

Crime -
States

January 24, 1994

TO: BRUCE REED
FROM: KEITH MASON
RE: CRIME IN STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESSES

This memo contains a summary of what the state governors said about crime in their state of the state addresses. Not all of the governors mentioned crime in their addresses and there are still quite a few governors who have not delivered their addresses.

Most of the Governors who have delivered state of the state addresses gave crime fighting a prominent position. Coming down hard on crime was not limited to Republicans. Democrats proposed equally tough crime fighting laws in their speeches. Most popular was the "Three Strikes, You're Out" proposal which calls for life imprisonment with no chance of parole for those convicted of a third violent felony. Governor Miller of Georgia went further, proposing a law that would imprison people for life after being convicted of a second violent felony. Other subjects which appeared in many speeches were juvenile violence, additional prison space, and gun control.

ALASKA - Governor Wally Hickel

- Announced his crime measure will provide 23 new state troopers and prosecutors to launch a sex crime unit for the State's District Attorneys office.

- Called for laws allowing police to arrest stalkers on bail who continue to harass their victims, drug tests for those in serious car accidents, lowering the age at which people can be tried as adults for murder and rape, and a sex offender registration bill.

ARIZONA - Governor Fife Symington

- Supports enacting a version of the Real-Offense sentencing used in Federal courts. This would guarantee that anyone convicted of a felony would be sentenced to prison.

- Introduced a \$31 million dollar crime package. Symington was vague as to how these funds would be spent but did mention sentencing teenagers who committed violent crimes as adults, additional funding for the Success-by-Six program to help at risk

children, and shoring up the Child Protective Services program to help abused children.

CALIFORNIA - Governor Pete Wilson

- Called for expanding the number of California Highway Patrol officers by 500. These additional police would be available to local law enforcement officials and would provide general assistance in high crime areas.

- Called for a "Three Strikes, You're Out" bill which would impose mandatory life sentences on three time convicted felons, double the sentences currently imposed on twice convicted felons, and impose mandatory life sentences on first time rapists, child molesters, arsonists, and convicted felons caught carrying guns.

- Proposed building six additional prisons to be paid for with \$2 billion in bonds.

- Proposed reducing time off for good behavior credits that allow violent criminals to shorten their sentences, cutting it to a maximum of a 15% reduction in sentence.

COLORADO - Governor Roy Romer

- Called for building a permanent 250-300 bed facility for youth offenders of violent crimes.

- Supported a complete overhaul of Colorado's children code to reflect the realities of youth violence. Romer said this overhaul should be based on principles that call for early intervention with troubled youths, specialized treatment that is community and family based for first time non-violent offenders, punishment with "real consequences" for violent teens and multiple offenders, and wider latitude for judges in sentencing alternatives.

- Said Colorado's habitual offender laws have obviated the need for a "Three Strikes You're Out" law but supported efforts to strengthen the habitual offender laws.

- Called for the death penalty to be expanded to include crimes of multiple shooting.

- Touted his handling of the crime issue, specifically in taking on the gun lobby and in tougher sentencing.

GEORGIA - Governor Zell Miller

- Announced that his administration has "opened more prison beds than any administration in history" as well as opening more boot camps than any state in the United States.

- Proposed that for certain violent crimes there be mandatory minimum sentences without being eligible for parole.

- Proposed that criminals given a life sentence be required to spend 14 years in jail before they are even considered for parole. Currently prisoners in Georgia are eligible for parole after seven years in jail.

- Proposed that twice convicted felons be put in jail for life. This is a tougher version of the "Three Strikes Your Out" plan that so many other governors have suggested in their state of the state speeches.

- Proposed laws requiring drunk drivers to spend at least 24 hours in jail and making it impossible for any DUI offenders to plead "nolo contendere" (which allows them to avoid having their drivers licenses suspended).

- Proposed legislation and funding to make Georgia schools safe. This includes banning the possession of handguns for those under 18 and making it a felony to anyone to sell or furnish someone under 18 a handgun. Miller included funds in his budget for schools with security problems to implement already developed school safety plans and to create alternative schools for students who continually disrupt classes.

- Announced he will introduce legislation to require those between the ages of 13 and 17 to be tried as adults.

INDIANA - Governor Evan Bayh

- Proposed an anti-crime initiative that will allow 16 and 17 year olds charged with gang activities to be tried as adults, make gang related murders or drive by shootings punishable by death, make illegal possession of handguns a felony, make it illegal to carry a handgun into schools or onto school buses, increase the penalty for crimes committed with assault weapons, make it illegal to knowingly leave a gun where a child is likely to have access to it, require child molesters to register with local police when they move into a community, and increase fines on criminals in order to fund the Violent Crime Compensation Fund.

ILLINOIS - Governor Jim Edgar

- Announced Illinois will open a 100 bed boot camp for non-violent youths convicted of property and drug crimes. Edgar says this will give them "another chance at life."

- Listed several statistics showing Illinois has become tougher on crime. Edgar told how Illinois has approved the construction of a new prison, extended the death penalty to drug kingpins, increased the penalty for repeat offenders convicted of armed violence, and raised the penalty for possession of a loaded machine gun. Edgar also mentioned that Illinois had boosted the penalties for drive-by shootings, given prosecutors and police more authority to charge juveniles as adults, and raised the penalties for carrying weapons near schools, parks, and public housing projects. After reciting these figures, Edgar noted that Illinois saw a 5% drop in violent crime last year but that "we should take absolutely no consolation from those statistics."

- Proposed banning assault weapons "that have no legitimate civilian purpose in a civilized society." Edgar also proposed increasing the penalty for unlawful possession of handguns from a misdemeanor to a felony and raising the penalty for unlawfully selling concealable firearms to juveniles.

- Asked the legislature to extend the Instant Check program which prevents "dangerous people from illegally buying legal weapons across the counter." Edgar announced he will push governors of neighboring states to join in an information sharing compact to stop the sale of guns to dangerous buyers throughout the area with Instant Check.

- Announced his administration is creating a special Strike Force within the Illinois State Police to "track and crack down" on the illegal trading of firearms to gang members.

- Announced he will propose legislation that will expand the electronic eavesdropping statute and the authority of the statewide grand jury to cover both gang-related felonies and illegal gun trafficking.

IOWA - Terry Branstad

- Called for tough laws to prevent juveniles from having guns and for keeping guns out of schools. Branstad affirmed his commitment to strong and effective juvenile laws that "hold" juveniles who commit crimes. Branstad also urged the legislature to adopt his juvenile program that includes "prevention, treatment, and enforcement." Branstad did not offer specifics.

- Called for a death penalty.

- Urged tougher penalties for child abusers and announced he has signed a proclamation declaring 1994 "The Year of the Family" in Iowa.

KANSAS - Governor Joan Finney

- Announced her support for a few measures making it easier to apprehend juvenile criminals and for reserving youth centers for those who have committed serious crimes.

- Reiterated her opposition to the death penalty but said she would allow it to become law without her signature.

- Stated that Bill Koch is studying crime in Kansas and that she will report on his findings later in the year.

MARYLAND - Governor Donald Schaefer

- Announced he had included money for prison facilities in Baltimore and Allegany Counties as well as for more than 500 jail beds.

- Said there had been a 20% decline in auto thefts thanks to state government efforts to get police chiefs to share information.

- Said Maryland needs a "combination of prevention, properly trained police, and tough penalties and gun laws."

- Proposed a DNA databank that would initially solve sex offense cases and later be expanded to solve other violent crimes.

- Proposed a ban on assault pistols, a ban on magazines with more than 20 rounds, and an updating of the list of semi-automatic rifles subject to the 7 day waiting period. Schaefer said he would support efforts to give mandatory sentences to those possessing firearms during drug trafficking. Schaefer also said he would support a law, like the one in Virginia, that would limit the purchase of firearms to one a month. Schaefer noted that this law would not include shotguns or rifles.

- Announced his support for a constitutional amendment to give crime victims rights in criminal proceedings.

- Said he will introduce legislation to change the method of execution from the gas chamber to lethal injection.

- Announced the flag in front of the Maryland capitol will be lowered to half staff every day there is a murder in Maryland involving a gun.

MASSACHUSETTS - Governor William Weld

- Announced his budget will triple the amount of money going to community policing, sending \$15 million to cities to spend on beefing up their police forces.

- Proposed a "Three Strikes You're Out" proposal which would impose mandatory life sentences on those convicted of three violent felonies.

- Said Massachusetts should "go after" gun traffickers who are "flooding" communities with illegal weapons.

MISSOURI - Governor Mel Carnahan

- Introduced legislation that will eliminate parole for the most violent offenders and impose tougher sentences for criminals who use weapons in crimes. Carnahan also called for building a new state prison.

- Introduced legislation that will put civilians to work in desk jobs in police stations, thereby freeing the police to be on the streets.

- Announced that his budget provides funding for a boot-camp to be built to house first time non-violent criminals. This boot-camp will be geared to preventing young people from turning to a life of crime by making offenders perform community service.

- Announced he will establish a Major Case Unit to make advanced crime fighting technologies more accessible to the Missouri police to help them solve capitol cases.

- Announced his budget contains increased expenditures to improve juvenile corrections. Carnahan said his budget contains more funds to house more violent juveniles and for programs to help reform them.

- Said he favors changing the state laws so that St. Louis and Kansas City can pass laws restricting access to handguns.

- Proposed increased funding for the Crime Victims' Compensation Fund which helps victims to overcome the financial impact of violent crime.

MISSISSIPPI - Governor Kirk Fordice

- Announced his 3000 by 2000 plan to add more prison space. This would build 3,000 more prison beds before the year 2000. Fordice asked the legislature to appropriate \$12 million of Mississippi's surplus money to fund phase one of this plan. Other aspects of this plan include implementing a house arrest

program for non-violent criminals and purchasing modular prison facilities to meet immediate needs.

NEBRASKA - Governor Ben Nelson

- Allocated \$1 million in his budget for a crime fighting proposal which calls for building a confinement facility for violent juveniles and creating a "boot camp" for non-violent offenders. Nelson spoke vaguely about preventing gang activity and getting guns out of schools. He also called for giving police an automated fingerprint identification system, D.N.A. testing equipment, and a state patrol strike force which Nelson said he included funds for in the budget. Nelson took credit for adding beds to the state prison system and toughening laws on drunken driving.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Governor Stephen Merrill

- Said New Hampshire is one of few states where violence is actually dropping but said they must continue to be vigilant regarding crime.

NEW MEXICO - Governor Bruce King

- Recommended an additional \$11 million, an 11% increase, in the Corrections Department operating budget. King also called for a \$25 million increase in the capital budget to meet American Correctional Association standards. This \$25 million would be used to build a new 400 bed prison, build a new 264 bed minimum restriction facility, and restore two prisons that are in need of repair.

- Asked the legislature to pass a bill that would make it a crime for juveniles to possess handguns unless they are hunting, training under adult supervision, or participating in other legal activities.

NEW YORK - Governor Mario Cuomo

- Called for banning all assault weapons.

- Proposed a life sentence without parole for anyone committed of a third felony offense and advocated putting stiff limits on the granting of paroles.

- Called for the creation of special squads of police to drive those with illegal weapons off the street.

- Announced "Operation Firebreak" which would make available a team of 100 state troopers to "wipe out growing dens of drugs and guns and violence." Cuomo did not elaborate.

- Said he will place new limits on the granting of parole.

OHIO - Governor George Voinovich

- Decried the waste and slowness of the criminal justice system.

- Proposed a "three strikes you're out law" for three time felons.

- Proposed tougher penalties for crimes against children, including the death penalty for people who kill children.

- Called for construction of a new high-security facility for violent juvenile offenders.

- Announced he will ask for a proposed constitutional amendment to eliminate the review of death penalty cases by the court of appeals to be placed on the November ballot for voter approval.

SOUTH CAROLINA - Governor Carroll Campbell

- Asked the legislature to pass a bill requiring any student caught with a gun on school grounds to spend a minimum of 60 days in a juvenile boot camp.

- Said his budget includes \$5 million to improve the Department of Juvenile Justice. Campbell also asked the legislature to ensure that juvenile offenders are not locked up with status offenders where they "learn all the tricks of the trade."

- Included \$2 million in his budget to put 600 non-violent offenders in Community Control Centers and \$1 million to expand electronic monitoring. Campbell said he has also included money to open two additional prisons and to open additions at two existing prisons.

SOUTH DAKOTA - Governor Walter Miller

- Announced there will be additional staff added and will be physical changes at the state prison to prevent riots like those that occurred last year.

TENNESSEE - Governor Ned McWherter

- Asked for funds to build 1000 more prison beds.

VIRGINIA - Governor George Allen

- Supported a "Three Strikes You're Out" proposal and bifurcated jury trials to allow juries to be informed of a criminal's prior record before sentencing.

- Said he will convene a special session of the General Assembly "to act on truth in sentencing legislation that will abolish parole and begin the process of comprehensively restructuring sentences." Allen said his plan would result in violent criminals serving more time in jail and non-violent offenders diverted to "alternatives to incarceration" to keep costs low. Allen said he has assembled a bipartisan commission to develop specific legislation to implement the plan.

- Announced that in the regular session he will submit legislation that will crack down on juvenile crime, grant additional rights to victims of crime, and better protect communities against sex offenders.

- Asked the legislature to leave the Mecklenburg prison open for an additional year. Allen also said he has asked the Secretary of Public Safety for a report on adding prison space by placing 2 prisoners in one cell.

WASHINGTON - Governor Mike Lowry

- Proposed \$13.2 Million in his budget for a long range strategy to decrease violence in schools and communities, strengthen families, and train and employ teenagers at risk of turning to crime. Lowry did not offer any specifics on what this strategy would be.

- Announced the state will continue to support the Youth Agenda which reorganizes state agencies which deliver family services, gives local communities more control in fighting crime, limits minors' access to handguns, and calls for stiffer penalties for young violent offenders who possess or use handguns and for adults who provide them.

WEST VIRGINIA - Governor Gaston Caperton

- Proposed strict new laws to reduce crime in West Virginia. This includes making it a felony to possess a firearm within 500 feet of a school, making it a felony to sell a gun to a minor,

and revoking the driving privilege of any student bringing firearms or other dangerous weapons to school.

- Included \$4 million in his budget for new equipment and new cruisers so the state police can better protect.

- Proposed making it a felony to bring drugs into the state.

- Proposed strengthening drunken driving laws.

- Proposed using probable cause to make an arrest in domestic violence cases.

- Asked the legislature to dedicate \$4 million in lottery proceeds to build a series of regional jails. Also asked them to approve boot camps as part of a comprehensive approach to rehabilitate criminals.