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BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS
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SLOWER GROWTH IN THE NATION'S PRISON AND JAIL POPULATIONS

WASHINGTON – The growth in the number of prisoners under state or federal jurisdiction slowed during the first six months of 2007, the Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) reported today. The number of prisoners rose 1.6 percent, which was lower than the 2.0 percent growth during the same period in 2006. In absolute numbers, prisoners under the legal jurisdiction of state or federal correctional authorities — some of whom were housed in local jails — increased by 24,919 prisoners to reach 1,595,037 prisoners.

On June 29, 2007, there were 780,581 inmates in local jails, which are correctional facilities operated by counties or municipal authorities. Growth slowed in the nation's jail population, from 2.5 percent in 2006 to 1.9 percent in 2007. This was the smallest annual rate of growth in the jail population since 2001 and the second smallest since 1981.

Despite slowing of growth in the number of jail inmates, local jails handled an estimated 13 million admissions during 2007. The volume of admissions was about 17 times larger than the number of inmates held in local jails on a given day.

The slower growth in the prison population was due largely to slower growth in the 10 states with the largest number of prisoners in 2000 — Texas, California, Florida, New York, Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Georgia, Pennsylvania, and Louisiana. During the first half of 2007, growth in these states rose 0.7 percent, down from 2.3 percent during the first half of 2006.

Prison admissions also increased at a slower rate, but continued to outpace growth in releases. Admissions were up 2.3 percent between 2005 and 2006 (the most recent data available), a slower rate than the 3.1 percent average annual growth from 2000 to 2005.

During the same period, releases from prison increased by 2.1 percent, down from an average annual rate of 2.8 percent. The number of parole violators returned to state prison increased by 35,926, a 17.6 percent increase since 2000.

(MORE)

At midyear 2007, the number of state and federal prisoners under jurisdiction in private facilities increased 5.4 percent to reach 118,239 prisoners (7.4 percent of all prisoners).

During the 12 months that ended June 2007, the nation's prison and jail custody populations increased by 46,887 inmates (up 2.1 percent) to reach 2,299,116 inmates. Two-thirds of the nation's custody population was in a state or federal prison (1,518,535), and the other one-third was held in local jails (780,581). At midyear 2007, there were an estimated 762 persons per 100,000 U.S. residents in prison or jail, up from 684 at yearend 2000.

On June 29, 2007, 62 percent of inmates held in local jails were awaiting court action or had not been convicted on their current charge, up from 56 percent in 2000. The largest jail jurisdictions — 173 with an average daily population of 1,000 or more inmates — accounted for 52% (402,300) of the jail population at midyear 2007.

During the 12 months that ended June 2007, local jail officials added slightly more beds (15,502) than inmates (14,571). Local jails operated at about 96 percent of their rated capacity at midyear 2007.

Based on jail jurisdictions that reported data, non-U.S. citizens accounted for nearly 8 percent of the jail population at midyear 2007, up from 7 percent in 2006 and 5.4 percent in 1999.

Black males comprised 35.5 percent of all inmates held in custody in the nation's prison and jails at midyear 2007. About 4.6 percent of all black males in the general population were in prison or jail, compared to 1.7 percent of Hispanic males and 0.7 percent of white males.

The report, *Prison Inmates at Midyear 2007* (NCJ-221944), was written by BJS statisticians William J. Sabol, Ph.D., and Heather Couture. The report, *Jail Inmates at Midyear 2007* (NCJ-221945), was written by BJS statisticians William J. Sabol, Ph.D., and Todd D. Minton. Following release, *Prison Inmates at Midyear 2007* can be found at: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/pim07.htm>, and *Jail Inmates at Midyear 2007* at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/jim07.htm>.

For additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics' statistical reports and programs, please visit the BJS Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs>.

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) provides federal leadership in developing the nation's capacity to prevent and control crime, administer justice and assist victims. OJP has five component bureaus: the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the National Institute of Justice; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; and the Office for Victims of Crime. Additionally, OJP has two program offices: the Community Capacity Development Office, which incorporates the Weed and Seed strategy, and the Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering and Tracking (SMART) Office. More information can be found at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov>.

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