

White House Admits Three Times More Money Goes to Prisons than Schools



Washington, July 12 (RHC)-- U.S. state and local spending on prisons and jails grew at three times the rate of spending on schools over the last 33 years as the number of people behind bars ballooned under a spate of harsh sentencing laws, according to a government report issued in Washington.

U.S. Secretary of Education John King said the report's stark numbers should make state and local governments reevaluate their spending priorities and channel more money toward education.

Between 1979 and 2012, state and local government expenditure grew by 107 percent to \$534 billion from \$258 billion USD for elementary and secondary education, while corrections spending rose by 324 percent to \$71 billion from \$17 billion, the U.S. Department of Education report found.

State and local spending on postsecondary education has remained mostly flat since 1990, the report said. Average state and local per capita spending on corrections increased by 44 percent as higher education funding per full-time equivalent student decreased by 28 percent, it said.

The United States spends about \$80 billion a year on incarceration, said White House Senior Advisor

Valerie Jarrett. "One in three Americans of working age have a criminal record," she said. "That creates an often insurmountable barrier to successful reentry."

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