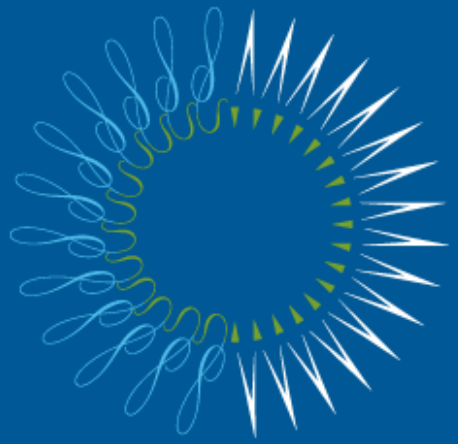


THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS

Summary of Research and Data Findings on Probation and Parole Revocations in Utah

Prison Relocation Commission working group

Salt Lake City, Utah

July 15, 2014

Outline

- Overview of Pew's Public Safety Performance Project
- Data findings relevant to probation and parole revocations
- Research findings relevant to probation and parole revocations
- Policy analysis and development calendar with CCJJ

Public Safety Performance Project - Background

Mission

- The Public Safety Performance Project (PSPP) helps states advance fiscally sound, data-driven sentencing and corrections policies that protect public safety, hold offenders accountable, and control corrections costs

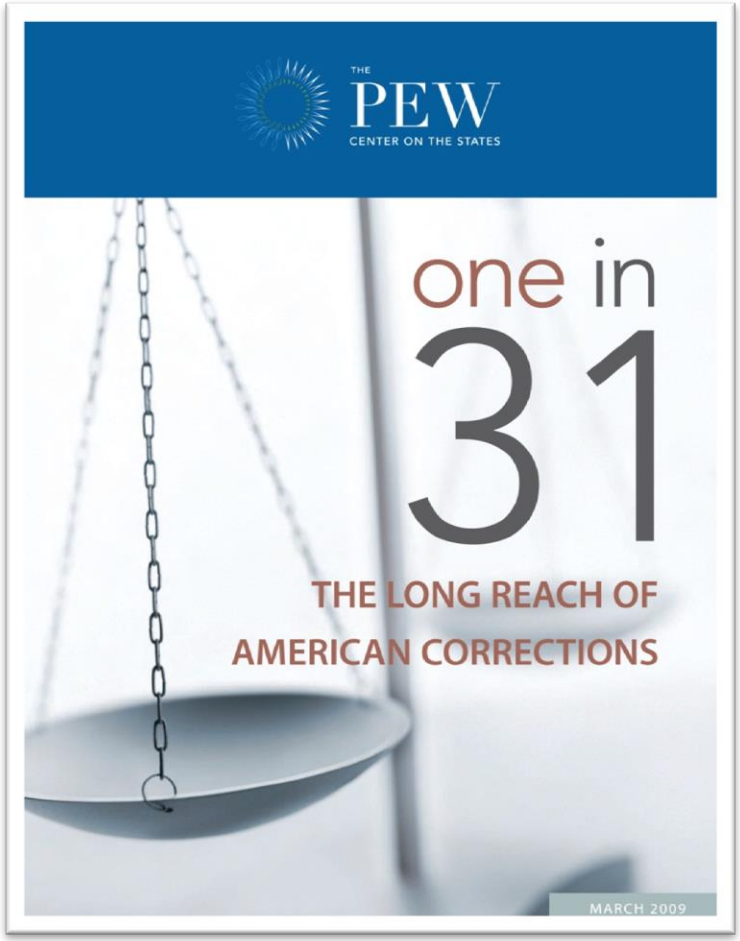
Goal

- Help states get a better return on their public safety dollars

Strategies

- Research on national trends and what works
- Intensive technical assistance to states

Research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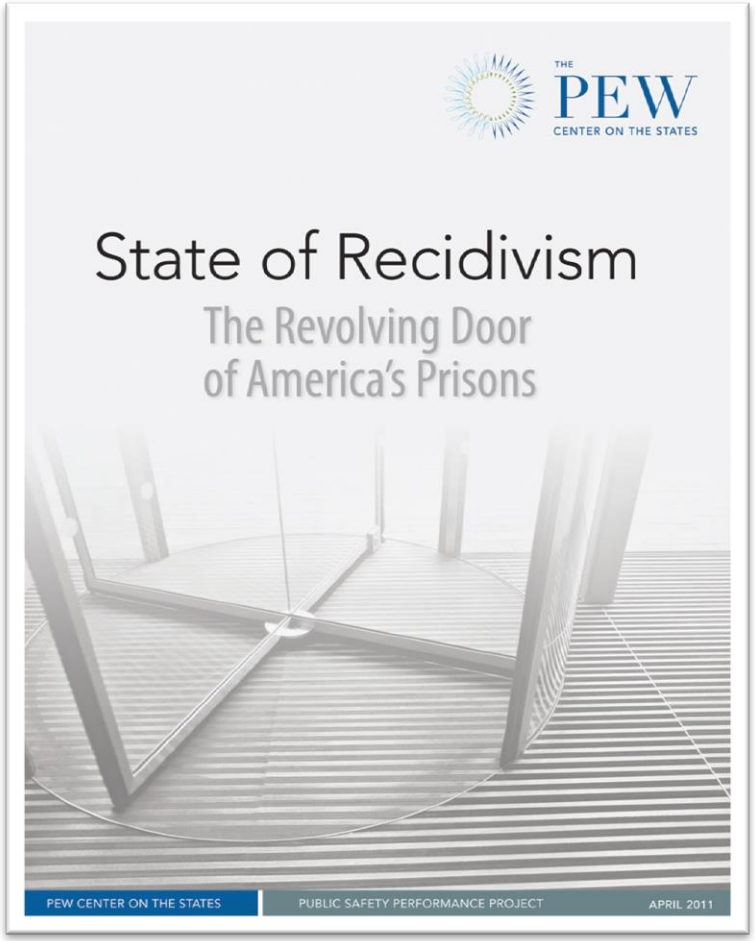
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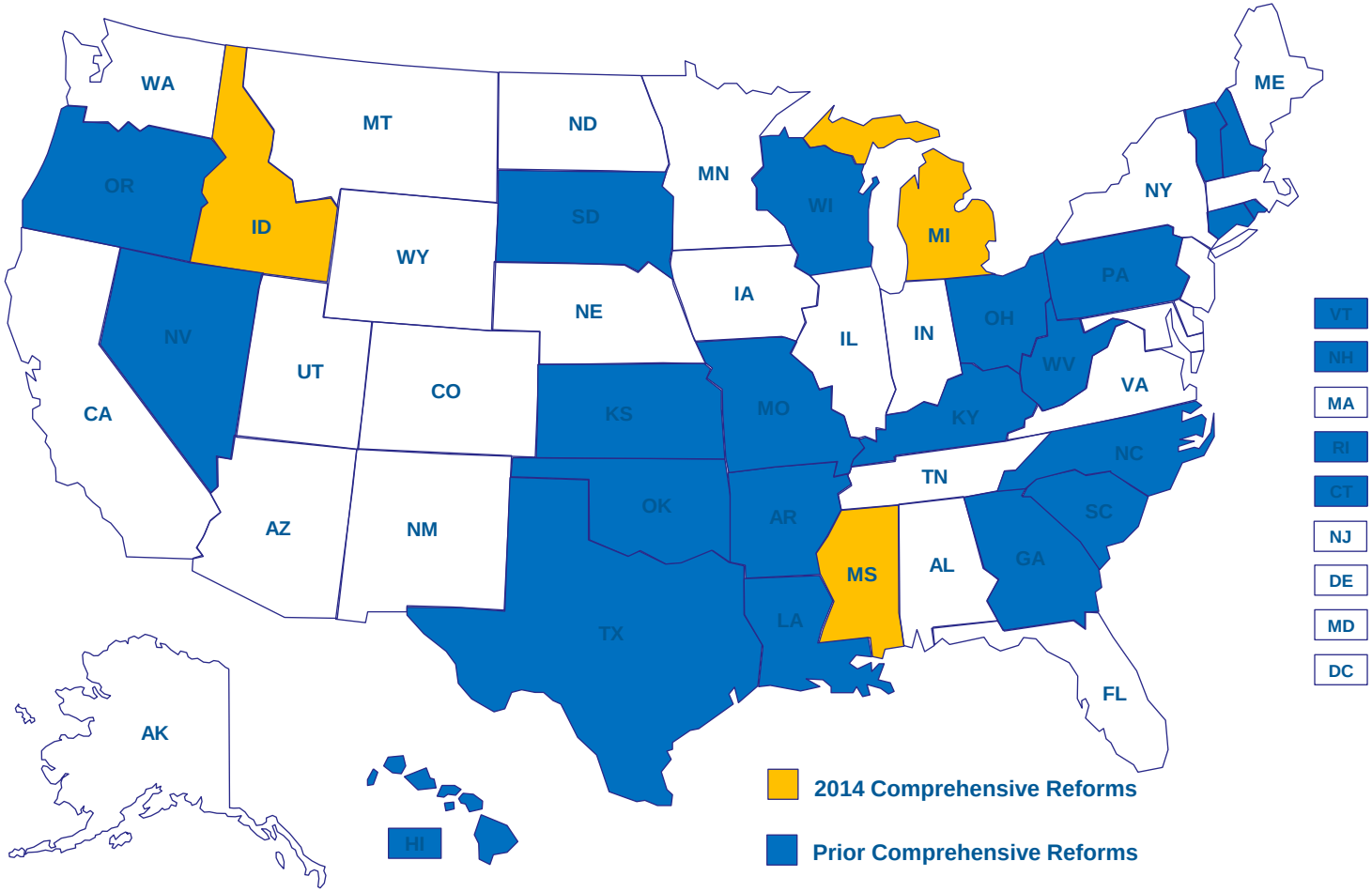
PUBLIC SAFETY PERFORMANCE PROJECT
APRIL 2011

Justice Reinvestment Technical Assistance



Technical Assistance Requested by Utah Leadership

The Governor, Senate President, Speaker of the House, and Chief Justice jointly requested technical assistance from the Pew Charitable Trusts in February 2014.

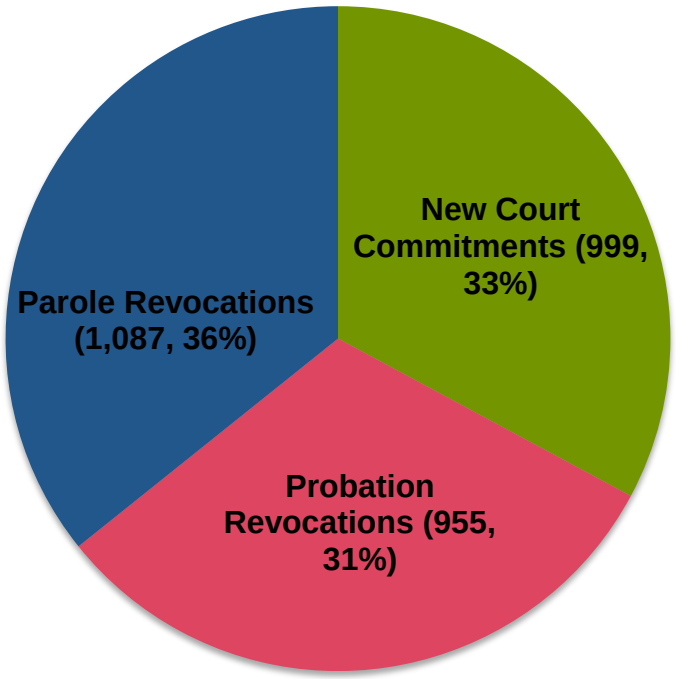
> *"How can we get the best public safety return on our taxpayers' corrections spending? Developing an answer will require us to examine Utah data, assess our sentencing and corrections policies, and review the latest research on what works to reduce recidivism. In partnership with Pew, we aim to answer this question and ultimately rebalance our public safety portfolio with a comprehensive, data-driven, evidence-based policy package ."*

Pew-CCJJ Calendar

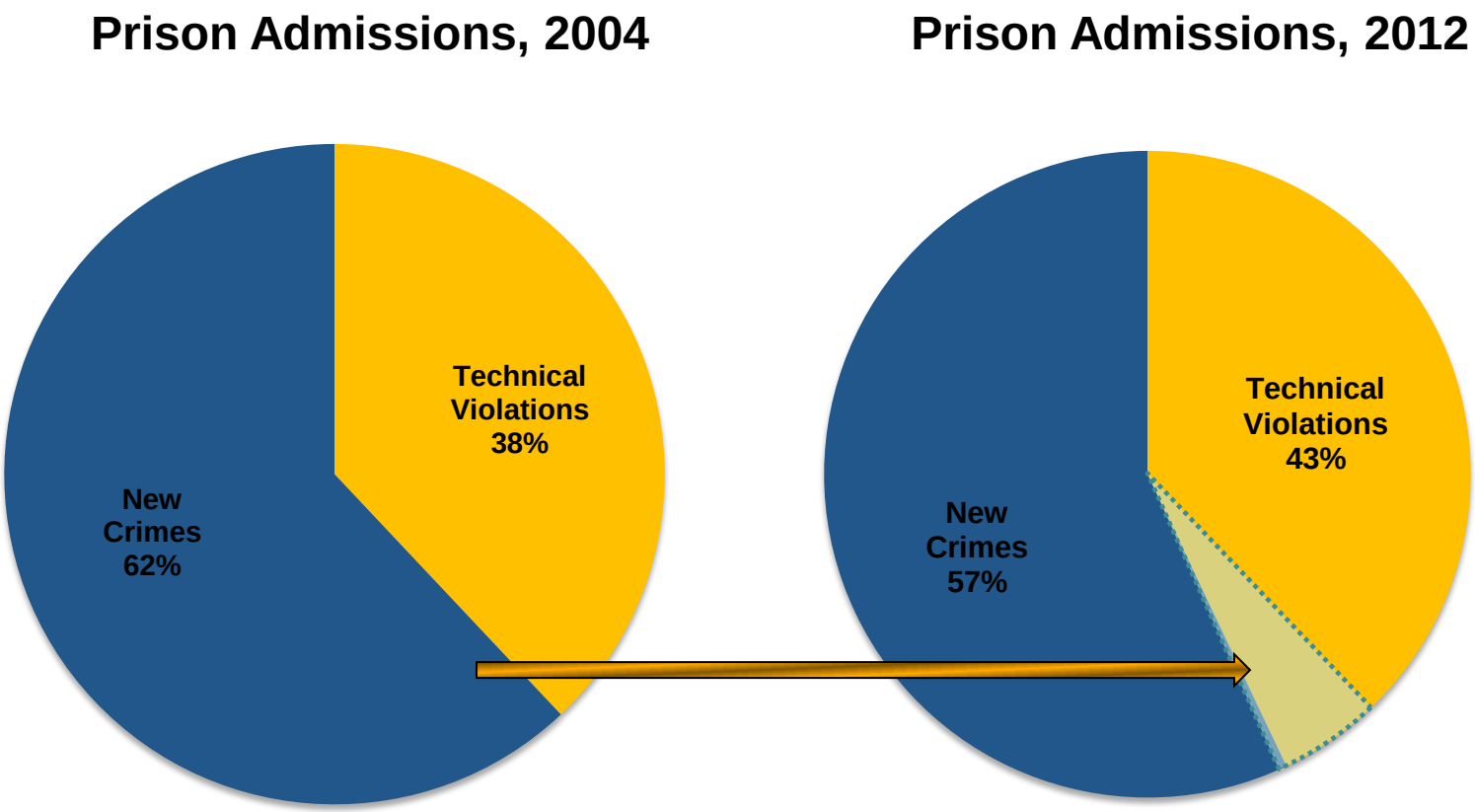
- **April:** Introduction to Justice Reinvestment process
- **May:** Data presentations on drivers of prison growth in Utah
- **June:** System assessment summarizing research on effective correctional practices compared to practices in Utah
- **July:** Introduction to policy development
- **August – October:** Multiple policy development meetings
- **November:** Report and recommendations finalized

DATA FINDINGS RELEVANT TO PROBATION AND PAROLE REVOCATIONS

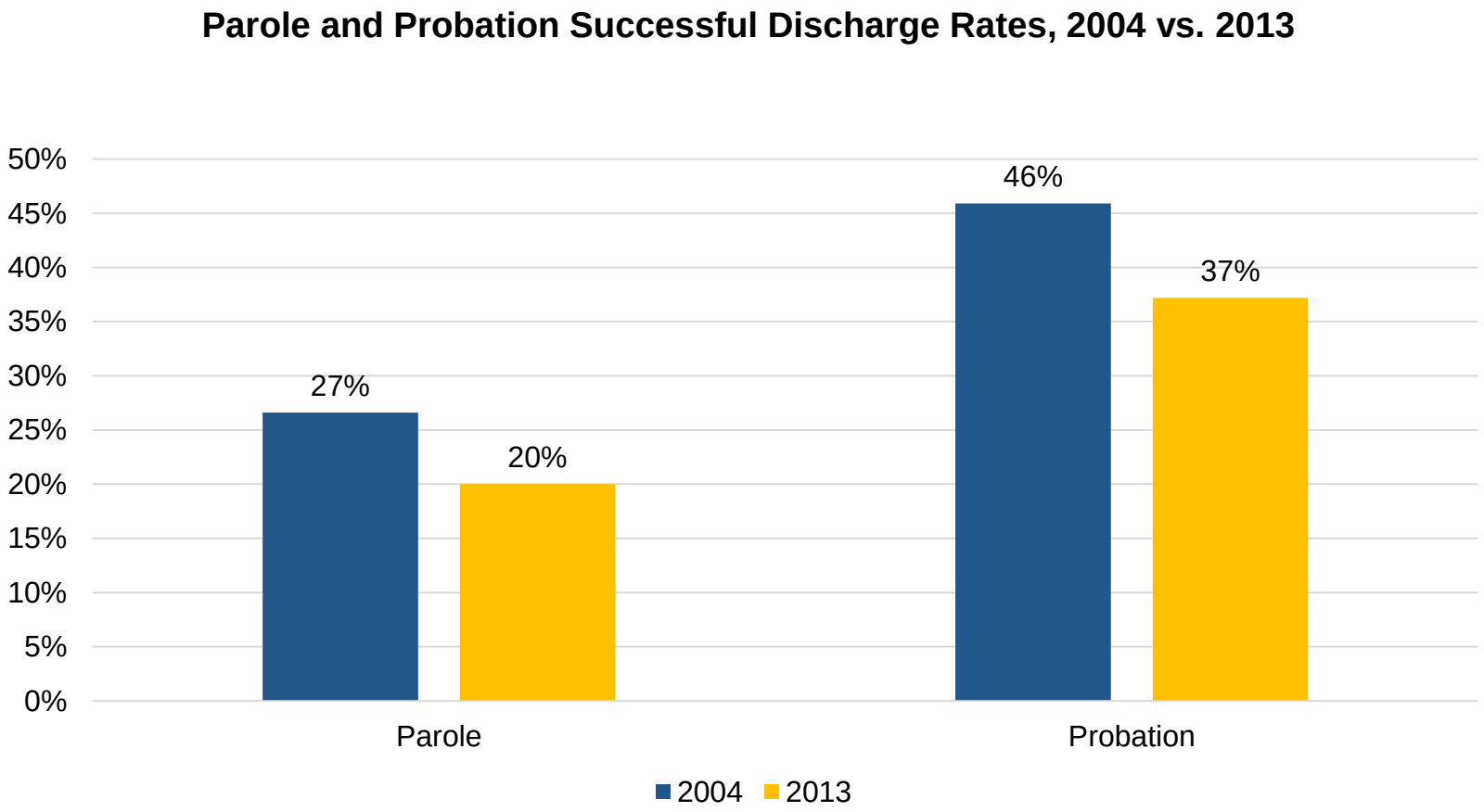
Parole and Probation Revocations Make Up Two-Thirds of Admissions



43% of Offenders Admitted to Prison with No New Criminal Conviction, Up From 38% in 2004



Declining Rates of Success for Probationers and Parolees



RESEARCH FINDINGS RELEVANT TO PROBATION AND PAROLE REVOCATIONS

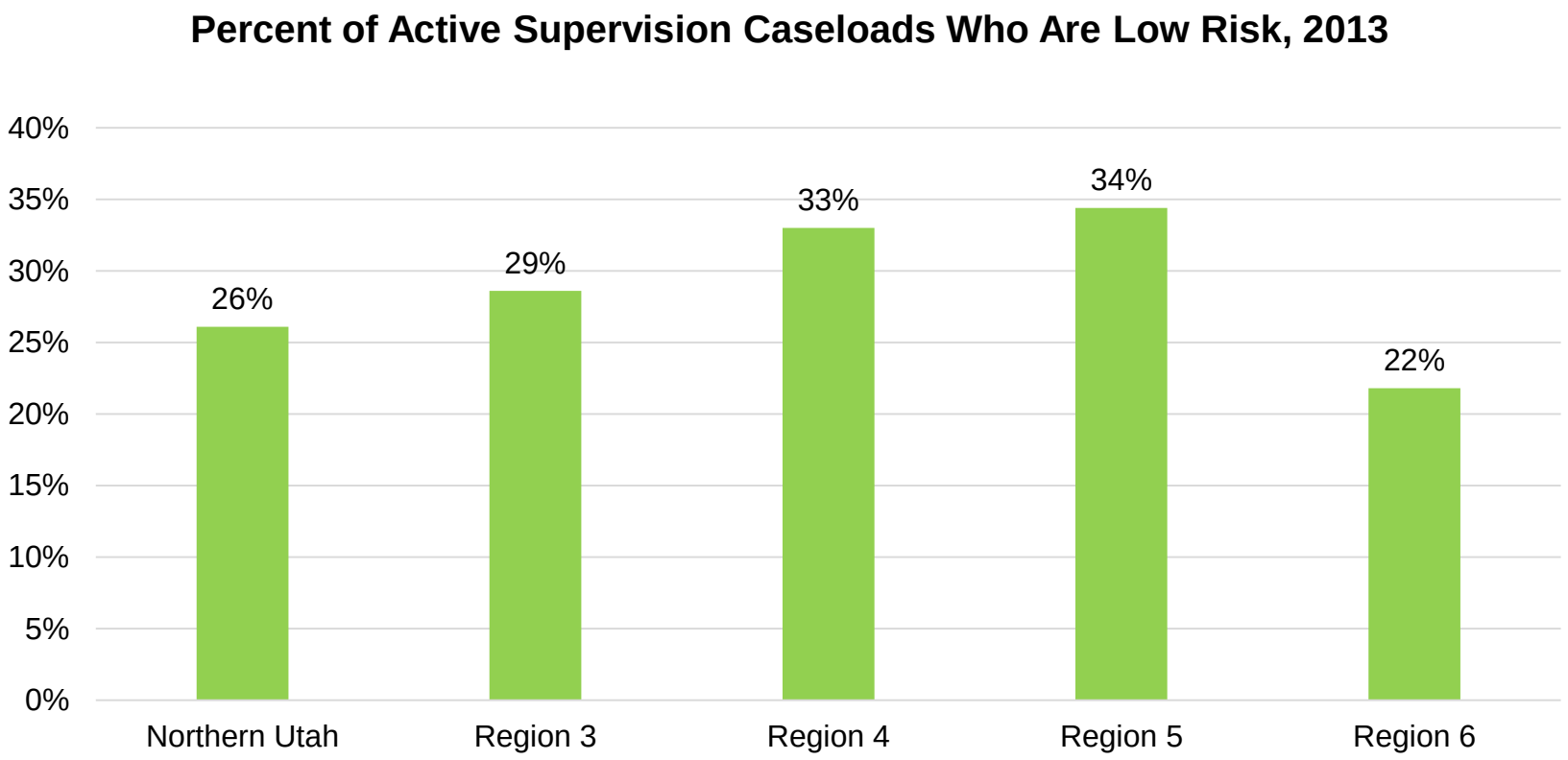
Recidivism Reduction Principles

- Focus on high risk offenders and target criminogenic needs
- Incorporate rewards and incentives
- Use swift, certain, and proportionate sanctions for violations
- Frontload resources
- Balance surveillance with treatment

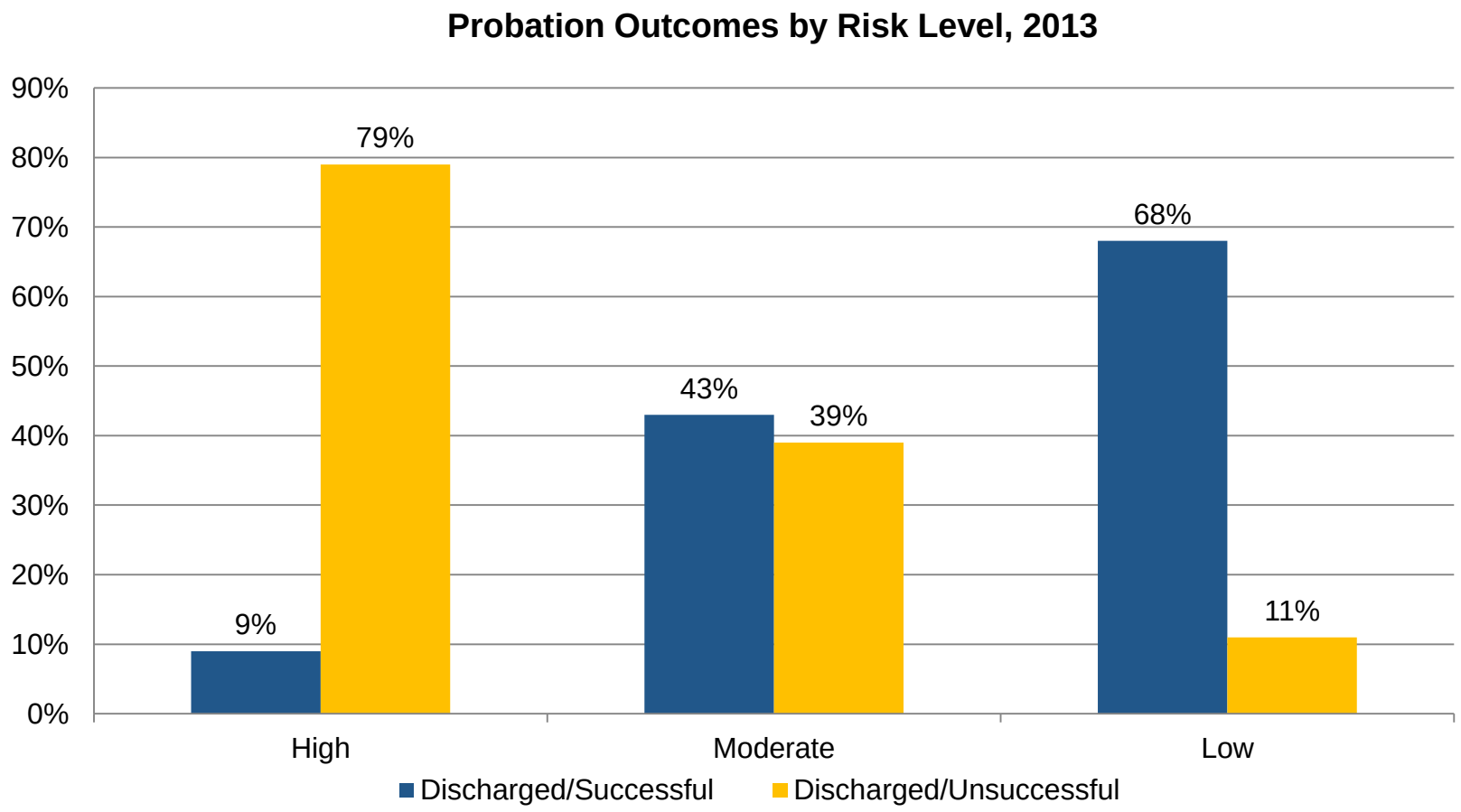
Focus on High Risk Offenders and Target Criminogenic Needs

- Research summary:
  - Resources should be targeted to higher risk offenders and interventions should focus on the offender's criminogenic factors
- Utah findings:
  - Utah uses a variety of screening and assessment tools to identify risk of reoffending and treatment needs, and has made strides to connect these tools to supervision practice
  - However, high risk offenders have dramatically high rates of failure on supervision and many supervision resources are still directed to low risk offenders

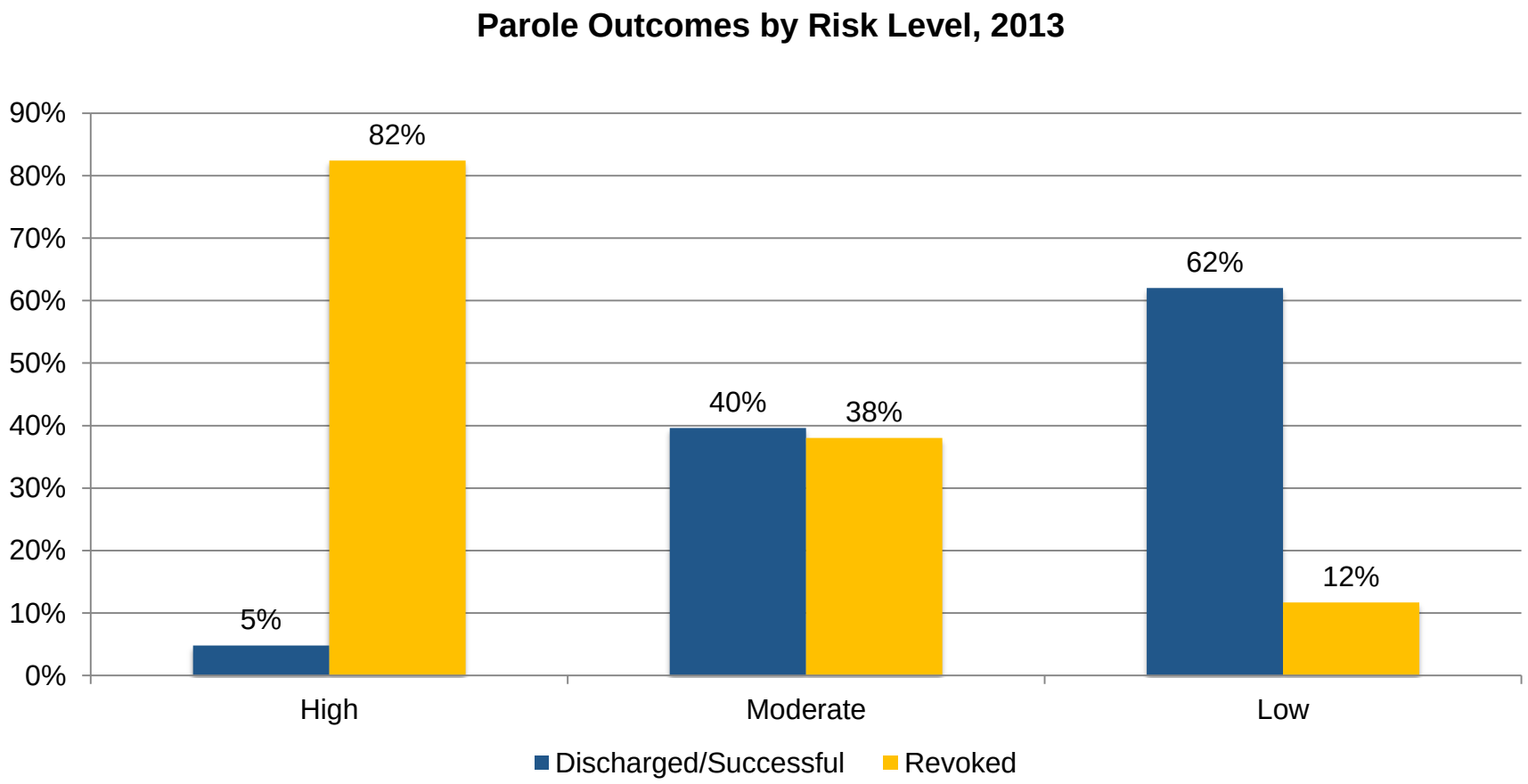
One-Quarter to One-Third of Actively Supervised Offenders Are Low Risk



Nearly 80% of High Risk Probationers are Unsuccessful Discharges



More than 80% of High Risk Parolees are Revoked



Incorporate Rewards and Incentives

- Research summary:
  - Rewards and incentives encourage pro-social behavior and improve supervision outcomes
- Utah findings:
  - There is no formal structure in place for rewarding positive behavior on supervision, including no way to earn time off of a supervision sentence

Swift, Certain, and Proportionate Sanctions

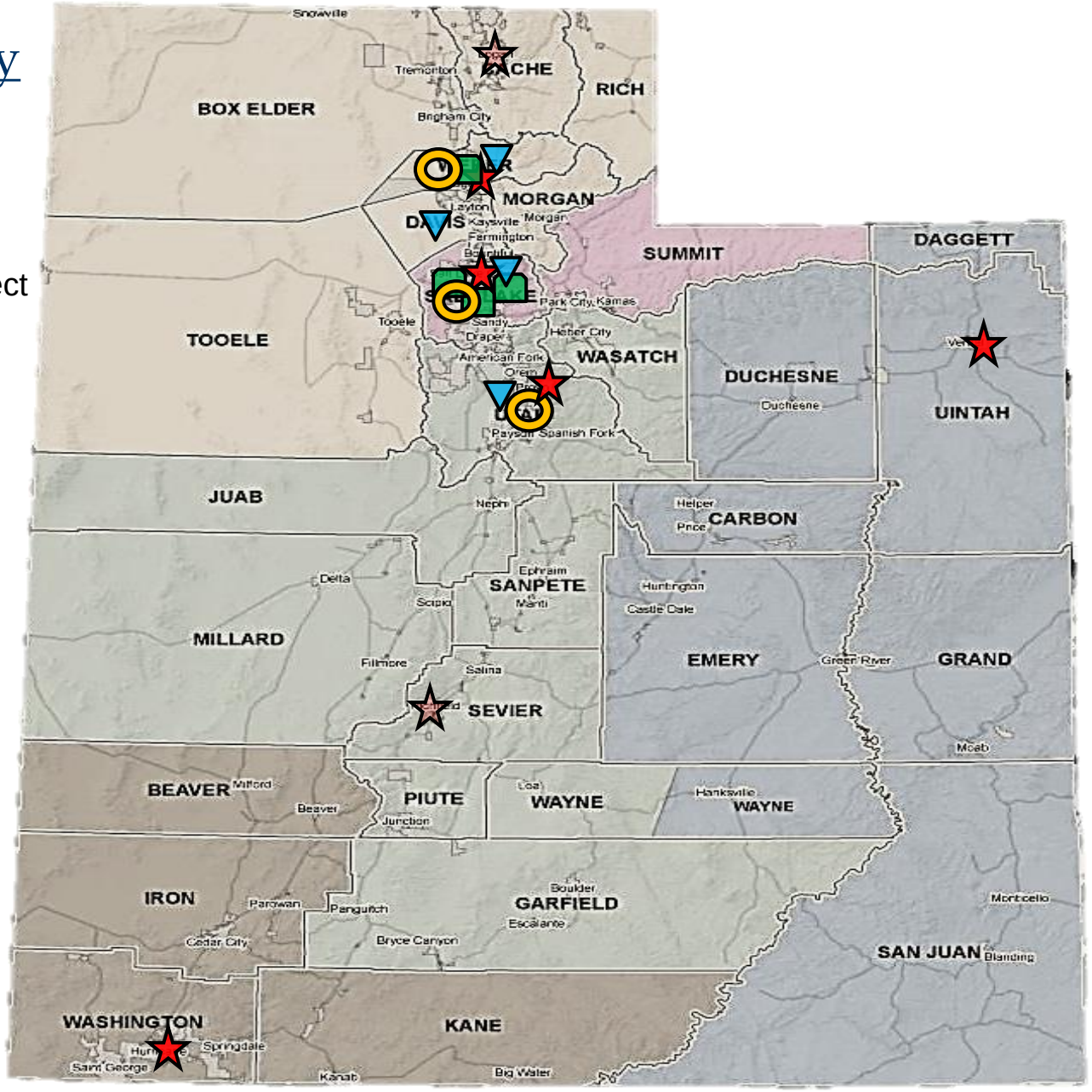
- Research summary:
  - Responding with immediacy, certainty, and proportionality to negative behavior induces behavior change more effectively than delayed, random, and severe sanctions
- Utah findings:
  - There is a system in place for revoking offenders, but no statewide system for graduated or intermediate sanctioning
  - Some sanctioning processes are inconsistent with swift, certain, and proportionate principles

Frontload Resources

- Research summary:
  - Because recidivism is most likely to occur in the first few months of supervision, focusing resources at the beginning of supervision reduces the likelihood of reoffending
- Utah findings:
  - Majority of parolees are revoked within their first year of supervision
  - Nearly one-third of offenders are released from prison without supervision

Community Reentry Options

- ★ - Treatment Resource Centers
- ▭ - Halfway Houses
- ◯ - Employment Placement Project
- ▼ - Parole Access to Recovery



Balance Treatment with Surveillance

- Research summary:
  - Balancing treatment with surveillance has a far greater impact on recidivism than just surveillance
- Utah findings:
  - Due to a variety of geographic and funding constraints, treatment needs are not met by the current state capacity
  - Many of the available treatment providers are not required to target criminogenic needs

Treatment Not Always Incorporating Best Practices to Reduce Recidivism

- Because most substance abuse and mental health services are designed to serve the general population, many treatment programs:
  - Are not designed to explicitly address criminogenic needs
  - Mix low/medium/high risk offenders, which can increase recidivism in lower risk offenders
  - Mix offenders with non-offenders
- State is making efforts to develop guidance for substance abuse, mental health and sex offender treatment, but no statewide standards for offender programming currently exist

Next Steps With CCJJ

- Two month policy analysis and development process with CCJJ subgroups
- Develop a package of data-driven policy recommendations that will reduce recidivism and safely control the growth in the state prison population
- Conclude in November 2014 with a report to the Legislature, the Governor, and the Chief Justice with recommendations for specific statutory and budgetary changes during the 2015 legislative session

Policy Development Subgroups

- Sentencing
- Release
- Supervision and Programming

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