Twitter Thread by Brad Haywood



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THREAD, PT DEUX -- it was a lovely long weekend, I'm feeling rested and energized, and lucky for you I've got some more great criminal justice policy ideas to share. Real exciting stuff, I promise. Let's flesh these out: 1/9

Ok, so to reduce unnecessary contacts between police and people/communities of color, here's what we're going to do: end the war on drugs. 2/9

Right now we needlessly make felons out of 10,000+ Virginians per year for narcotics possession, so for that we're going to end the war on drugs. 3/9

Reduce court fines and fees, prevent disenfranchisement, demilitarize police departments, eliminate mandatory minimums? I've got a great idea for those, as well: end the war on drugs 4/9

Oh, and police and prison budgets are bloated, driving state and municipal governments into debt, with no societal benefit to show for it. So in order to save a crap ton of cash we're also going to end the war on drugs 5/9

In redistributing $$ savings, racial equity is paramount. And we do that through reinvestment in Black communities, incl through poverty reduction programs demonstrated to lead to less drug use & lower crime, pretty much rendering pointless...you guessed it, the war on drugs 6/9

Two bills in 2021 hold the most promise in this regard: legalization of marijuana & defelonization of simple drug possession. The latter (no bill # yet) is patroned by @SallyLHudson and would make possession of a Schedule I/II narcotic a misdemeanor instead of a felony 7/9

If you think that sounds controversial, ask yourself, if we had NO drug laws right now, how would you propose to treat people caught with drugs? Would you put them in prison? Take away their civil rights? Stamp them with a scarlet letter that impedes employment/housing/etc? 8/9

Oh, you wouldn't do that? Then why are we doing it now? Maybe we ought to stop, huh? @SallyLHudson's bill wouldn't affect punishment for drug dealing, it would just allow us to start treating drugs as what they are: not a crime, and at most a public health problem 9/9