

# Parole in California, 1980 - 2000: Implications for Reform



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**The Little Hoover Commission  
Public Hearing on Parole Reform  
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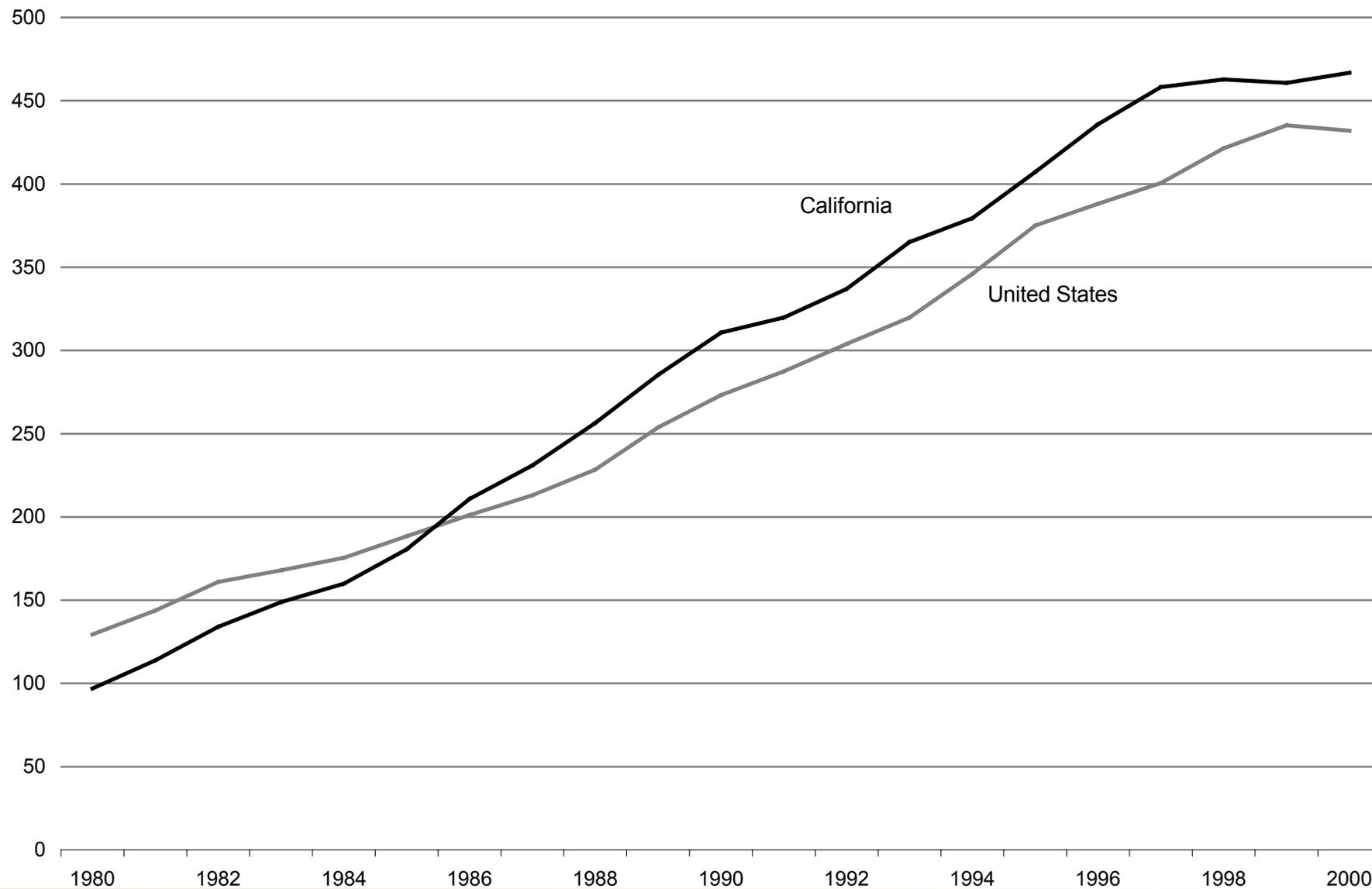


# Conclusion #1

- California's parole policies are significantly different from every other state.
  - Greater use of parole supervision
  - Greater use of parole violations
  - “New crime” violators: fairly stable
  - “Technical” violators: large variation

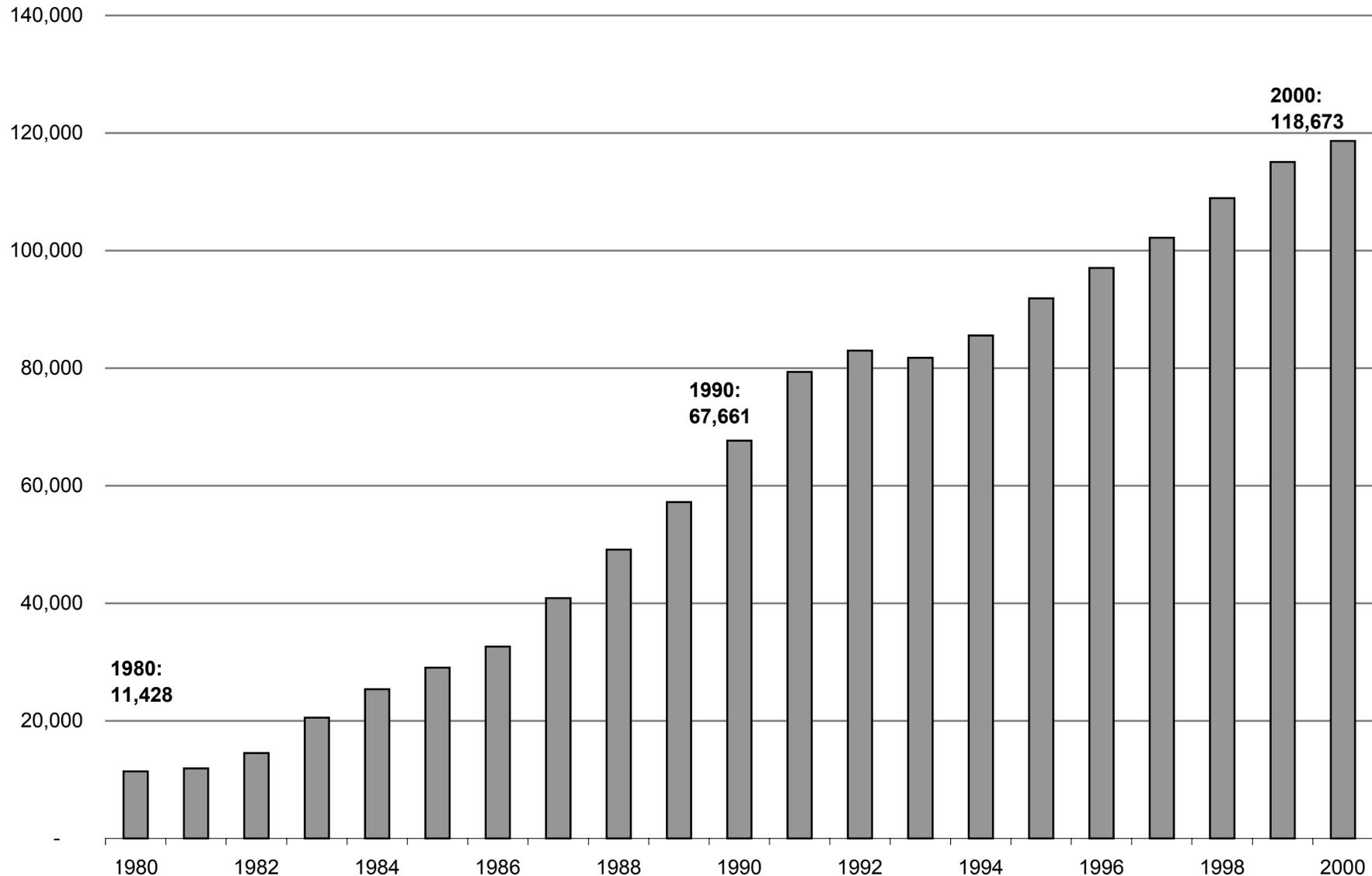
# California's incarceration rate has tracked the national rate fairly closely.

Incarceration Rate per 100,000 Population



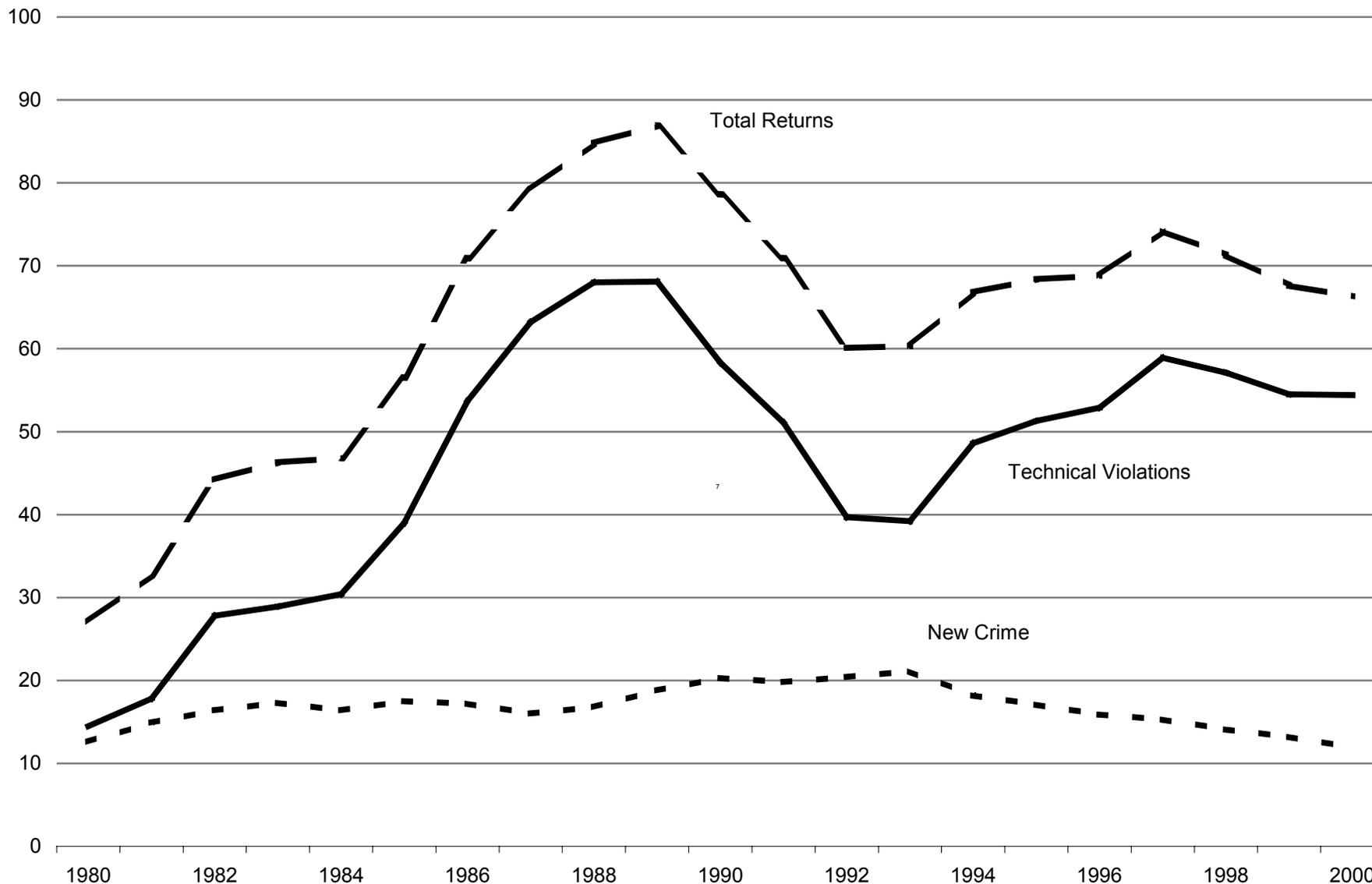
# California's parole population has increased ten-fold since 1980, compared to four-fold nationally.

Parole Population



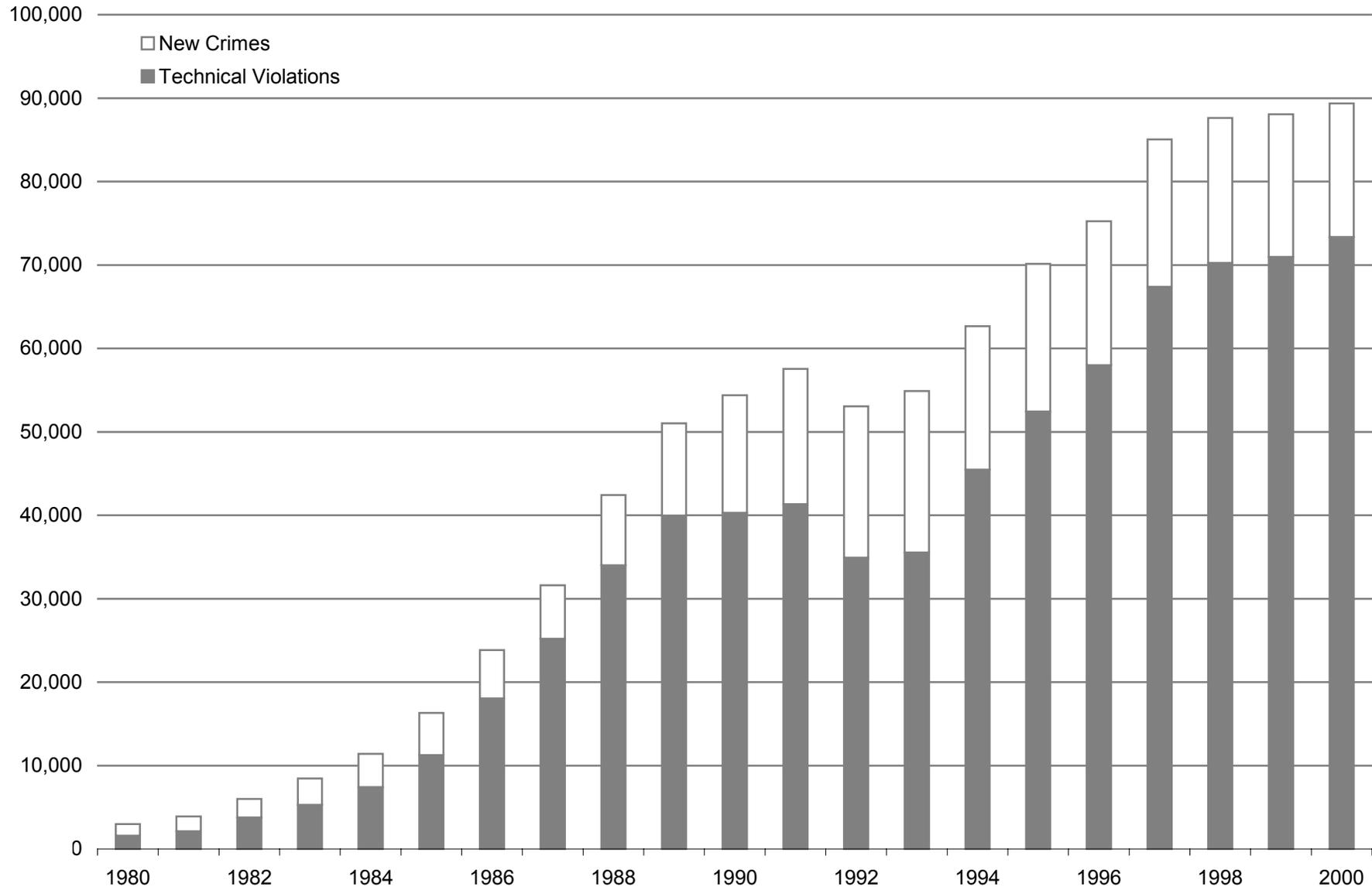
# Returns for technical violations have varied greatly and returns for new crimes have been fairly stable.

Rate per 100 Average Daily Parole Population



# There were nearly 90,000 parole returns to prison in 2000, a 30-fold increase over 1980.

Parole Violators Returned to Prison





## Observations on administrative criminal returns and administrative non-criminal returns.

- Criminal returns account for 80% of “technical” violations
- Drug use is largest single category at 20%
- Criminal returns grew by 60% and non-criminal returns grew by 247% (1990 - 2000)
- “Violations of parole process” account for 95% of non-criminal returns
- Largest growth categories from 1990 to 2000 include violations of parole process (256%), weapons access (120%), sex offenses (145%), drug possession (128%), drug use (120%), and driving violations (119%)



# Conclusion #2

- California's parole supervision and revocation policies:
  - Are very expensive
  - Come with uncertain benefits
  - Require same critical cost-benefit examination as other policies



# Conclusion #3

- Increases in program funding will have little benefit if the “policy framework” in which these programs operate does not change



# Recommended changes to “policy framework”

- Create reentry courts
- Distinguish “new crime” violations from “technical” violations
- Develop new strategies for the problem of drug use



# Conclusion #4

- A reinvestment strategy that moves funds from corrections budget to community-level reentry management strategies could:
  - Save money and
  - Reduce crime.