

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Safe & Just**  
Michigan

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*Statement from Safe & Just Michigan Executive Director John S. Cooper  
on Senate passage of bills related to the jails task force:*

“Bills passed in the Michigan Senate today — Senate Bills 1046-1051 — will provide Michigan residents and their communities with greater public safety and safeguard taxpayer dollars while significantly improving our justice system. The Michigan Joint Task Force on Jail and Pretrial Incarceration’s evidence-based report demonstrated that arrest, incarceration and probation for minor offenses takes up too much time of law enforcement officers that is better spent keeping our communities safe. It also demands millions of taxpayer dollars as well — money that could have been spent on public health, assistance for people who have lost jobs, or other community needs. The jails task force report also demonstrated that even if a person is ultimately acquitted, time in jail is a detrimental, life-changing event. These bills encourage better alternatives, such as allowing police officers to issue appearance tickets in lieu of arrest, extending the age of eligibility for youthful trainee status, encouraging shorter probation periods, or making a sentence other than jail the norm for certain misdemeanors. That allows people to be held accountable for their mistakes and learn from them.

“We hope the House prioritizes passage of these bills and sends them to the governor’s desk before the end of the Lamé Duck session. We also encourage the Senate to take up House Bills 5846-7 and 5849-5857, which would end driver’s license suspensions for non-driving offenses and mandatory jail sentences for certain misdemeanors. We’re thankful for the work of the Michigan jails task force and the legislators who supported their recommendations.”

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Safe & Just Michigan ([www.safeandjustmi.org](http://www.safeandjustmi.org)) works to advance policies that end Michigan’s over-use of incarceration and promote community safety and healing. We partner with Michigan organizations and leaders from across the political spectrum, including business and community leaders, faith communities, crime survivor organizations, formerly incarcerated individuals, prisoners and their families, as well as Michigan taxpayers statewide.