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## Plan cuts prison time for non-violent criminals

### Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS – An Indiana Senate committee has passed a plan that would keep violent felons in prison longer and reduce punishments for many thefts and drug crimes.

The proposed legislation would require most violent offenders to serve at least 85 percent of their sentences and place low-level felons in probation, community corrections and drug treatment programs.

Republican Sen. Brent Steele of Bedford says the provision in his bill would more efficiently use the state's tax dollars by curbing repeat offenses. Indiana has seen a 40 percent rise in the number of inmates over the past decade.

Probation officials worry they won't have the resources to deal with the larger workload under the reform. The bill's proponents contend it will pay off by decreasing the state's prison population.

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