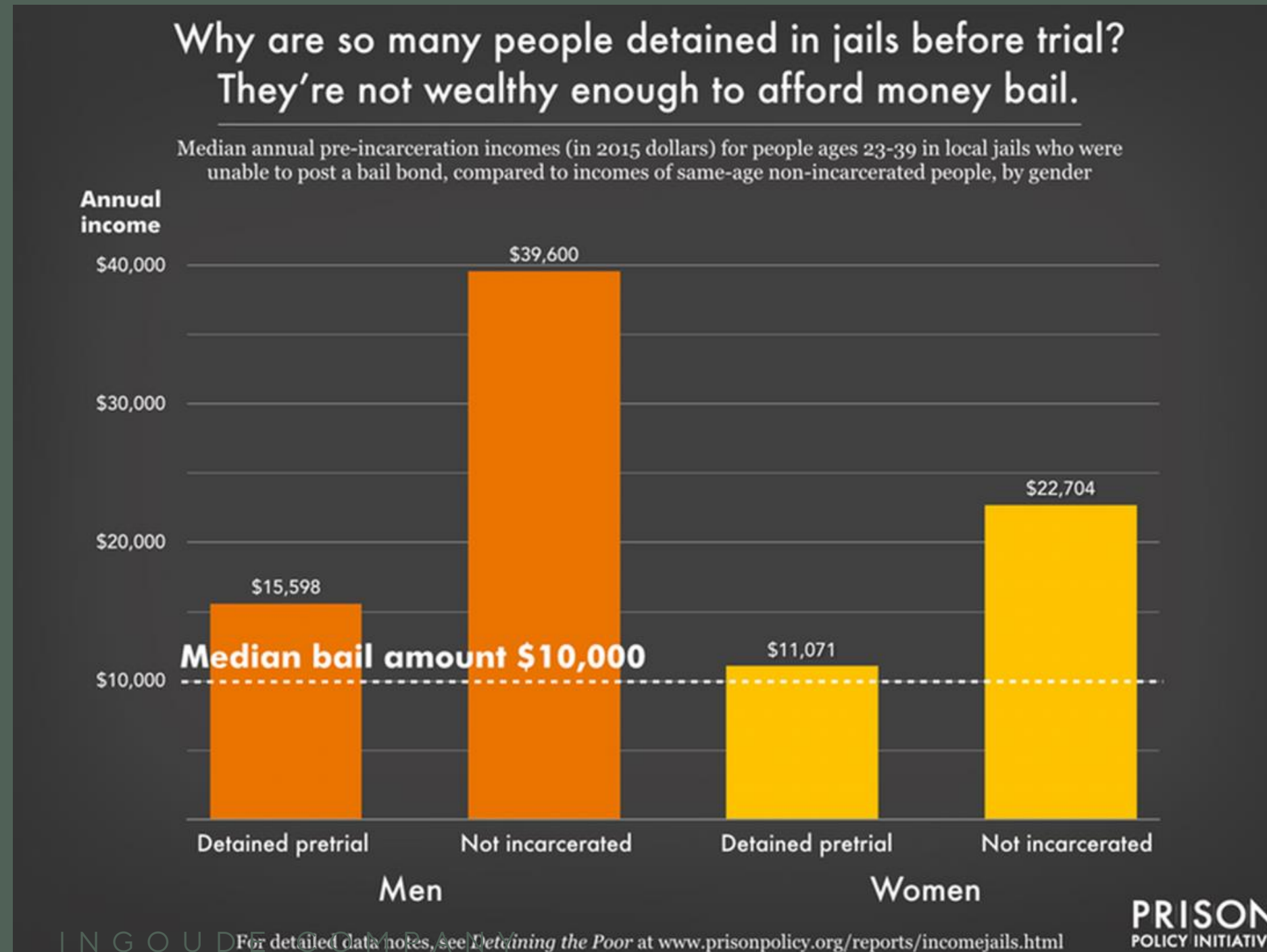
REVIEW OF RECENT  
POLICY IN LINE WITH  
CAMPBELL PROPOSAL  
REQUEST.

(CAMPBELL, 2023).

- Texas passed stricter requirements of applying cash bail and restricting judges from giving recognizance bonds (McCullough, 2021)
- Governor of Texas and Republicans who pushed and voted for the bill cited crime rates and examples of people being released pre-trial and then going on to harm someone while awaiting trial (McCullough, 2021).
- Illinois passed law in 2018, stalled after backlash, amended to require bail in certain circumstances (Bishop, 2023).
- New York budget currently stalled over bail reform (DeWitt, 2023).



# BACKGROUND: COUNTER FRAMING FROM REFORM GROUPS AND POLITICIANS



- Contributes to racial and economic disparities. (Justice Policy Institute, 2012).
- Harris County Case Study (Council of Economic Advisors, 2015; Rosenberg, 2017)
- U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (2022) suggested federal government work with Congress to pass bail-free legislation.

(Sawyer & Wagner, 2023)

# EXISTING REVIEWS

Bechtel, et al., 2017	Risk Assessment Tool impact on FTA and re-arrest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of research rigor in many studies.</li><li>• Null findings for re-arrest</li><li>• Small but positive predictability for FTA</li></ul>
Vilijoen, et al., 2019	Risk Assessment Tool impact on recidivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Small but positive effects on recidivism</li></ul>
St. Louis, 2023	Pre-trial detention impact on convictions, guilty please, dismissals, charge reductions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strong effets for likelihood of incarceration</li><li>• Medium for convictions, guilty pleas, &amp; dismissals.</li><li>• Null on charge reductions</li></ul>
Bechtel, et al., 2011	Risk factors associated with pretrial failure. Failure = re-arrest, FTA, new crime, noncompliance with release.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Null findings</li><li>• Findings in opposite direction: injury to victim, using a weapon, and abusing alcohol (lower level of failure)</li></ul>



RESEARCH  
QUESTION:

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DOES THE  
ASSIGNMENT OF  
CASH BAIL  
PREVENT CRIME?



# SEARCH STRATEGY

## IDENTIFYING ARTICLES

- **Build from Bechtel et al. (2011)'s approach:**
  - Begin with Pretrial Justice Institute's **"Pretrial Research Bibliography."**
- **Incorporate Viljoen et al's (2019) approach:**
  - **13 databases to capture pub/unpub**
  - Avoid publication bias (Lipsey & Wilson, 2001)  
*[PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, PsycBOOKS, National Criminal Justice Reference Service, MEDLINE, Criminal Justice Abstracts, Google Scholar, Sociological Abstracts, Social Services Abstracts, Social Sciences Abstracts, Social Sciences Full Text, Web of Science, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses]*
- **Keyword search terms:**
  - "bail", "bond", "failure to appear"
  - bail" with "recidivism", "re-arrest", "race", "disproportionality", "poor", "income".

### PRISMA SEARCH PROTOCOL

Checklist of 16 items to collect on each article.

To build transparency and systematization into information collection.

(Wilson, 2013; Rethlefsen, et al., 2021)

### RAYYAN ONLINE SOFTWARE

Organize, manage, and code evidence for systematic reviews.

- Collaboration
- Machine Learning identifies elements of articles.

(Rayyan, 2023)

# INCLUSION CRITERIA

PICOS Framework (Wilson, 2013)

- **Data from United States**
- **Publication after 1984 (Bail Reform Act of 1984)**
- **Outcomes that capture crime prevention expectations and reform expectations.**



## CRIME PREVENTION EXPECTATIONS



Failure to Appear

Re-arrest

Recidivism

(Informed by Campbell, 2023)

## REFORM EXPECTATIONS



Economic  
disproportionality

Racial disproportionality



# INCLUSION CRITERIA

## STUDY TYPE

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### Random Control Trials

### Quasi-Experimental Designs

- Must have control/comparison group
  - Comparison group:
    - No cash bail assigned & released
    - Assignment: random, near-random, or matched on pre-test.

## POPULATION

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By nature, narrowed to **population charged with a crime.**

- County-level, state-level
- Follow **individuals**, not aggregate outcomes at different time periods.

# EXCLUDED STUDIES

## TRACK

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Use Rayyan software to organize and manage excluded studies, noting reason for exclusion.

To follow expectations of Campbell reviews for appendix items.  
(Wilson, 2013).



# ANALYTIC STRATEGY: CODING

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**Two researchers** to code each article for intercoder reliability (Wilson, 2013; Campbell, 2023)

**Code for inclusion criteria and outcomes.**

- Structure data for hierarchical reporting (multiple outcome reports per study). (Wilson, 2013).

**Code for bias estimates.**

- Utilize the Cochrane Risk of Bias Framework (Wilson 2013)
- Use the GRADE Pro software, a Cochrane software, to aggregate quality of studies across full review (Wilson, 2013; Cochrane, 2023).



# ANALYTIC STRATEGY

## Calculate Standardized Effect Size

- Select standardized effect measurement that requires the fewest transformation (Polanin & Snilstveit, 2016)

## Based on preliminary identified studies that fit criteria:

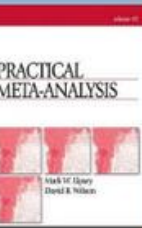
- Odds Ratio
- Preferred effect size for dichotomous case outcomes (St. Louis, 2023).

## Utilize the Lipsey & Wilson (2001) meta-analysis companion calculator.

- Converts between effect sizes/types.
- Follow the Campbell policy on conversion (Polanin & Snistveit, 2016)

### Practical Meta-Analysis Effect Size Calculator

David B. Wilson, Ph.D., George Mason University



HOME
EFFECT SIZE TYPE
+ Standardized Mean Difference (d)
+ Correlation Coefficient (r)
+ Odds-ratio (OR) and Risk Ratio (RR)
FORMULAS

This is a web-based effect-size calculator. It is designed to facilitate the computation of effect-sizes for meta-analysis. Four effect-size types can be computed from various input data: the standardized mean difference, the correlation coefficient, the odds-ratio, and the risk-ratio.

This calculator is a companion to the 2001 book by Mark W. Lipsey and David B. Wilson, *Practical Meta-analysis*, published by Sage.

# Conclusion

- **Competing political framing and recent state-level policies suggest a need to connect research findings to policymakers.**
- **This systematic review will identify articles that test bail impact on crime prevention measures – FTA, re-arrest, recidivism, along with fairness measures – race and economic indicators.**
- **Addresses a gap in systematic reviews that connects to policy relevance.**

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# QUESTIONS?



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