

The Price of Juvenile Justice:

*Why Raising the Age
Makes Cents for New York*



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INTRODUCTION

On April 9, 2014, Governor Andrew Cuomo signed Executive Order 131, which established the Commission on Youth, Public Safety, and Justice, tasked with proposing recommendations to raise the age of juvenile jurisdiction from 16 to 18-years-of-age. The Commission promulgated 38 recommendations ¹ on implementation of raise the age reform. Yet as of this date, New York remains one of only two states, the other being North Carolina, that still sets the age of criminal responsibility at 16.

This report discusses the impact of existing law on 16- and 17-year-olds and the effect that raising the age will have on their lives. It also describes the cost savings and financial benefits that the state and society will receive as a result of raising the age. Finally, the report discusses key issues that the Independent Democratic Conference (IDC) will address with all stakeholders in the criminal justice system and hold a public hearing on this issue. This feedback and discussion will form the basis of a new IDC proposal on raising the age, to be introduced during the 2017 legislative session.

OVERVIEW

Raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction from 16 to 18 will have an enormous societal impact and improve the lives of thousands of teenagers as they enter young adulthood. Free from a criminal record and the effects of incarceration, 16- and 17-year-olds who have been treated as adults under the criminal justice system for committing non-violent offenses will be able to lead normal, healthy and productive lives.

In addition, raising the age will have a profound economic effect on the state of New York and its localities. Fewer arrested youths will result in fewer incarcerated youths, saving the state money on jail and detention costs, transport of youths to jails, detention centers and correctional facilities. Further, fewer youths with criminal convictions or in a criminal court jurisdiction will result in reduced costs for teens put on probation and parole who require supervision by the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision.

Equally important is the impact of avoided victims on society. Getting troubled juveniles the rehabilitation, mental health counseling and social service programs that they desperately need to turn around their lives will greatly reduce recidivism, resulting in a drop in crime for the public and a decline in future arrests. Each avoided victim yields a monetary benefit to New York, in addition to avoiding the emotional impact of being the victim of a crime. Similarly, there should be an expected drop in sexual assaults for youths housed in adult jails and correctional facilities.

¹ THE GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON YOUTH, PUBLIC SAFETY, AND JUSTICE, SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM IN NEW YORK STATE (2015), *available at* <https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/ExecutiveSummaryofCommissiononYouthPublicSafetyandJusticeRecommendations.pdf>

A major factor that this report estimates are the additional earnings that will result from avoiding a criminal record, having a criminal record sealed, and earning additional income instead of being incarcerated. Research has shown that youths without a criminal conviction are more likely to finish high school and obtain a college degree, resulting in higher earned income. Further, sealing provisions that will allow criminal conviction records to be private will allow youths to complete employment applications without having to report their criminal conviction. This will enhance their chances of obtaining employment. Finally, as a result of this employment, state and local governments will save costs in healthcare, public welfare programs, social welfare programs, and gain additional tax dollars in additional earnings.

THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF RAISING THE AGE

Methodology

In analyzing the economic benefits of the Executive's proposal, the IDC reviewed the savings to the state's criminal justice system, the financial benefits to New York of fewer potential victims, additional future earnings that youths will receive as a result of not having a criminal record and savings to the state from social service spending. In determining these costs and economic impacts the IDC used a variety of statistical evidence including but not limited to methodology and assumptions used by the Vera Institute of Justice, policy reports issued in other states that have recently implemented raise the age, and recent fiscal analysis performed by the state's Division of Budget.

Annual Fiscal Impact

Savings to the State's Criminal Justice System

Youths ages 16 and 17 who are treated as adults for crimes committed have a wide ranging economic impact on the criminal justice system. From the moment that a youth commits a crime, police officers are working to find the offender and arrest the person and prosecutors are spending time to bring criminal charges against the offender. Further, the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) is expending resources to transport the offender to a juvenile detention facility, adult jail such as Rikers Island, or correctional facility. During the criminal proceedings of a youth in criminal court, DOCCS spends money transporting a 16 or 17-year-old from court and meetings with his or her attorney and back to the detention facility, jail or correctional facility. Once a youth is released from incarceration, the teen may be on probation or parole, which requires DOCCS to spend additional state resources on the teen to determine compliance with the provisions of the teen's probation or parole.

Full implementation of raising the age should render significant cost savings and offsets to the criminal justice system with a projected 1,500 youths who will avoid jail, 620 youths who will avoid state prison, and 570 youths who will avoid parole supervision. There is also an expected decline in probation supervision (1,700 fewer youths) and parole supervision required (570

avoided youths), as well as criminal court prison transfers (710 fewer youths). Table 1 below² has a further breakout of these projected cost offsets and youths affected related to criminal justice services. When fully annualized, the program will save up to **\$117.11 million in criminal justice costs for the State of New York.**

Table 1. Criminal Justice Cost Offsets 16- and 17-Year-Olds

<u>Program Components</u>	<u>Average marginal cost</u>	<u>Number of units</u>	<u>Potential Savings to the State's Criminal Justice System Yearly</u>
Jail (detention)	\$89 per day x 365	1,000 youths served	\$32,485,000
Criminal court prison transfer	\$62 per day x 365	710 youths served	\$16,067,300
Probation supervision	\$7 per day x 365	1,700 avoided youths served	\$4,343,500
Jail	\$89 per day x 365	1,500 avoided youths served	\$48,727,500
Prison	\$62 per day x 365	620 avoided youths served	\$14,030,600
Parole supervision	\$7 per day x 365	570 avoided youths served	\$1,456,350
Totals	\$316 per day x 365	6,100 youths	\$117,110,250

Avoided Crime Victim Costs

Raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction will reduce recidivism by enhancing social service programs, family support networks, use of mental health counselors and intervening with troubled youths at the start of the criminal justice process. The reduction in the recidivism rate will have a direct impact on the number of arrests of youths for misdemeanors and felonies, and will cause a further decline of crime victims in the state of New York.

² NY State, Division of Budget, BC 2015-216 RTA Analysis: Breakout of Program Components and Cost Assumptions, Estimates extrapolated from DOB calculations

According to the Commission, full implementation of raising the age is expected to avoid between 1,500 and 2,400 crime victimizations every five years. An average number of crime victimizations avoided during a five-year period would be 1,950 with an average victimization reduction of 390 persons per year. In order to determine projected misdemeanor victimizations and felony victimizations avoided annually, a projection was assumed that 75% of all offenses are misdemeanors and 25% are felonies.

The 75-25% assumptions are based off data from the Division of Criminal Justice Services (“DCJS”) that indicated 74% of total arrests among 16- and 17-year-olds in 2013 were misdemeanors (24,725 of 33,414) with the remaining 26% of arrests consisting of violent and non-violent felonies (4,353 non-violent and 4,336 violent). Accordingly, the annual projected misdemeanor victimizations avoided upon raise the age implementation is 293 persons and felony victimizations avoided is 98.

Crimes studies and methodology used by the Vera Institute estimate that the average victim cost per misdemeanor is \$500 and the average victim cost per felony is \$4,000.³ The numbers are also based on the Vera Institute’s estimates of the average misdemeanor victim cost of vandalism (\$370), larceny (\$450), fraud (\$1,100), and theft (\$480). For felonies, the estimated cost of certain offenses ranges from aggravated assault (\$8,700), simple assault (\$4,500), motor vehicle theft (\$6,114), and robbery (\$3,299).

The total victimizations for misdemeanors and felonies and the average cost per victim yield the result of \$146,500 for avoided misdemeanor victimization benefits and \$392,000 for avoided felony victimization benefits.

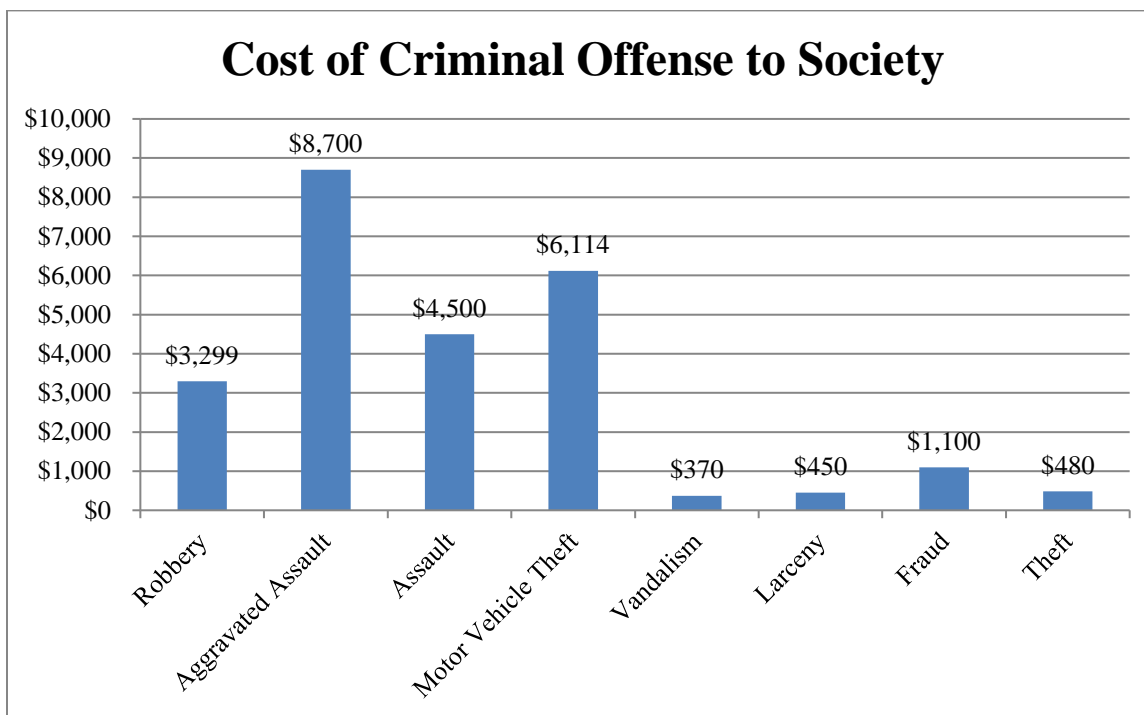
When fully phased in, raise the age will yield **\$538,500 in total annual avoided costs** related to the victims of crimes.

Table 2. Avoided Annual Victimization Costs per Youth Aged 16 and 17

	<u>Misdemeanors</u>	<u>Felonies</u>
Total victimizations avoided per year	293	98
Average Cost to Victim	\$500	\$4,000
Total Avoided Victim Cost	\$146,500	\$392,000
Total	\$538,500 per year	

³ Kathryn E. McCollister, Michael T. French & Hai Fang, The Cost of Crime to Society: New Crime-Specific Estimates for Policy & Program Evaluation, Drug & Dependence, Vol. 108(1) 98-109.

Chart 1. Cost of Criminal Offense to Society⁴



Avoided Juvenile Offender Sexual Assault Costs

Juveniles, including 16 and 17-year-olds who are placed in adult correctional facilities and adult jails find obstacles on their paths to find rehabilitation. Among those impediments are the threat and number of incidents of assaults, including sexual assaults. This has a direct emotional and physical toll on youths that will affect them for the duration of their lives. Researchers have also found costs associated with sexual assault during incarceration, including use of judicial resources, litigation and attorneys' fees, and jury awards for plaintiffs for damages and pain and suffering.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, approximately 4.8% of incarcerated youth are sexually assaulted, with juveniles five times more likely to be sexually assaulted in an adult facility rather than a juvenile facility. The Justice Policy Institute⁵ estimates the average jury award of a youth assaulted is \$206,933. This conservative estimate does not include litigation costs to the state and medical costs associated with victim. DCJS data indicates that 1,500 youths will avoid jail time and 620 youths will avoid prison time, totaling 2,120 youths who will avoid jail or prison time.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ Justice Policy Institute, *Sticker Shock: Calculating the Full Price Tag for Youth Incarceration* (2014), available at http://www.justicepolicy.org/uploads/justicepolicy/documents/sticker_shock_final_v2.pdf

Extrapolating the 2,120 persons and the 4.8% of sexual assaults across the juvenile incarcerated population, up to 102 persons may have been sexually assaulted while incarcerated. That could potentially lead to \$21.1 million annually in settlements or jury awards given to teens sexually assaulted while incarcerated.

Table 3. Avoided Sexual Assault Victimization Costs

	Avoided Youths	Number of Youths Sexually Assaulted (4.8%)	Cost of Lawsuit Per Youth	Total Amount of Lawsuits
Jail	1500	72	\$206,933	\$14,899,176
Prison	620	30	\$206,933	\$6,207,990
Totals	2,120	102	\$206,933	\$21,107,166

Additional Annual Earned Income

Another significant change from raising the age is the additional future earnings that 16- and 17-year-olds will receive as a result of no longer having a criminal record, which can be a deterrent for employers during the hiring process. According to a 2007 study “The Impact of Youth Criminal Behavior on Adult Earnings,” an arrested youth earns 22% less than a similarly situated youth without a criminal record; a criminal conviction lowers a youth’s earnings by 36% six years post-criminal conviction. Although federal law prohibits an employer from discriminating against an applicant or employee solely because of their criminal record, that prohibition is difficult to enforce.⁶ Moving cases out of criminal court for non-violent offenses and sealing a person’s record after ten years if there are no further criminal convictions will greatly enhance a person’s earning capacity.

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median weekly earnings in 2014 for a full-time worker with a high school degree was \$668 per week, for an annual salary of \$34,736; the median weekly earnings for a full-time worker without a high school degree was \$448, for an annual salary of 25,376.⁷ This equals a 37% decrease in earnings. Over the course of a 35-year career, this means that a full-time worker makes \$327,600 more than someone who does not have a high school degree.

Using the 36% decrease in earnings and a 72% assumed employment rate for a male with a high school degree from the Vera Institute, youths who no longer have a criminal conviction will earn \$9,360 more a year and \$327,600 in additional earnings over a 35-year career between ages 20 and 65. These additional earning figures are also consistent with findings from educational researchers that a male who finishes high school earns between \$117,000 and \$322,000 more than

⁶ U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Pre-Employment Inquiries and Arrest & Conviction, available at http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/practices/inquiries_arrest_conviction.cfm

⁷ US Dep’t of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Median Weekly Earnings by Educational Attainment in 2014*, Jan. 23, 2015.

a high school dropout⁸ because incarceration and a criminal conviction negatively impact a youth's ability to obtain a high school degree. Over a lifetime the earnings differential between a high school dropout and a college graduate is even larger: \$950,000 compared to \$1,387,000. For purposes of this analysis, the potential of a college degree is left out of the equation, comparing only the high school dropout with the high school graduate in earnings potential.

Table 4. Projected Earnings Comparison Based on High School Degree

	Projected Earnings (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)			
	Full-Time With High School Diploma	Full-Time Without High School Diploma Due to Criminal Conviction	Impacts	
Average Weekly Wage	\$668	\$488	-\$180	-37%
Average Annual Salary	\$34,736	\$25,376	-\$9,360	
Lifetime Earnings	\$1,215,760	\$888,160	-\$327,600	

In order to determine the total amount of additional earnings as a result of raise the age, the IDC first looked at the total number of youths most likely to no longer have a criminal conviction. As previously stated, DOB estimates that a total of 2,120 youths will avoid incarceration.

This figure does not include youths incarcerated for violent felony offenses. Data from the Children's Defense Fund shows that there were 1,400 violent felony convictions in 2013, which represented 4% of total arrests.⁹ Under the Executive's proposal, 16- and 17-year-olds arrested for most violent offenses would still have their cases originate in a criminal court jurisdiction including all Class A felonies, homicides, violent felony offenses, sexually-motivated felonies, terrorism crimes, felony vehicular assaults, aggravated criminal contempt, and conspiracy to commit or tampering with a witness related to any of these offenses.¹⁰ Youths convicted of these violent offenses are excluded from the earnings calculation.

Statistics show that about half of these 2,120 youths, or 1,060, will be reconvicted of another offense within the next three years, with the subsequent conviction likely being under a criminal court jurisdiction because the adjudication of the crime may occur once the person is over the age of 18. Of these 1,060 youths, the Vera Institute methodology estimates that 30% (318) of them will be reconvicted in the adult system in subsequent years, which would unseal their criminal

⁸ HENRY LEVIN, CLIVE BELFIELD, ET AL., THE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF AN EXCELLENT EDUCATION FOR ALL OF AMERICA'S CHILDREN (2016), available at: http://www3.nd.edu/~jwarlick/documents/Levin_Belfield_Muennig_Rouse.pdf

⁹ Joint Legislative Public Hearing on 2015-2016 Executive Budget Proposal: Public Protection, Before the State Senate Finance Committee and State Assembly Committee on Ways & Means, February 26, 2015 (testimony of Dacia Read & Beth Powers, Childrens Defense Fund).

¹⁰ See also Joint Legislative Public Hearing on 2015-2016 Executive Budget Proposal: Public Protection, Before the State Senate Finance Committee and State Assembly Committee on Ways & Means, February 26, 2015 (testimony of Soffiyah Elijah, Executive Director of The Correctional Association of New York).

records. This would leave a remainder of 742 affected youths who will never have a criminal record by being transferred out of criminal court jurisdiction on a non-violent felony offense.

In addition, if criminal records are sealed for many of the crimes discussed, estimates predict that 350 people annually who were previously convicted of misdemeanors and non-violent felonies will remain conviction free after ten years.¹¹ Combined with the 742 youths who will be without a criminal record, this totals 1,092 youths. The \$9,360 in additional earnings per youth extrapolated for 1092 youths totals **\$10.22 million in additional annual earnings**.

Table 5. Earnings Potential of Youths Ages 16 and 17 Who Will Be Without A Criminal Record

	Number of Youths	Additional Earnings Per youth	Total Additional Earnings
Annual	1092	\$9,360	\$10,221,120

Savings on Public Welfare Programs, Social Support Programs, and Healthcare

As pointed out in the previous section, by raising the age of criminal responsibility, the earnings potential of those teens who would have otherwise been incarcerated, will increase on average over \$9,000 a year. However, without this earning potential, many of these children will be forced to rely on government subsidies to maintain any degree of stability in their lives.

Researchers in one study on youth who lacked a college degree or a secure place in the labor market found that the government pays an additional \$360 in welfare payments and an additional \$430 in social support grants and programs for this population. By eliminating barriers to higher education and employment, these individuals will no longer rely on welfare. The state would have the potential of saving \$393,120 each year in welfare payments and \$469,560 in social services support grants.¹²

For healthcare costs, uneducated and unemployed youth impose a public health care burden of \$3,490 compared to the average youth cost of \$1,110, for a net cost on the public of \$2,380 per youth.¹³ This cost is attributed to more time spent obtaining mental health treatment, alcohol and substance abuse, and chronic disability costs. Removing 16 and 17 year olds from the criminal justice system and providing them with the rehabilitative services they need, will help reduce the health care costs of the state by \$2,598,960

Finally, youths without gainful employment or higher education, average \$750 in taxable income for state, federal and local governments compared to their working peers who average \$2,430.

¹¹ Press Release, *Governor Cuomo Offers Executive Pardons to New Yorkers Convicted of Crimes at Ages 16 and 17*, Dec. 21, 2015.

¹² CLIVE R. BELFIELD, HENRY M. LEVIN, & RACHEL ROSEN, *THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF OPPORTUNITY YOUTH* (2012).

¹³ *Id.*

This taxable revenue per youth is based on the lost earnings potential of between \$9,273 and \$9,800, depending on current research.¹⁴ That equals a net of \$1,680 in fewer tax dollars going to governmental entities. By providing a pathway to employment for these teens, state, federal and local governments would see a net gain of \$1,834,560 in tax revenues.

In total, cost savings in welfare payments, social support programs, and healthcare costs will total **\$3.46 million**.

Table 6. Welfare, Social Support Programs, Healthcare & Additional Tax Revenue

	Annual Number of Youths	Net Additional Amount Per Youth Each Year	Total
Welfare Payments	1092	\$360	\$393,120
Social Support Programs	1092	\$430	\$469,560
Healthcare	1092	\$2,380	\$2,598,960
Totals	1092	\$3,170	\$3,461,640

Additional Income Tax Revenue

As previously stated, raise the age will result in additional annual earnings for teens. Instead of incarceration, teens will be able to finish high school, earning additional income that is taxable by the state of New York.

The IDC has computed the potential amount of income tax gained in the first four years of implementation, when raise the age is fully annualized (table 7). When these calculations were made, the IDC assumes that the total number of youths per year without criminal records from this program will remain 1,092. The average salary of individuals with and without a high school diploma was computed based on statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and includes a 2% increase per year for cost of living adjustments. Table 7 shows that the average salary without a high school degree in 2021 is projected to be \$26,929 and with a high school degree is \$36,862. State income tax gained without a high school diploma is \$1,320 compared to income tax on earnings with a high school degree being \$1,913, for a net difference of \$593 in additional tax revenue per teen. That net difference extrapolated over 1,092 teens in 2021 is **\$0.6 million**.

¹⁴ *Id.*

Table 7. Additional New York State Income Tax Revenue 2018-2021¹⁵

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021
Avg. Salary without High School Diploma	\$ 25,376	\$ 25,884	\$ 26,401	\$ 26,929
Tax Rate	6.33%	6.21%	6.09%	5.97%
Avg. Salary with High School Diploma	\$ 34,736	\$ 35,431	\$ 36,139	\$ 36,862
Income Tax without High School Diploma	\$ 1,270	\$ 1,295	\$ 1,320	\$ 1,344
Income Tax with High School Diploma	\$ 1,863	\$ 1,888	\$ 1,913	\$ 1,937
Net Income Tax Gains Per Youth	\$ 592.488	\$ 592.881	\$ 593.053	\$ 592.697
Number of Youths	1092	1092	1092	1092
Total Income Tax Increase	\$ 646,997	\$ 647,426	\$ 647,614	\$ 647,550
Projected Lifetime Income Tax Revenue Increase				\$29,579,154

Lifetime Savings & Cost Benefits

Lifetime Criminal Justice Savings

In addition to the expected savings to the criminal justice system as a result of the expected downward trend in youth arrests, raise the age will also have expected long-term savings to the criminal justice system. For example, incarcerated youths may need to serve multiple years in a correctional facility due to a crime committed as a 16 or 17-year-old. Raise the age will result in reduced sentences for certain offenders and avoidance of incarceration for other offenders. Researchers in a 2012 study¹⁶ found that long-term or lifetime costs saved on each youth averages \$13,700. Extrapolated over the 1,092 youths impacted by raise the age, this will yield \$14.96 million in total lifetime criminal justice savings.

Table 8. Lifetime Criminal Justice Savings

	Number of Youths	Criminal Justice Savings Per Youth	Total Lifetime Criminal Justice Savings
Lifetime Savings	1092	\$13,700	\$14,960,400

¹⁵ These figures assume: A 2% annual salary improvement, a continuation of the 2025 tax rates, and a constant number of youths affected through 2053.

¹⁶ *Id.*

Lifetime Additional Earnings

Researchers in a 2012 study found that youths at a disadvantage compared to their peers in education and workforce development also have lower lifetime earnings. Using our figure of 1,092 youths affected by raise the age annually and the \$327,600 in additional income per youth from table 4, lifetime earnings over a 35-year career as a result of raise the age will be **\$357.73 million**.

Table 9. Lifetime Earnings Potential of Youths Ages 16 and 17 Who Will Be Without A Criminal Record

	Number of Youths	Additional Earnings Per youth	Total Additional Earnings
Lifetime Earnings	1092	\$327,600	\$357,739,200

Lifetime Savings on Welfare, Social Support Programs, Healthcare & Additional Tax Revenue

Researchers Clive Belfield, Henry Levin and Rachel Rosen also reviewed the potential lifetime benefits of opportunity youths, defined as youth who have dropped out of high school or college, have been involved in the criminal justice system, and are unable to find work. They found a direct correlation between being an opportunity youth and needing additional government services such as welfare and social support programs, and healthcare, over the teen's lifetime.

In comparison to teens who were not incarcerated and obtained a high school degree, opportunity youths required an additional lifetime payment of \$9,660 in welfare and social support programs. The \$9,660 in social service programs and welfare payments per youth, multiplied by the 1,092 youths affected by raise the age totals \$10,548,720 for welfare payments and social support programs.

Researchers also found a lifetime cost of \$41,870 for healthcare due to substance abuse and mental health counseling. By multiplying the \$41,870 by the number of youths (1,092), totals a cost of \$45,722,040 in health care costs over the lifetime of these youths. By moving these teens out of the criminal justice system, a lifetime savings is projected for welfare payments and social support programs, and healthcare.

These two categories of healthcare and welfare payments **total \$56.27 million**.

Table 10. Lifetime Savings on Welfare, Social Support Programs, and Healthcare.

	Annual Number of Youths	Lifetime Additional Amount Per Youth	Total
Welfare Payments & Social Support Programs	1092	\$9,660	\$10,548,720
Healthcare	1092	\$41,870	\$45,722,040
Totals	1092	\$51,530	\$56,270,760

Lifetime Additional Tax Revenue

Beginning in 2018 and extrapolating the net tax revenue per year of \$593, along with assuming a 2% cost of living adjustment, the IDC estimates that over a 35-year period, 1,092 teens who receive additional income under raise the age, would result in **\$29.57 million in additional taxes**.

Summary of Cost Savings and Financial Benefits

This analysis presents the economic benefits of raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction in New York to include most 16- and 17-year-olds under family court jurisdiction instead of being charged as adults. The report draws on research, fiscal numbers and analysis produced by the state's Division of Budget, the Vera Institute, Raise the Age coalition partners, and the effects of raising the age in other states.

The IDC finds that raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction would yield **\$152.99 million in annual savings** in New York State including: \$117.11 in criminal justice savings; \$0.5 million in avoided crime victim costs; \$21.1 million in avoided sexual assault victim costs; \$10.22 million in annual earnings benefits; \$3.46 million in avoided costs for public welfare programs, social support programs, and healthcare costs; and \$0.6 million in additional tax revenue for governmental entities.

The IDC also finds that raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction would yield **\$443.57 million in lifetime savings** including: \$357.73 million in lifetime additional earnings; and \$56.27 million in lifetime savings on welfare payments, social support programs, and public health care costs; and \$29.57 million in additional tax revenue. This additional tax revenue is based on the additional income earned as a result of obtaining a high school degree and secure place in the workforce.

Economic Impacts of Raise the Age

Financial Savings & Gains	Amount	Beneficiary
Criminal Justice Savings	\$117.11 M	To State
Avoided Crime Victim Costs	\$0.5 M	To Victims
Avoided Sexual Assault Costs	\$21.1 M	To State
Additional Earnings	\$10.22 M	To Youths
Avoided Costs for Public Welfare, Social Welfare Programs, & Healthcare	\$3.46 M	To Municipal, State and Federal
Additional Tax Revenue	\$0.6 M	To the State
ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACTS	\$152.99 M in Savings	To All Sources
Additional Lifetime Earnings	\$357.73 M	To Youths
Lifetime Savings on Welfare, Social Support Programs & Healthcare	\$56.27 M	To Municipal, State and Federal Governments
Additional Tax Revenue	\$29.57 M	To the State
LIFETIME FINANCIAL IMPACTS	\$443.57 M in Savings	To All Sources

ACHIEVING RAISE THE AGE

The IDC supports raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction and will make passing reforms a priority in the 2017 legislative session. Over the past few years, the IDC has led the way on paid family leave, universal pre-kindergarten, and gun control legislation, and we aim to be at the forefront of the raise the age campaign for the upcoming legislative session. Working in a bipartisan fashion with all participants in the criminal justice system, the IDC will hold hearings and engage with all stakeholders on this issue, culminating in a comprehensive proposal to be released in the coming weeks ahead. Together, we can change the lives of thousands of young people for a brighter future and safer communities.

The key areas that the IDC will focus on include:

Raising the Age

1. Raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction from 16 to 18 years old and raising the lower age of juvenile jurisdiction for juvenile delinquents from 7 to 12

Specialized Housing

2. Ensuring the safety and security of detained or incarcerated youths while enhancing social services and early intervention programs. Removing juveniles from adult correctional facilities and determining the location of state facilities for juveniles

Social Services & Rehabilitation

3. Expanding funding for rehabilitation and re-entry programs for youths, including new family support centers, additional mental health counseling, crisis intervention, clinic assessments, and community based programs

Juvenile Proceedings

4. Determining which criminal offenses juveniles should be tried as adults and which offenses should be adjudicated in non-criminal proceedings

Sealing of Criminal Records

5. Addressing the collateral consequences of a criminal record by determining which criminal offenses should be eligible for sealing of a criminal record and the time elapsed post-criminal conviction to be eligible for sealing.

Improving Arrest Procedures

6. Improving arrest procedures for juveniles by requiring police questioning to be conducted in rooms suitable for teenagers and requiring the presence of a juvenile's parent or guardian prior to questioning.

CONCLUSION

Events that occur in our youth are critical to the ability of an individual to become a successful and productive member of our society. Sometimes young individuals stray and commit criminal acts. When this happens, society needs to balance the need for justice and prevention of future crime with the ability to rehabilitate the individual so they can continue to contribute to society. The current system of treating youths who have committed non-violent crimes at 16 or 17 years of age as we do adult criminals is unbalanced – prioritizing punishment and minimizing the ability for these individuals to rejoin society effectively.

The IDC believes that we must recalculate our priorities and create a system that serves justice and gives these youths a chance to be net providers to society, as opposed to becoming a cost to it. Raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction from 16 to 18 will have an enormous societal impact and improve the lives of thousands of teenagers as they enter young adulthood. Individuals hampered with a criminal record are less likely to advance academically, secure employment, and very often end up back in the criminal system. These effects are most pronounced when this happens at a young age. Forging a system that prevents this from happening has long term positive benefits for society as a whole. This report has showcased how rehabilitating youths leads to lower recidivism, higher educational attainment, and higher lifetime wages that translate into higher revenues and lower costs for the state.

Since its inception the IDC has sought to turn rhetoric into results. Whenever possible, we have sought to quantify the tangible material benefits of enacting the policies we support, a strategy that we have found to be helpful in bridging ideological divides. This focus on policies that bring real, material improvements to the people of New York has been instrumental in successfully enacting a number of policies, including marriage equality, raising the minimum wage twice, and creating a paid family leave benefit for the workers of New York. The IDC is bringing this same focus and commitment to raising the age and our conference will not rest until we as a state can reach agreement to ensure that non-violent offenders 16 or 17-years-of-age are no longer incorrectly thrown into the adult correctional system.