



**DOC created this crisis –
and the cost to Colorado is real.**

The Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC) is running out of prison beds. After decades of successful reforms and investment in community-based safety strategies, for the first time in 22 years, **Colorado is facing the real possibility of building a new prison.**

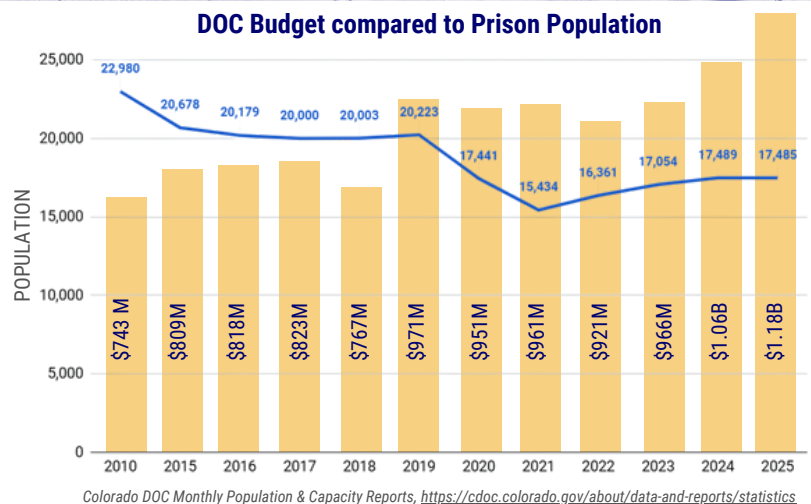
With a **projected \$945 million revenue shortfall this year** from HR 1 (One Big Beautiful Bill Act) and more deficits on the horizon, lawmakers will be forced to choose:

Teachers, or prisons? Healthcare, or prisons?

Why is Colorado's prison population growing?

The main driver is a 20% increase (in 2024–25) in prison admissions for technical parole violations, **with a 30% spike for women**. Technical parole violations include things like missing parole meetings or failing a drug test.

The decision to ask the Parole Board to revoke parole for a technical violation is made solely by DOC.



The tools are in place

In 2018, the Legislature unanimously passed **Prison Population Management Measures (PPMM)** to help prevent overcrowding.

Under PPMM, if prison bed vacancy falls below 3% for 30+ days, the Parole Board may expedite reviews for people convicted of nonviolent offenses who are lower risk or within 90 days of release. DOC must:

- Notify courts, prosecutors, and defense attorneys about the shortage of beds.
- Identify available community corrections beds to maximize referrals.

but DOC refuses to use them.

DOC is deliberately circumventing PPMM by delaying prison transfers from county jails.

This tactic artificially inflates the prison bed vacancy rate above 3%, blocking the use of the very tools designed to manage overcrowding.



DOC's mismanagement isn't just crowding county jails, it's draining state dollars, too. Taxpayers are footing the bill for every extra jail bed.

A crisis of their own making:

In 2024 and 2025, CCJRC offered the Legislature real solutions to slow prison admissions and prevent this crisis. **DOC opposed and blocked every single one of them.**