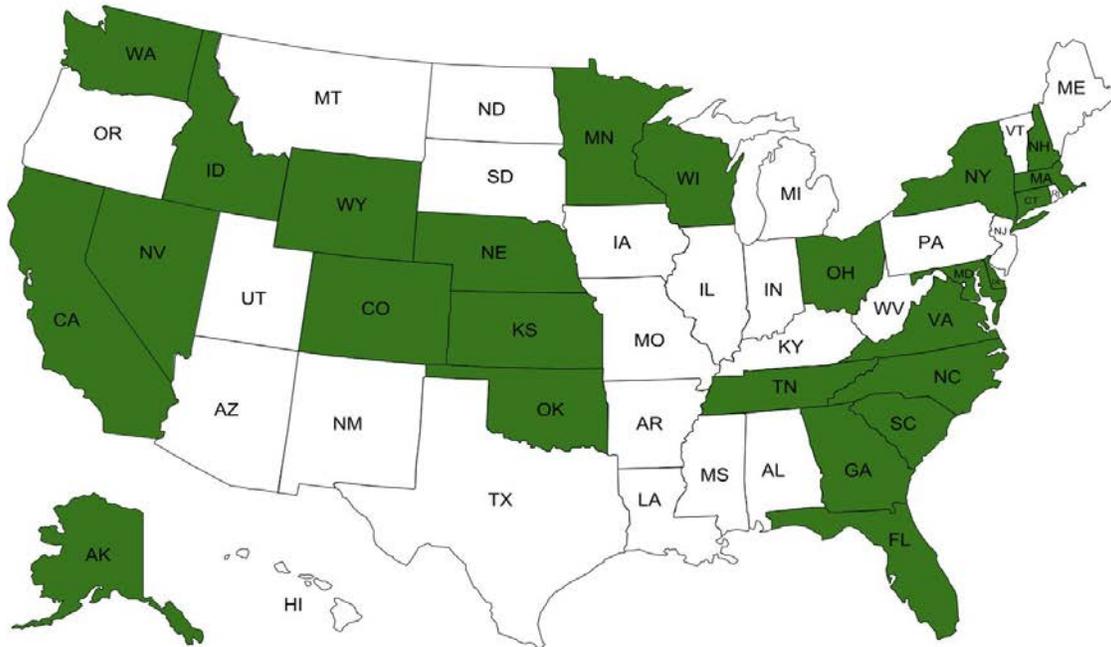


## The National Campaign to Reform State Juvenile Justice Systems 2014 Legislative Successes



The National Campaign to Reform State Juvenile Justice Systems invests in state reform efforts that aim to change how youth are treated to reflect their developmental differences from adults, address mental health and behavioral concerns, provide community-based alternatives to the formal court process and incarceration, help youth with juvenile records succeed, and ensure that youth have access to quality legal representation.

In 2014, the National Campaign supported reform efforts in 25 states: Alaska, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin and Wyoming. These state-based campaigns worked with policymakers to introduce 54 bills and policy proposals (i.e., budget items and administrative changes). Of these, 32 passed, 21 were unsuccessful, and one remained active in a state with an ongoing legislative session.

Below is a summary of some of the state campaigns' 2014 successes:

**CALIFORNIA** required that youth in adult facilities be assessed differently than adults and have access to age-relevant programming, and ended the practice of detaining status offenders for contempt of court.

**COLORADO** created a right to counsel at detention hearings and first appearances and required the court to make specific findings before allowing waiver of counsel.

**CONNECTICUT** funded a new family violence mediation diversion program and secured an agreement from the executive branch to establish standards for alternative schools.

**DELAWARE** unanimously approved legislation to allow judges to waive fines and fees for juvenile defendants.

**FLORIDA** revised the juvenile justice code to emphasize therapeutic and family-involved interventions, create new alternatives to secure detention, reduce the size of residential facilities, and require providers to report on post-program recidivism.

**GEORGIA** clarified provisions from last year's juvenile code re-write.

**IDAHO** strengthened the ability of judges to use deferred prosecution and problem-solving courts.

**KANSAS** enacted an omnibus juvenile justice bill that, among other things, creates a mechanism for prosecutors to have the records of misdemeanants expunged, ends the practice of detaining status offenders for contempt of court, creates a presumption against state incarceration for non-person offenses, incorporates a state-wide risk assessment into pre-sentence investigations, and raises the age at which a youth can be tried as an adult from 10 years old to 12 years old.

**MARYLAND** expanded the types of cases eligible for transfer from adult to juvenile court and instituted a requirement that the state annually report information on the number of youth tried as adults.

**MINNESOTA** created a process for judges to expunge juvenile delinquency records.

**NEBRASKA** enacted omnibus legislation that increases original juvenile court jurisdiction to apply to most 16- and 17-year-olds and permits school districts to opt-out of referring truant youth to county prosecutors.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE** enacted omnibus legislation that raises the age of original juvenile court jurisdiction to include 17-year-olds, updates competency standards, provides counsel in mandated hearings to review the continued placement of youth whose stays exceed six months, and strengthens waiver of counsel procedures.

**NEW YORK** established a commission to plan how the state will raise the age of juvenile court jurisdiction to include 16- and 17-year-olds and improve outcomes for youth while promoting public safety.

**OKLAHOMA** passed multiple bills that, among other things, permit data sharing between youth serving agencies, allow the Office of Juvenile Affairs to establish a charter school at its facilities, and clarify that a juvenile adjudication does not need to be declared on employment applications.

**SOUTH CAROLINA** severely limited the circumstances when a youth is to wear restraints in court.

**WASHINGTON** passed multiple bills that provide for the automatic sealing of records for certain adjudications, prohibit statements made by a juvenile in the course of a mental health or chemical dependency assessments from being admitted into evidence, permit law enforcement to detain chemically dependent youth in treatment facilities, and modify prior life without parole sentences to now provide minimum terms of 25 years and maximum terms of life.

**WYOMING** funded data collection that will annually capture all juvenile petitions and court outcomes.

No legislative proposals were introduced in **Nevada** and **Tennessee** where efforts focused on preparing for the 2015 legislative sessions. In **Ohio**, the legislative session continues for the calendar year.

Unfortunately, efforts in **Alaska** to repeal automatic waiver provisions and in **Wisconsin** to raise the age of juvenile court jurisdiction failed in 2014. Multiple issues advanced but did not pass in **Virginia**.

The National Campaign provides assistance to advocates and public officials to reform state juvenile justice laws. M+R Strategic Services helps to design, staff and manage state campaigns. For more information, contact [nationalcampaign@mrss.com](mailto:nationalcampaign@mrss.com).

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