

# fact sheet



## Projected vs. real costs

Raise the Age campaigns often face inflated cost estimates from opponents. We found a good strategy was to make people explain their estimates in detail — including the assumptions that went into the estimates.

### **Cost to municipalities**

Connecticut police chiefs projected that municipalities would have to reconfigure police lock-ups because 16- and 17-year-olds could not be held with adults if the age of juvenile jurisdiction rose to 18. One town's police chief said that it would need to build an entirely new police station if the bill became law.

The bill addressed logistical challenges of separating juveniles from adults in holding areas. In truth — since most towns only arrest a few 16- or 17-year-olds a month — these challenges are not major. The actual cost to towns was \$0.

### **Cost to state**

There was a cost associated with providing services for older youth within the juvenile justice system, but it was less than projected. Cost estimates for Raise the Age rarely take into account that the youth crime rate is still dropping.

Adding 16-year-olds to the juvenile justice system was projected to increase its size by 40 percent. In reality, it only increased system size by 22 percent. In fiscal years 2010 and 2011, the state spent \$12 million less than it had budgeted for the reform.\*

\* Source: *Juvenile Justice Reform in Connecticut: How Collaboration and Commitment Have Improved Public Safety and Outcomes for Youth*, Justice Policy Institute