**Economic Cost of Incarceration**

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**Abstract**

The criminal justice system is a vital resource for ensuring that laws and regulations are enforced, there is safety in the community, and the rights of all citizens are protected. Our systematic method to prevent both law breakers, and would-be violators, from committing crimes, center around incarceration. However, this method carries an enormous economic cost, impacts not only the taxpayers, but the families of the prisoners’ as well. While the cost of correcting inmates annually costs tax-payers billions of dollars, often the family members must also bear a cost: providing necessities and conveniences for inmates throughout the years of the individual’s sentence. This cost is borne most frequently by the inmate’s partner, who must also act as the sole caregiver of the couple’s children. This study seeks to examine the financial burden borne by the family members, and or partner of our incarcerated inmate population.