

RIGHT ON CRIME

GOING ROGUE:

How Radical, Reformist Prosecutors
Are Endangering Public Safety



WRITTEN BY

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GOING ROGUE: HOW RADICAL, REFORMIST PROSECUTORS ARE ENDANGERING PUBLIC SAFETY

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KEY POINTS

- **Rogue prosecutors are undermining laws** throughout the nation, issuing official memos or informal orders to not prosecute certain types or classes of crimes.
- **Going against the national trend**, many cities with rogue prosecutors have experienced rising crime rates in certain categories of offenses.
- **Many states have taken** different measures to address the rogue prosecutor problem with differing outcomes.
- **Lawmakers have several formidable policy solutions** at their disposal to swiftly reign in dangerous, rogue prosecutors, individually or in conjunction for maximum effect.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Despite decades of bipartisan criminal justice reform and declining national crime rates, several U.S. cities have experienced increases in crime under the leadership of rogue prosecutors who abuse their discretion by refusing to enforce laws they disagree with and instead pursue lenient charges against violent criminals. These district and county attorneys implement formal or informal non-prosecution policies that violate their sworn duties, undermine the rule of law, and erode public trust in the justice system. Data from the FBI indicates that during the tenure of these prosecutors, occurrences of several major crimes, such as murder and aggravated assault, rose. The crime rates in cities like Austin, Philadelphia, and Minneapolis illustrate correlations between the implementation of reformist prosecutorial policies and some rises in violent and property crime (FBI, n.d.). States, like Texas, have responded by enacting laws to enable the public to remove such officials.

Rogue prosecutors continue to refuse to enforce certain laws for political purposes, despite previous legislative attempts to address the issue. This paper evaluates several innovative policy solutions to address the issue in Texas, including the creation of a Statewide District Attorney's Office, led by a Chief State Prosecutor; the establishment of an oversight commission; the formation of regional judicial districts; and the expansion of the Attorney General's prosecutorial authority. These solutions may also be replicated in other states. Texas must adopt a strengthened, statewide framework to ensure uniform enforcement of state law, preserve public safety, and restore confidence in our criminal justice system.

INTRODUCTION

Decades after the implementation of bipartisan criminal justice reform policies that focus on evidence-based, cost-effective solutions, national crime rates have declined dramatically since their peak in the 1990s (Lopez, 2026). Crimes ranging from homicide to petty theft are down in most major cities (Lopez, 2026). The keyword here is *most*. There are cities throughout our nation that have elected officials who refuse to enforce legitimate federal, state, or even local laws (Stimson, 2023). These officials are commonly referred to as “rogue prosecutors.” Often coinciding with the election of these officials are rises in crime, against national trends.

Rogue prosecutors are elected district and county attorneys who implement blanket policies (either formally through a memo or informally through unwritten, office-wide “policies”) that defy laws, thereby violating their sworn oath of office to preserve public safety and, as a result, compromising the rule of law (Altman, n.d.). Many states have enacted laws to combat rogue prosecutors, including processes for removal and providing strict interpretations of official misconduct for which these officials can be ousted. In Texas, for example, official misconduct is defined as “intentional, unlawful behavior relating to official duties by an officer entrusted with the administration of justice or the execution of the law” (Texas Local Government Code Sec. 87.011). The statute goes on to clarify that this can include “failure, refusal or neglect” to follow the law, including issuing and enforcing policies of refusal to prosecute certain classes or types of criminal offenses (Texas Local Government Code Sec. 87.011).

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics’ National Crime Victimization survey in 2024, 68% of property crime victims did not even report their crimes to law enforcement (BJS, 2024). Forty-one percent of property crime victims and 23.3% of violent crime victims cited that they did not report their crime to law enforcement because they did not believe that the police could or would do anything (BJS, 2024).

When local prosecutors are not enforcing laws passed by our elected state officials, public safety is jeopardized, the rule of law is undermined, and public faith in our institutions is eroded. Research has shown that when prosecutors have higher conviction rates, mortality rates decline (Bencsik & Giles, 2026). Although there have been valiant attempts to address this issue nationwide, states across the country, including Texas, still have elected officials who are derelict in their duties to enforce the law and, thus, deny justice to victims. The Texas Legislature should enact a statewide framework to address failures to prosecute serious crimes and improve public safety. This paper will explore a variety of policy solutions that can be enacted alone or jointly to address the rogue prosecutor problem plaguing localities.

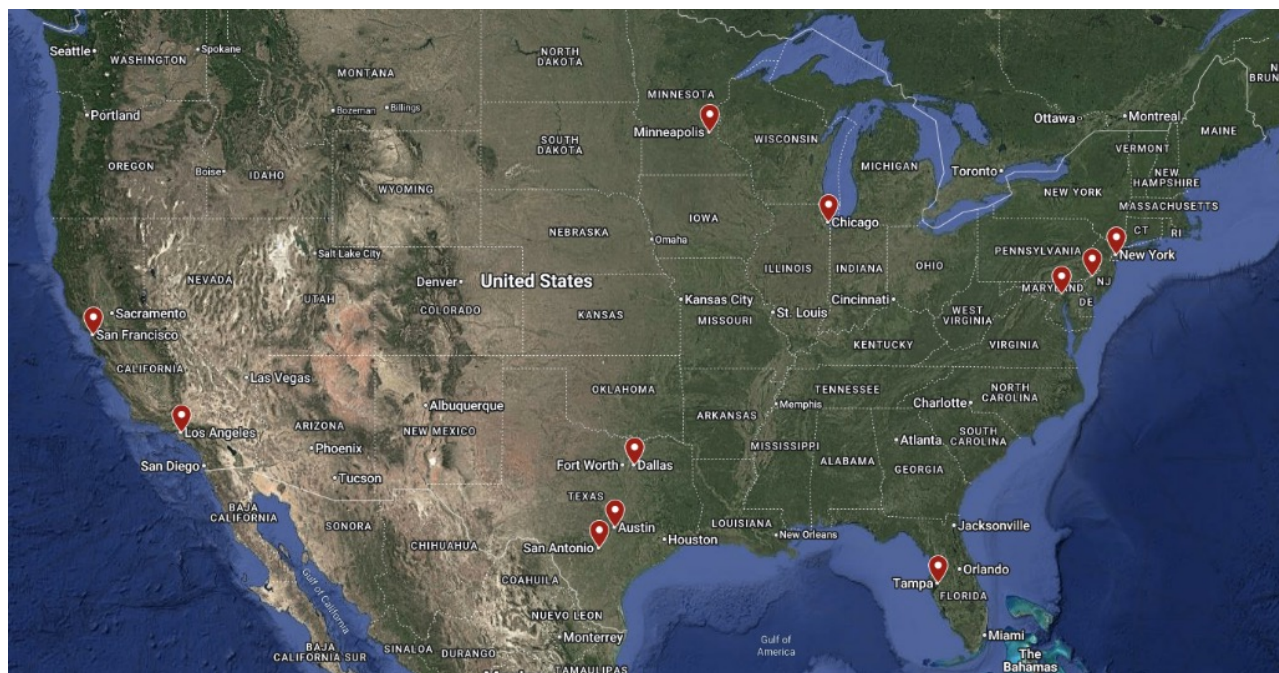
ROGUE PROSECUTORS DEFY STATE LAWS IN MAJOR U.S. CITIES

While many district and county attorneys who refuse to prosecute certain crimes never make news headlines, there are several that regularly capture the public’s attention. Rogue prosecutors are not confined to red or blue states but tend to be elected in progressive-minded cities like Austin, Texas, and Minneapolis, Minnesota. Most of these officials were elected in the late 2010s and early 2020s. Some have retained their office and have won re-election, while others have been successfully removed from their posts by an outraged public or governor.

Nationally Prominent Rogue Prosecutors

In 2014, Marilyn Mosby, a self-proclaimed “reformist” prosecutor, was elected as the State Attorney from Baltimore, Maryland. Shortly after taking office, major violent crimes, including murder, rape, aggravated assault, and robbery, surged (Stimson & Smith, 2020). In 2021, Mosby announced that her office would no longer prosecute drug possession, prostitution, trespassing, certain traffic violations, and other minor offense cases—in direct violation of state law (Jackman, 2021). Crime rose steeply again, with increases in homicide, aggravated assault, and robbery (Council on Criminal Justice, 2025). This followed a decrease in crime experienced during

Figure 1
Major U.S. Cities with Rogue Prosecutors



Note: Image from [Stimson, 2023](#).

the Covid-19 pandemic when Mosby announced her non-prosecution policies ([Council on Criminal Justice, 2025](#)). In 2022, Mosby was indicted on perjury and fraud charges and subsequently lost her re-election campaign ([Witte, 2022](#)). Crime rates have significantly declined since she left office in 2023, with her successor reversing many of her non-prosecution policies ([Council on Criminal Justice, 2025](#); [Mann, 2023](#)).

In 2016, voters in Cook County, Illinois, (home of Chicago), elected prosecutor Kim Foxx. Upon taking office, she instituted radical bail-reform policies that included dropping hundreds of bail violation cases ([Richards & Jackson, 2020](#)). Between 2016 and 2019, the state attorney's office dropped nearly 30% of charges against felony defendants—a 50% increase from her predecessor ([Richards & Jackson, 2020](#)). In that same time frame, the rates for several categories of violent crimes rose in Chicago ([Smith & Stimson, 2020](#)). Although re-elected in 2020, Foxx chose not to run for re-election in 2024 amid widespread criticism

for soft-on-crime policies and for her role in fumbling the widely publicized Jussie Smollett case ([Jordan & Wall, 2023](#)). Today, she is widely regarded as one of the first rogue prosecutors and an influential one at that, setting the stage for future radical district attorneys ([Smith & Stimson, 2020](#)).

In 2017, Philadelphians elected Larry Krasner, a radical district attorney who implemented office-wide policies that included declining charges for certain crimes such as prostitution, marijuana possession, and other drug charges ([Philadelphia District Attorney Office, 2018](#)). He also demanded that no bail be set in retail theft cases and ordered prosecutors to seek diversion whenever possible in cases involving firearms and intoxicated driving ([Philadelphia District Attorney Office, 2018](#)). After Krasner took office, Philadelphia residents experienced a rise in non-fatal shootings, aggravated assaults, retail thefts, auto thefts, and homicides ([Stimson, 2024](#)). Krasner quickly garnered local and statewide criticism that resulted in an impeachment

by the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in 2022. The charges against him were improper use of prosecutorial discretion and the implementation of ineffective crime-combatting policies, leading to public safety concerns for the City of Philadelphia. The articles of impeachment specifically cited rises in violent crime under Krasner's leadership ([Pennsylvania House Republican Caucus, 2022](#)). Although impeached, the disgraced district attorney was not removed from office due to a technicality ([AP News, 2024](#)). The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania ruled in 2024 that the state constitution does not allow the House and Senate in subsequent sessions to act on matters that were begun in prior session ([AP News, 2024](#)). Despite widespread criticism and condemnation of his policies, Krasner was re-elected in 2025 ([MacDonald & Rinde, 2025](#)).

In 2020, voters in Los Angeles County, California, elected George Gascon, a rogue prosecutor who previously served as the district attorney for San Francisco County. Upon taking office, Gascon implemented radical, sweeping policy changes in the country's largest local government prosecutorial office. Under his leadership, the Los Angeles County district attorney's office no longer sought cash bail for "misdemeanor, non-serious, or nonviolent" crimes and promised to no longer seek capital punishment for any offense ([Munoz & Cota-Robles, 2020](#)). Gascon also promised to resentence all inmates currently housed on death row to life in prison sentences ([Munoz & Cota-Robles, 2020](#)). Crimes that Gascon's office announced he no longer intended to prosecute included trespassing, disturbing the peace, driving without a license, making criminal threats, drug possession, public intoxication, loitering to commit prostitution, and resisting arrest ([ABC7, 2020](#)). Los Angeles law enforcement quickly objected to these blanket policies of non-prosecution, insisting that they would "further victimize Los Angeles residents, especially Black and Hispanic residents who currently make up 70% of violent crime victims" ([Munoz & Cota-Robles, 2020](#)). Los Angeles County has since elected a new district attorney.

San Francisco, California, swapped one reformist district attorney for another in 2020. Chesa Boudin ran on a reformist platform, promising to reduce mass incarceration, establish a more equitable justice system, and vowing to not prosecute "quality of life" crimes ([Harvard Law Review, 2023](#)). Under the leadership of Boudin, prosecutors sought out shorter carceral sentences and more diversion programs. This came as San Francisco experienced increases in theft, organized crime, and racially motivated crimes ([Harvard Law Review, 2023](#)). Outraged voters in San Francisco felt that his policies were too lenient and created a safe haven for criminals. As a result, just one and a half years into his role, Boudin faced a citizen-initiated recall election that proved successful. He was removed officially in 2022 ([Harvard Law Review, 2023](#)). The mayor of San Francisco also faced criticism for the rise in crime. He was not recalled, but lost reelection in 2024 ([Harvard Law Review, 2023](#)).

In 2022, nearly two years after the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Hennepin County voters elected radical progressive Mary Moriarty ([Ibrahim, 2022](#)). Since taking office, Moriarty has received widespread criticism for her emphasis on pursuing lenient charges and plea deals for violent offenders, which she views as focusing criminal justice reform policy on rehabilitation rather than punishment ([Hyatt, 2023](#)). Additionally, Moriarty has sought harsh charges against law enforcement officers in use-of-force cases ([Manix, 2024](#)). Under her leadership, Hennepin County began to consider race as a factor in plea deal negotiations ([Rantala, 2025](#)). As of 2026, Moriarty still holds office but will not run for reelection ([Ryan & Brown, 2025](#)).

Other Examples

From 2017 to 2025, Andrew Warren, the State Attorney from Hillsborough County, Florida, issued policies in his office to not prosecute cases that he did not personally or morally agree with, such as state laws related to abortion and gender-affirming care for minors ([Executive Office of the Governor of Florida,](#)

2022). Warren also allegedly pursued lesser charges for defendants convicted of first-time offenses ([Executive Office of the Governor of Florida, 2022](#)). As a result of his direct disregard for state laws, the Governor of Florida suspended him in 2022 ([Executive Office of the Governor of Florida, 2022](#)). The Supreme Court upheld this suspension in 2024, and a new state attorney took office in 2025 ([Eisen & Subramanian, 2024](#)).

In 2022, Manhattan elected district attorney Alvin Bragg, who ran on a reformist platform. He issued a memo upon taking office instituting a policy of non-prosecution for marijuana, prostitution, and fare evasion offenses ([CBS, 2022](#)). Additionally, Bragg encouraged staff to pursue lesser charges for less serious drug offenses, burglary offenses, and store robberies where a weapon is present but presents no “genuine risk of physical harm” ([CBS, 2022](#)). As of 2026, Bragg remains in office.

Texas Rogue Prosecutors

In 2020, Travis County (which includes Austin) voters elected progressive district attorney, Jose Garza. Garza vowed on the campaign trail, even before taking office, to not prosecute several offenses in direct disobedience of the state legislature and to prosecute law enforcement officers harshly ([Sanders, 2024](#)). He has set a precedent within his office of not prosecuting abortion or drug possession offenses ([Sanders, 2024](#)). He has pursued aggressive charges against police officers and has fumbled high profile homicide cases, releasing dangerous offenders back onto the streets of Austin and denying many victims due justice ([Hogan, 2025](#)). The Austin Police Association has accused him of “emboldening criminals” ([Freeman, 2024](#)). Although he has faced multiple removal efforts under the Texas Legislature’s Rogue Prosecutor law, he has yet to be successfully removed ([Fogel, 2024](#)). This is largely because no official memo or other document specifically detailing policies of non-prosecution has been distributed to attorneys in the office. Texas’s Rogue Prosecutor law only prohibits blanket, official non-prosecution policies ([HB 17, 2023](#)). Garza

won re-election in 2024, despite law enforcement and sizable public opposition ([Freeman, 2024](#)).

Although Austin, Texas, might have the most infamous rogue prosecutor, other major cities in the state have district attorneys who have run on progressive, reformist platforms and have unofficial non-prosecution or leniency policies. San Antonio District Attorney, Joe Gonzales, first elected in 2018, has been accused of having soft on crime prosecution policies ([Marfin, 2019](#)). For example, in 2019, he gave local law enforcement officers the option to issue tickets for certain drug, theft, and traffic misdemeanors in lieu of jail time ([Marfin, 2019](#)). In Dallas, Texas, the district attorney, John Creuzot, announced that he would no longer pursue charges against low-level, first time drug offenders ([Marfin, 2019](#)). While prosecutor and officer discretion are important and cases should be evaluated individually, all public servants must follow the law and not implement contradictory blanket policies. All of the aforementioned Texas district attorneys in three of the state’s largest cities have received substantial funding from radical, progressive billionaires via the Texas Justice and Public Safety PAC ([Schoffstall, 2022](#)).

In 2026, Travis County District Attorney Jose Garza, along with nine other progressive district attorneys (including Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner, Minneapolis District Attorney Mary Moriarty, and Dallas District Attorney John Creuzot) launched an organization called the Project for the Fight Against Federal Overreach (aka FAFO), with the primary purpose of prosecuting federal law enforcement officials accused of misconduct in their respective jurisdictions ([Dewan, 2026](#)). This group was created in response to the killings by federal agents in recent months in Minneapolis and aligns with the rogue prosecutors movement’s prioritization of pursuing harsh penalties against law enforcement officers accused of misconduct ([Dewan, 2026](#)).

AN ANALYSIS OF CRIME RATES IN CITIES WITH ROGUE PROSECUTORS

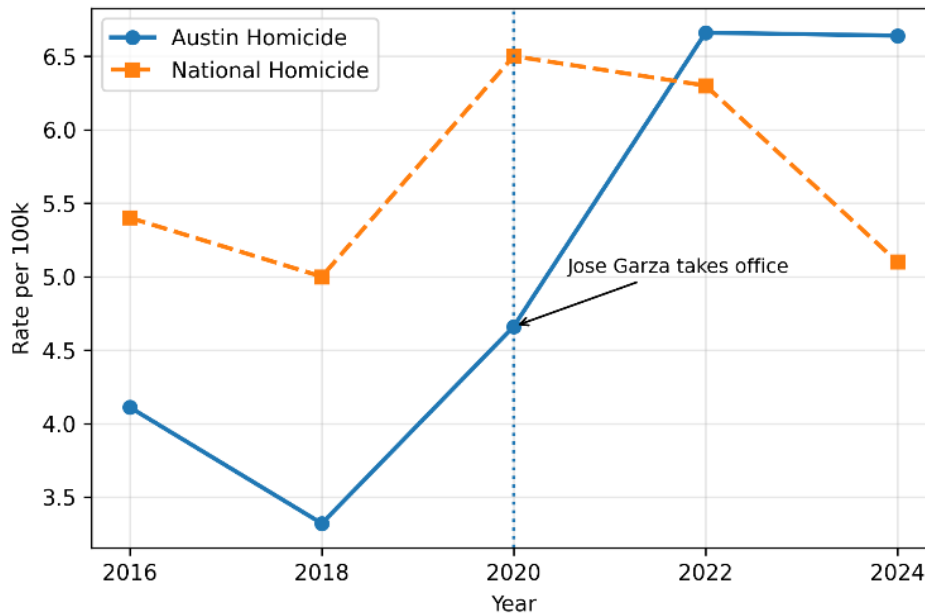
The rise of rogue prosecutors and their reformist policies began in the mid- to late 2010s. To examine what crime in those cities looked like before and after these district and county attorneys took office, the FBI's crime data portal provides some insight. Looking into nine major cities, it is evident that some serious, violent crimes, as well as major property crimes, have risen during the tenure of some of these prosecutors. Tables of crime rates, derived from official FBI data, for Austin, Baltimore, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, San Antonio, and San Francisco from 2016 to 2024 are in the appendix. Although it would be spurious to say the election of these attorneys caused a rise in crime, it would be unwise to forgo a scrutinous examination of the correlation.

The most notable rises in crime from 2016 to 2024 occurred in Philadelphia, Minneapolis, Chicago, and Baltimore. In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the aggravated assault, arson, larceny theft, and motor vehicle theft rates climbed dramatically from 2016 to 2024 (FBI, n.d.). The Philadelphia rogue prosecutor, Krasner, was elected in 2017. During his time in office, the aggravated assault rate rose almost 20% (FBI, n.d.). The overall major property crime rate rose by over 43%, and larceny-theft climbed by over 35% (FBI, n.d.). Motor vehicle theft in the city nearly tripled (FBI, n.d.). From 2016 to 2024, Minneapolis experienced an 112% rise in homicide (FBI, n.d.). Violent crime and property crime have both risen in the city during that same period, with climbs in aggravated assault, arson, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft (FBI, n.d.). Minneapolis's current rogue prosecutor, Mary Moriarity, took office in 2022. In Chicago, property crime rate rose about 5% from 2016 to 2024, the exact period that the reformist prosecutor, Kim Foxx, held office (FBI, n.d.). The highest rise was in motor vehicle theft rate, which nearly doubled in Chicago (FBI, n.d.). Baltimore also experienced a large increase in motor vehicle theft during the same time that reformist prosecutor, Marilyn Mosby, held office (FBI, n.d.).

Focusing on Texas, the city of Austin has experienced the most dramatic surges in violent and property crimes. Between 2016 and 2024, Austin saw its homicide rate climb by over 60%.

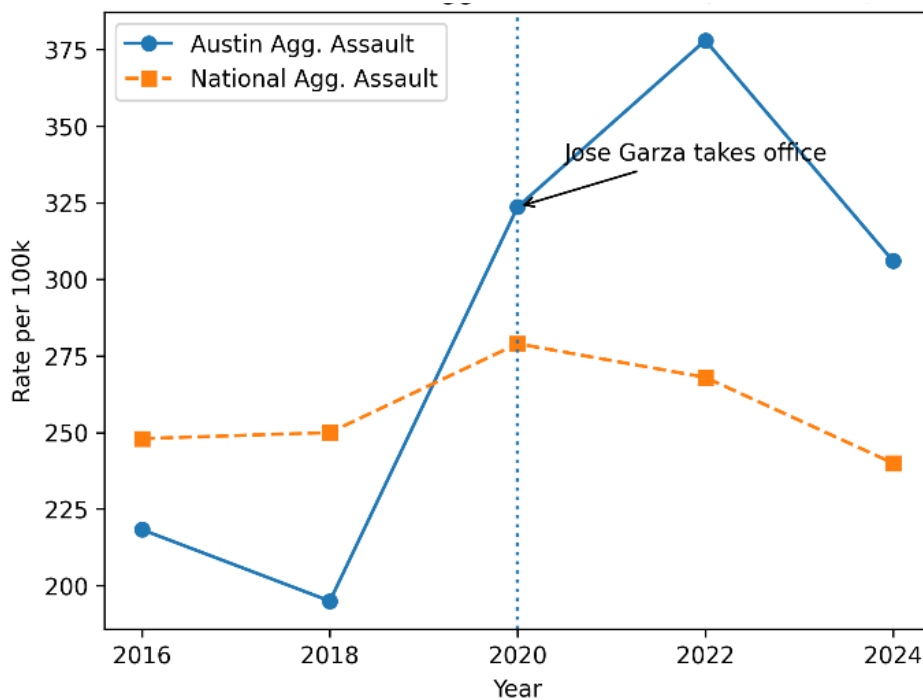
Focusing on Texas, the city of Austin has experienced the most dramatic surges in violent and property crimes. Between 2016 and 2024, Austin saw its homicide rate climb by over 60% (see Figure 2) (FBI, n.d.). The aggravated assault rate in the city rose over 40% (see Figure 3), and arson and motor vehicle theft (see Figure 4) have nearly doubled in the same time frame (FBI, n.d.). Meanwhile, San Antonio saw a doubling in its motor vehicle theft rate and a short-lived rise in its homicide rate, which has since subsided (FBI, n.d.). Dallas experienced a nearly 28% jump in aggravated assaults and a near doubling of its motor vehicle theft rate (FBI, n.d.). Statewide, Texas has seen a rise in motor vehicle theft, but most other crimes have had a notable decline in the same period, albeit a temporary crime rise in 2022 that was experienced nationally (FBI, n.d.). The correlation of the election of rogue prosecutors in the Lone Star State and rises in crime that are comparable to America's most dangerous cities cannot be disregarded.

Figure 2
Austin vs. National Homicide Rates (2016-2024)



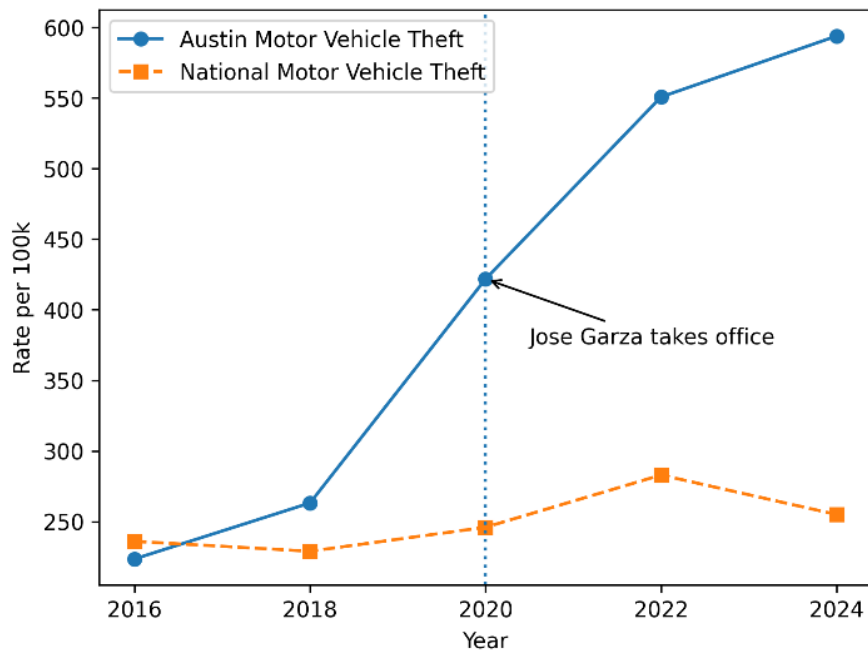
Note: Data from [FBI, n.d.](#)

Figure 3
Austin vs. National Aggravated Assault Rates (2016-2024)



Note: Data from [FBI, n.d.](#)

Figure 4
Austin vs. National Motor Vehicle Theft Rates (2016–2024)



Note: Data from [FBI, n.d.](#)

EXISTING STATE ROGUE PROSECUTOR REMOVAL PROCESSES

Even before the rogue prosecutor movement crept its way through the nation, many states had statutes to safeguard citizens from corrupt public officials. Twenty-nine states (seen in green in **Figure 5**) allow for citizen-initiated removal of rogue prosecutors ([AFPI, 2024](#)).

The ability to recall prosecutors is clearly not a red state or blue state policy. States from across the ideological spectrum allow for citizen recall. Some states also allow the governor or state legislature to remove prosecutors, which has been utilized. As discussed above, Florida Governor DeSantis was able to remove Andrew Warren, the state attorney from Hillsborough County, for his reform pledges to not prosecute certain crimes, in direct violation of state law ([Executive Office of the Governor of Florida, 2022](#)). The removal was later upheld by the Florida Supreme Court ([Eisen & Subramanian, 2024](#)).

Around the same time that the country saw the election of rogue prosecutors, many state legislatures responded by passing laws to protect citizens from rogue district attorneys who refused to fulfill their official duties and who abused their prosecutorial discretion.

In 2019, Pennsylvania lawmakers passed a bill to expand the prosecutorial powers of the attorney general to include certain offenses, including firearms-related offenses ([HB 1614, 2019](#)). This was enacted as a direct result of the election of the Philadelphia district attorney, Larry Krasner, who ran on a progressive platform that included the harsh prosecution of firearm offenses, as well as the non-prosecution of several offenses including prostitution and drug offenses ([Camacho et al., 2023](#)).

In 2021, the Tennessee Legislature enacted a bill that triggers alternative prosecution arrangements when a local prosecutor institutes a policy that blanketly prohibits the prosecution of certain

AN EXPLORATION OF COURSES OF ACTION FOR TEXAS

Despite the enactment of HB 17 in 2023, rogue prosecutors throughout the State of Texas still refuse to enforce legitimate state laws, consequently endangering public safety and depriving crime victims of due justice. Policymakers and advocacy groups have floated several different solutions to this issue. One solution is to create a statewide prosecutor. Another option involves creating a commission to oversee the affairs of district attorneys and have the power to remove rogue actors. This power could also be delegated to an existing commission. Other viable alternatives include expanding the prosecutorial powers of the Attorney General of Texas or creating regional judicial districts with elected judges and prosecutors who would have original jurisdiction over cases involving major crimes.

Chief State Prosecutor

A Chief State Prosecutor would serve as a statewide district attorney, created by the legislature, and would have the power to take major crime cases from any other district or county attorney's office in the state. Major crimes are serious felony offenses such as those listed in ¹

[Article 5, Section 21 of the Texas Constitution](#) authorizes the Texas Legislature to create district attorney offices at their discretion. This would not create a statewide office that necessitates an election and would be appointed by the state's governor and confirmed by the Texas Senate. [Article 5, Section 21](#) specifies that the Texas Legislature *may* allow for the election of district attorney but does not explicitly require an election.

The office of the Chief State Prosecutor would have the power to prosecute cases that local jurisdictions refuse and high-profile cases that take up a lot of

manpower, especially in rural counties. This could dramatically benefit rural counties, thereby reducing departmental caseloads and giving them the ability to focus their resources elsewhere.

Creating the Chief State Prosecutor position offers many benefits. The Texas Attorney General does not currently possess the power to prosecute criminal cases that have been neglected by city officials (*The State of Texas vs. Stephens, 2022*). A new office with broad prosecutorial authority would need to be created, barring granting the attorney general this power. Giving this power to the attorney general would be met with legislative hurdles, such as passing a constitutional amendment with bipartisan, bicameral support in the state legislature.

This solution also solves the problem of uniformity in prosecution and enforcement of state law throughout all 254 counties. Texans' access to justice should not be dependent on where they reside in the state. All victims deserve to have their case thoroughly reviewed regardless of whether they live in a big, blue city or a small, red town. There should be uniformity among local jurisdictions in the enforcement of state law.

Lastly, the process of removing a district attorney from office is lengthy, and during that time, countless cases could be left unresolved. With a Chief State Prosecutor, the office could take up cases with original jurisdiction and without having to petition for removal and go through all sorts of legal proceedings for crime victims to receive the justice they deserve.

The creation of this office may generate some criticism, such as centralizing power (i.e., prosecutorial authority) that was intentionally decentralized to promote local authority and freedom from a powerful

¹ Crimes listed in Chapter 42A.054, Texas Code of Criminal Procedure include murder, capital murder, aggravated kidnapping, trafficking of persons, continuous trafficking of persons, indecency with a child, sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault, injury to a child, elderly individual, or disabled individual, aggravated robbery, burglary, aggravated promotion of prostitution, compelling prostitution, sexual performance by a child, possession or promotion of pornography, use of a child in the commission of an offense, or use of a deadly weapon in the commission of the offense.

state government. Critics may also argue that the 2023 rogue prosecutor bill already addressed this issue, and if changes are needed, those should be made to the existing law. Lastly, a chief prosecutor may also be viewed as a new level of government, going against the typical conservative mantra of smaller government and personal liberty.

Oversight Commission

The State of Texas established a Prosecuting Attorneys Coordinating Council in 1977 with the purpose of providing legal education, professional development, and technical training to local district attorney offices. It was dissolved in 1985 due to redundancy in training and lack of funding. In 2023, lawmakers introduced HB 200 to resurrect the Council with the purpose of disciplining county and district attorneys ([HB 200, 2023](#)). This was seen as an alternative to the rogue prosecutor bill, HB 17, that eventually passed. The State of Texas could choose to resurrect this council with the purpose of creating a mechanism by which to discipline rogue district attorneys.

Alternatively, the Legislature could give the power to discipline these rogue prosecutors to an existing commission, such as the Commission on Judicial Conduct. This would likely require statutory changes and potentially a constitutional amendment if the state granted the commission the power to remove district attorneys found to be incompetent or engaged in misconduct.

Regional Districts

Similar to the Chief State Prosecutor proposal, the Texas Legislature could opt to create regional district attorney offices under [Article 5, Section 21 of the Texas Constitution](#). In the 89th Texas Legislature, lawmakers proposed a bill that created five regional judicial districts divided among the five largest cities in the state and surrounding rural areas ([SB 2384, 2023](#)). Each of these districts would have its own prosecutors and judges.

Creating regional districts has several benefits. It may or may not require a constitutional amendment based on the interpretation of Article 5. Additionally, this would give rural counties with corrupt district attorneys other avenues for justice and alleviate the burden on local county and district attorney offices overwhelmed with cases.

This option, however, does come with some cons worth considering. There might be some push-back against creating another level of government, especially from limited-government conservatives. Additionally, this would be a more expensive option than creating a single statewide attorney, and it would require more funding from the state. If these positions were elected—which the public would probably demand—the same dark money that is behind the election of the rogue prosecutors in our cities now could infect those regional district offices as well. Additionally, this does not solve the issue of uniformity in prosecution like a statewide district attorney would. There would still be the potential for uneven enforcement and prosecution if rogue prosecutors and judges were elected to these regional positions.

Expand Prosecutorial Powers of the Attorney General

Since the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals ruling in 2022, the Attorney General of Texas has been unable to prosecute most criminal cases ([The State of Texas v. Stephens, 2022](#)). Texas could pursue expanding the prosecutorial powers of the attorney general; however, this would require a constitutional amendment and the support of members of both parties in the state legislature. This would be an incredibly difficult hurdle to overcome, given the often-partisan nature of the office.

CONCLUSION

Rogue prosecutors undermine the rule of law, endanger the public, and deprive victims of crime due justice. There must be a mechanism by which those in power who choose not to enforce the law can be held accountable. This will restore confidence in our justice system and our republic. Several viable solutions exist to address this issue in Texas, whether

that means creating a new position of the Chief State Prosecutor, expanding the current prosecutorial powers of the attorney general, creating a new oversight commission, or establishing new regional district attorney offices that can seek justice when local officials fail to answer the call. It may also be valuable to jointly enact several of these solutions to maximize effectiveness. ■

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Austin, Texas, Violent and Property Crime Rates (2016–2024)

Austin Crime Rate (per 100k)	2016 (947,897)	2018 (964,243)	2020 (965,872)	2022 (975,335)	2024 (993,771)
Violent Crime	411.75	385.80	508.45	546.88	470.44
Homicide	4.11	3.32	4.66	6.66	6.64
Agg. Assault	218.27	194.97	323.65	378.02	306.01
Robbery	110.56	105.89	114.40	95.97	84.63
Rape	78.81	81.62	65.74	66.23	73.16
Property Crime	3549.87	3496.11	3793.58	3591.99	3258.09
Arson	7.81	5.81	13.98	15.17	15.19
Burglary	554.07	471.77	499.45	498.29	447.08
Larceny-Theft	2764.44	2755.32	2858.35	2527.85	2202.02
Motor Vehicle Theft	223.55	263.21	421.80	550.68	593.80

Appendix B: Baltimore, Maryland, Violent and Property Crime Rates (2016–2024)

Baltimore Crime Rate (per 100k)	2016 (614,664)	2018 (602,495)	2020 (602,274)	2022 (569,931)	2024 (568,271)
Violent Crime	1791.22	1842.35	1560.43	1711.26	1609.09
Homicide	51.74	51.29	54.79	57.38	34.14
Agg. Assault	838.99	890.30	884.32	1032.93	943.56
Robbery	851.85	840.84	567.52	566.38	572.09
Rape	48.64	59.92	53.80	54.57	59.30
Property Crime	4849.16	4540.29	3096.60	3404.09	4185.86
Arson	42.14	22.90	18.26	19.65	20.94
Burglary	1199.84	1003.83	680.59	612.88	523.52
Larceny-Theft	2742.15	2787.41	1879.38	2151.31	2586.62
Motor Vehicle Theft	865.03	726.15	518.37	620.25	1054.78

Appendix C: Chicago, Illinois, Violent and Property Crime Rates (2016–2024)

Chicago Crime Rate (per 100k)	2016 (2,704,965)	2018 (2,705,988)	2020 (2,699,347)	2022 (2,665,064)	2024 (2,721,326)
Violent Crime	1116.20	1013.31	984.78	537.36	523.45
<i>Homicide</i>	28.39	20.95	28.56	22.66	16.94
<i>Agg. Assault</i>	584.22	565.97	614.85	127.39	124.42
<i>Robbery</i>	442.15	357.76	291.51	335.75	325.10
<i>Rape</i>	61.44	68.63	49.86	51.56	56.99
Property Crime	3243.04	3224.22	2228.91	3123.45	3383.94
<i>Arson</i>	21.70	15.71	23.56	5.70	16.98
<i>Burglary</i>	527.66	433.30	320.19	286.15	285.82
<i>Larceny-Theft</i>	2270.90	2401.41	1512.74	2036.46	2248.35
<i>Motor Vehicle Theft</i>	422.78	373.80	372.42	795.14	832.79

Appendix D: Dallas, Texas, Violent and Property Crime Rates (2016–2024)

Dallas Crime Rate (per 100k)	2016 (1,317,942)	2018 (1,345,076)	2020 (1,338,846)	2022 (1,299,553)	2024 (1,326,093)
Violent Crime	764.14	768.36	915.79	789.04	658.33
<i>Homicide</i>	12.97	11.37	18.60	16.31	13.65
<i>Agg. Assault</i>	343.64	403.03	589.24	563.35	438.96
<i>Robbery</i>	349.33	296.12	259.03	167.60	168.69
<i>Rape</i>	58.20	57.84	48.92	41.78	37.03
Property Crime	3435.59	3316.62	3509.44	3786.98	3398.25
<i>Arson</i>	28.00	14.57	13.82	14.54	11.39
<i>Burglary</i>	830.69	675.95	693.36	523.33	465.80
<i>Larceny-Theft</i>	2000.85	1907.92	2014.87	2225.53	1823.93
<i>Motor Vehicle Theft</i>	576.05	718.18	787.39	1023.58	1097.13

Appendix E: Los Angeles, California, Violent and Property Crime Rates (2016–2024)

Los Angeles Crime Rate (per 100k)	2016 (3,976,324)	2018 (3,990,469)	2020 (3,972,278)	2022 (3,822,224)	2024 (3,878,718)
Violent Crime	724.71	754.95	727.09	831.24	714.75
<i>Homicide</i>	7.37	6.47	8.84	10.12	6.81
<i>Agg. Assault</i>	399.21	426.34	466.61	527.91	461.88
<i>Robbery</i>	259.21	258.79	201.72	238.71	205.43
<i>Rape</i>	58.92	63.35	49.92	54.50	40.63
Property Crime	2524.74	2579.16	2238.67	2748.45	1468.57
<i>Arson</i>	31.21	41.45	75.37	49.21	10.57
<i>Burglary</i>	397.88	400.65	346.73	392.78	366.15
<i>Larceny-Theft</i>	1628.11	1703.13	1283.65	1639.49	836.33
<i>Motor Vehicle Theft</i>	467.54	433.93	532.92	666.97	255.52

Appendix F: Minneapolis, Minnesota, Violent and Property Crime Rates (2016–2024)

Minneapolis Crime Rate (per 100k)	2016 (413,645)	2018 (425,395)	2020 (424,536)	2022 (425,104)	2024 (428,572)
Violent Crime	1117.38	798.08	1198.95	1226.52	1152.43
<i>Homicide</i>	8.46	7.29	19.55	18.58	17.97
<i>Agg. Assault</i>	553.13	410.91	664.02	708.77	674.33
<i>Robbery</i>	445.79	278.33	420.22	417.07	367.50
<i>Rape</i>	110.00	101.55	95.16	82.10	92.63
Property Crime	4273.95	3955.39	4727.98	5262.01	5116.30
<i>Arson</i>	20.55	17.87	29.44	24.46	25.90
<i>Burglary</i>	827.76	726.15	926.89	601.97	612.27
<i>Larceny-Theft</i>	2945.28	2696.55	2834.39	3188.40	2948.40
<i>Motor Vehicle Theft</i>	480.36	514.82	937.26	1447.18	1529.73

Appendix G: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Violent and Property Crime Rates (2016–2024)

Philadelphia Crime Rate (per 100k)	2016 (1,567,872)	2018 (1,584,138)	2020 (1,581,531)	2022 (1,567,258)	2024 (1,573,916)
Violent Crime	981.27	910.27	979.59	1045.59	915.09
<i>Homicide</i>	17.41	22.16	31.24	33.18	16.90
<i>Agg. Assault</i>	488.18	486.82	593.98	586.57	580.07
<i>Robbery</i>	395.38	332.17	298.10	370.58	270.47
<i>Rape</i>	80.30	69.12	56.27	55.26	47.65
Property Crime	3173.09	3129.46	3050.91	4351.42	4540.84
<i>Arson</i>	26.53	27.14	35.10	34.14	46.00
<i>Burglary</i>	445.51	410.13	438.44	415.44	315.58
<i>Larceny-Theft</i>	2350.70	2333.64	2136.22	3089.47	3185.37
<i>Motor Vehicle Theft</i>	350.35	358.55	441.15	812.37	993.89

Appendix H: San Antonio, Texas, Violent and Property Crime Rates (2016–2024)

San Antonio Crime Rate (per 100k)	2016 (1,492,494)	2018 (1,532,212)	2020 (1,529,133)	2022 (1,472,904)	2024 (1,526,621)
Violent Crime	720.53	629.61	766.25	889.06	599.10
<i>Homicide</i>	9.98	6.98	8.57	15.82	8.32
<i>Agg. Assault</i>	481.27	419.46	533.24	643.63	394.99
<i>Robbery</i>	149.55	115.32	142.30	116.64	108.47
<i>Rape</i>	79.73	87.85	82.14	112.97	87.32
Property Crime	5228.84	4024.51	3763.05	5077.18	4626.36
<i>Arson</i>	17.02	12.14	15.50	17.31	11.79
<i>Burglary</i>	819.77	595.09	520.36	635.48	495.80
<i>Larceny-Theft</i>	3907.42	3019.88	2768.37	3582.18	3282.22
<i>Motor Vehicle Theft</i>	484.63	397.40	458.82	842.21	836.55

Appendix I: San Francisco, California, Violent and Property Crime Rates (2016–2024)

San Francisco Crime Rate (per 100k)	2016 (870,887)	2018 (883,305)	2020 (874,784)	2022 (808,437)	2024 (827,526)
<i>Violent Crime</i>	710.77	695.57	548.25	658.43	578.72
<i>Homicide</i>	6.55	5.21	5.49	6.80	4.23
<i>Agg. Assault</i>	300.38	291.97	247.15	320.25	281.44
<i>Robbery</i>	364.57	358.31	272.98	293.28	259.21
<i>Rape</i>	39.27	40.08	22.63	38.10	33.84
<i>Property Crime</i>	5472.24	5604.17	4471.28	5950.12	3844.11
<i>Arson</i>	29.28	32.60	43.10	42.55	32.14
<i>Burglary</i>	571.60	602.51	851.87	735.62	618.47
<i>Larceny-Theft</i>	4247.51	4491.65	2894.31	4394.90	2540.83
<i>Motor Vehicle Theft</i>	623.85	477.41	682.00	777.05	652.67

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Ross Jackson is a senior policy analyst for Right On Crime at the Texas Public Policy Foundation. He started at the Foundation as an intern and worked as a research assistant while he completed graduate school. His previous work for the Foundation has focused on criminal justice issues including human trafficking and diversion and mitigation programs. Jackson has a Master of Public Administration with a concentration in nonprofit policy advocacy and a Bachelor of Science in political science from The Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University. Before working for TPPF, Jackson interned on Capitol Hill for Former Congressman Kevin Brady working on family and worker support legislation. Outside of work and school, Jackson enjoys road-tripping, hiking, and spending time with family and friends.

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