

# [2015 Session] Support Pretrial Services Divisions

## **Policy Background:**

Pretrial Services Divisions assess defendants and help judges by providing them with objective release recommendations that can safely reduce costly jail overcrowding and increase safety and security in our communities.

Policy-makers should take all steps to protect existing pretrial services programs and encourage support for new programs.

## **Key Facts:**

- As of December 1, 2014, Texas county jails housed a total of 64,587 individuals, 39,121 (61%) of which were in pretrial detention.<sup>[1]</sup>

These individuals have not been convicted of the crime for which they are accused. They are awaiting trial but many cannot afford to pay the bond amounts that would allow for their release. Especially for the men and women who do not pose a risk to public safety, this creates unnecessary and costly jail crowding.

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<sup>[1]</sup> Texas Commission on Jail Standards, *Texas County Jail Population*, December 1, 2014; <http://www.tcjs.state.tx.us/index.php?linkID=325>