

Advocacy in Illinois

Advocacy with Governor Pritzker to Address Justice Issues

Go to

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/gov/contactus/Pages/VoiceAnOpinion.aspx>

to write to Governor Prizrker, asking him to:

- Exercise his executive clemency powers in an expansive manner to address the historical harms and injustices of mass incarceration
- Encourage IDOC to use its discretion to release elderly people over age 55 with less than 12 months to serve and people serving Class 2-4 felonies.
- Commute the sentences of anyone over the age of 60.
- Encourage IDOC to expedite credit restoration, implementation of discretionary release programs, and every other step necessary to bring IDOC's population back to capacity.

Cook County Jail Reform

[Sign the petition here](#), asking Sheriff Dart to take measures to **Stop the Loss of Life in the Jail and to **Eliminate the Draconian Prohibition on Introduction of Paper into the Jail****

Chicago City Council – Contact information for future advocacy:

[Find your Ward, your Alder and the Alder's Phone number here](#) by entering your Street Address

Identify members of the committees of the City Council at this link:

<https://chicago.councilmatic.org/committee/committee-on-workforce-development-0b950fd51e8b/>

Advocacy Toolkit and Advocacy Training

Advocacy Toolkit of the Prison Policy Institute, a collection of guides and training materials issued in March 2022 that advocates can use to strengthen their campaigns to end mass incarceration

Access it at [Advocacy Toolkit](#).

Legislative Advocacy Training with Restore Justice Illinois Director Jobi Cates –recorded March 6, 2021, presented in collaboration with the Unitarian Universalist Advocacy Network of Illinois

Watch at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zzfHkqvaEe4>

Organizing and Advocacy

New organizing and advocacy resource from the Community Justice Exchange and the Defender Impact Initiative, issued in April 2020:

[A Social Media Toolkit for Organizing and Advocacy to End Mass Criminalization and Incarceration](#)

Justice Reform in the Illinois General Assembly – Spring 2026 session

Filing Witness Slips To Support Justice Reform Legislation – Act BY THE DEADLINES MENTIONED BELOW to file witness slips, prior to scheduled committee hearings, as a PROPONENT of important Justice Reform legislation pending in the Illinois General Assembly:

MARCH 18 DEADLINE – Witness Slips needed by 5:00 pm on Wednesday March 18 (prior to scheduled committee hearing) using the instructions below

Take a few minutes to file witness slips as a PROPONENT for this important Justice Reform legislation pending in the Illinois General Assembly:

- **Restricting Solitary Confinement - File SB 65/HB 1428 – [File a witness slip at this link by that time in support of HB 1428](#)**, the Nelson Mandela Act, which would restrict use of solitary confinement in Illinois, using data gathered under legislation passed in an last session of the General Assembly
[You can find more information on this bill here.](#)
- **Affordable communications with incarcerated at IDOC – File a witness slip at this link: <https://bit.ly/4cKkVTU> by that time as a PROPONENT of HB 4235/SB 3386 - a new bill to keep families connected during incarceration through affordable communications – for discussion of the importance of this bill, see: https://www.restorejustice.org/bill/hb-4235/?mc_cid=c137e6a249&mc_eid=b92d12e360**
- **Cannabis Probable Cause – [Fill out this form](#)**, by that time to file a witness slip as a PROPONENT of **HB 4782**, which seeks to prevent law enforcement officers from stopping, searching, or detaining a driver solely based on the odor of burnt or raw cannabis, by removing the odor-proof container rule from the cannabis law.
- **Credit for Change Act – [Click here to file a witness slip by that time as a PROPONENT for HB5287](#)**, which would allow everyone not serving life to be awarded sentence credits for good behavior.
- **Day-for-Day Good Conduct Credit Act – [Click here to file a witness slip by that time as a PROPONENT for HB5256](#)**, which would give additional supervision credit for those on mandatory supervised release. Here is a [one-pager](#) with more details about the bill.
- **Reintegration and Civic Empowerment (RACE) Act – [Click here to file a witness slip by that time as a PROPONENT for HB5414](#)**, which would expand civics education in Illinois prisons and restore voting rights to people who are currently incarcerated. More information about the act here: [Reintegration and Civic Empowerment \(RACE\) Act](#)

The procedure for filing a witness slip is as follows:

Go to the link for the form identified as being created for the bill in question

Fill in your information, including “self” for “Firm/Business or Agency”

For Representation: write in “self” if you do not represent a firm or an organization

Under Position:

click “Add Legislation” and then click “Original Bill” in the drop down menu, and

click “Add Position” and then click “PROPONENT” or “OPPONENT” in the drop down

For Testimony: choose “record of appearance only.”

Click your agreement with the ILGA Terms of Agreement

Restore Justice Advocacy Day in Springfield, April 15, 2026 – [Register here BY APRIL 6](#)

Train leave Union Station at 6:00 am

Here are fact sheets for the bills that Restore Justice is supporting

[HB 4235/SB 3386: Affordable Communications Keep Families Connected](#)

[HB 1428/SB 65: Nelson Mandela Act](#)

[SB 248: Amend the Post-Conviction Act for People Sentenced in Youth](#)

[HB 5287/SB 3354: Credit for Change](#)

Supporting 2026 Illinois Legislative Priorities of Restore Justice – Watch this YouTube recording of a January 28, 2026 meeting of [Restore Justice](#): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XbOgRb0GX28>,

explaining in detail their legislative priorities for the current session of the Illinois General Assembly, and discussing their strategy and how everyone can get involved in supporting:

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“ SB 65/HB 1428 – a longstanding proposal to restrict use of solitary confinement with the Nelson Mandela Act, now supported by data gathered under legislation passed in an last session of the General Session

“ SB 248 (which has passed the Senate)– to give people sentenced to life without parole as children the chance to file a second post-conviction petition for reconsideration

HB 4235/SB 3386 - a new bill to keep families connected during incarceration through affordable communications – for discussion of the importance of this bill, see: https://www.restorejustice.org/bill/hb-4235/?mc_cid=c137e6a249&mc_eid=b92d12e360

And the important and longstanding legislative proposal to establish retroactive youthful resentencing review for those convicted as juveniles prior to 2019 (bill number to be assigned)

Link for Quick Action to Support Expanding the Pretrial Success Grant Program – Please go to link below to connect directly with your Illinois Legislators and Governor Pritzker to ask that they act this spring to expand the Pretrial Services Pilot Grant Program to address underlying challenges that have brought people into contact with the criminal legal system in the first place, by improving community safety and ensuring that people have the resources they need to succeed both during the court process and after their case concludes.

Enter your contact information and send the message at this link:

https://actionnetwork.org/letters/tell-your-legislators-to-expand-the-pretrial-success-grant-program?clear_id=true&source=tplemail

Preserving resources in Illinois for supporting the most vulnerable, protecting the progress Illinois has made toward a fairer, safer, and more stable justice system, and making investments in community-based services –

Support the [letter](#) sent by 100+ organizations to Illinois elected officials in January, asking them to stand strong against reductions in these programs in response to Trump’s attacks on funding.

Copy the language of the letter in your own advocacy and use these [slides that feature the letter and all the signers](#) in sending messages on Instagram & Facebook to publicize the letter

Justice Reform in the Illinois General Assembly – Spring 2025 session

The Following Bills Were Among Those Passed by the General Assembly and Sent to Governor Pritzker for his Signature – several relate to collection of data critical to future reform efforts:

Improving Public Defense – HB3363: the Funded Advocacy and Independent Representation Act (the FAIR Act), under which Illinois will establish an Office of the State Public Defender and will create a statewide system to ensure consistent, well-funded, and independent public defense services in Illinois

See: <https://mailchi.mp/endmoneybond/wedidit?e=26813fbadd>

Continued Funding for the Pretrial Success Act grant program, designed to insure success of the Pretrial Fairness Act reforms

See: <https://www.chicagoappleseed.org/2025/06/10/victory-pretrial-success-grant-program-preserved-funding-kept-for-critical-pretrial-services/>

Youthful Parole – [HB 2546](#), an important revision to the Youthful Parole Act that strengthens the existing Act by ensuring that eligible people can access a parole hearing on the correct timeline and not have to remain incarcerated longer while they wait for their hearing.

Fines & Fees –SB108, making the Cook County Traffic Fee Waiver Program permanent, a significant step toward reducing court debt for Illinois families

Policing -in Schools legislation requiring all public schools and districts in Illinois to stop issuing fines for disciplinary violations and to report annually to the state and make public how often they involve police in student matters, with data disaggregated by race, gender, and disability
see: <https://davisvanguard.org/2025/06/illinois-bans-school-fines/>

Civil Asset Forfeiture -- HB 1628, to improve data collection and transparency in Civil Asset Forfeiture – toward reforming the system in Illinois that allows the state to permanently seize someone's property

See: <https://www.chicagoappleseed.org/2025/05/27/hb1628-a-step-toward-enhancing-data-collection-and-transparency-in-reporting-civil-asset-forfeiture/>

Contraband in Prisons – SB2201, mandating the collection and public reporting of prison contraband data, as in where it is found, and who in the facility (person in custody, staff, vendor, etc.) is in possession of or attempting to procure the contraband – part of the effort to improve the safety of everyone inside IDOC but not be unnecessarily punitive to people in custody.

Crime Data – HB1710: Homicide Data Transparency Act, requiring law enforcement agencies across Illinois to routinely publish detailed data on nonfatal shootings, homicides, and investigations.

Work will continue in the fall veto session of the General Assembly to pass the following bills:

Home For Good Legislation – SB2403 and HB3162, to provide for \$103 million of investment that would expand housing access and housing support for people with arrest and conviction records

Detention for juveniles – to obtain Houe approval of SB1784, which would raise the minimum age of detention of juveniles from 10 to 13 and SB2156, which would create a Juvenile Detention Utilization Task Force to shift fiscal incentives away from detention to community alternatives
Go to this link for a: [Fact sheet on SB 1784](#)

Automating Expungement and Sealing of Criminal Records in Illinois – to eliminate the (often prohibitively complicated) extra procedures that are now required for the individual to obtain the expungement and sealing to which he or she is entitled is entitled under the law.

Ending Lifelong Financial Punishment by Abolishing All Fees for All Public Conviction Registries – SB2197 / HB3469, to end lifelong registration fees for those convicted of crime
See this [SB2197 / HB3469 fact sheet](#) with information about the importance of this legislation

Post Conviction-Review [SB 248](#), needing approval in the House, to amend to create fairness and consistency by allowing children and young people sentenced before the monumental U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Miller v. Alabama*, the same opportunity for a constitutional hearing as people sentenced after *Miller*.

Requests for Advocacy from Earlier Years

Limiting Solitary Confinement in Illinois:

[Use this link to reach out to your legislators and ask for their support on SB 2257 / HB 4828](#) to limit the use of isolated confinement in Illinois correctional facilities.

Learn more about the bills here: [SB 2257 / HB 4828](#).

Direct questions to James Swansey at jswansey@restorejustice.org.

Assuring Success of the Pretrial Justice Act. Use this link:

<https://actionnetwork.org/letters/tell-your-legislators-to-support-the-pretrial-success-act/>

to tell your legislators you want them to vote for the Pretrial Success Act, a \$15 million appropriations request that will expand access to health and human services for people awaiting trial. Learn more about the act here: [the Pretrial Success Act](#),

Contact your legislators (find them here: <https://www.illinoispolicy.org/maps/>) and ask them to support these important reforms to our criminal legal system:

- the Felony Murder Bill ([SB 2078/HB 3381](#)), [Fact Sheet](#), to end excessive sentencing under the felony murder rule
- the Mandatory Supervisor Release (MSR) Bill ([HB 5487](#)), [Fact Sheet](#) to allow early discharge for people who have satisfactorily met all required conditions of MSR
- Three Strikes Bill ([SB 2079/HB 3380](#)), [Fact Sheet](#): Returns discretion to judges and the ends a costly, ineffective, and overly punitive sentencing practice.
- Joe Coleman Clean-up Bill ([HB 5396](#)), [Fact Sheet](#): Provides minor but important clarifications/fixes to implement the bill as it was originally intended
- Juvenile right to counsel ([SB3321](#)) to guarantee counsel for all juveniles during custodial interrogation
- Juvenile detention ([HB4776](#)) to raise the age of admission to the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice from 13 to 14

Raising the Minimum Age for Pretrial Detention of Juveniles in Illinois Gradually from 10 to 13

Call Senator. Elgie Sims - (773) 933-7715 to urge that he post [HB 2347](#) in committee asap, as it has already passed the House and represents a compromise after a decade of negotiations on how to raise the age of detention to avoid harming children.

Access a fact sheet on the bill here:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/63d1611dce49d866f7193ab1/t/659f04b6a3d0ca72f737242a/1704920248207/Det+Ref+fact+sheet+Jan+10%2C+2024.docx+%281%29+copy.pdf>

Ending Prison Gerrymandering

- Call Senate President Don Harmon at (217) 782-8176 to ask that he schedule a vote on [House Bill 1496](#), which would help with the proper implementation of the Illinois ban on prison gerrymandering.

Reintroducing Parole in Illinois

Monday Night Mobilizing with [Parole Illinois](#) – [Join here](#) for Zoom calls every Monday night from 7:00 to 7:45 to get updates and guidance on contacting legislators

Meeting ID: 814 3143 9034 Passcode: 740826

Learn more at:

<https://mailchi.mp/27efead16b18/parole-illinois-september-newsletter-17625031?e=76688094e9>

Tools for Ongoing Advocacy in the Illinois General Assembly

Learning about pending bills in the legislature:

You can learn more about the terms of a bill with simple search: e.g. for “HB____ Illinois 2021”]

You can find details about the content and status of Senate and House Bills by number at:

<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/default.asp>)

Find your Senator’s and Representative’s names and addresses here to register support or opposition to a bill: <https://www.illinoispolicy.org/maps/>.

Filing Online Witness Slips Online for Committee Hearings in the Illinois General Assembly,

as a proponent of important bills that need our support and

as an opponent of bad bills that we need to oppose.

It takes less than a minute, and it makes a difference:

It is important to emphasize:

- a. the importance in these battles of committee hearings, and the witness slips that we submit in advance of those hearings, because failure of a bill to “make it out of committee” can prevent it from being considered, and

- b. the importance of the challenging work that takes place during the last week of a legislative session, when new bills are floated and amendments adopted in floor votes, often without much notice.

Contact Avalon Betts-Gaston avalon.betts-gaston@saferfoundation.org of The Alliance for Reentry and Justice at to get on her distribution list for urgent messages with the legislature is in session about opportunities to fill witness slips online

Ending our System of Permanent Punishments:

Illinois Coalition to End Permanent Punishments <https://endpermanentpunishments.org/> and the Fully Free Campaign <https://fullyfree.org/> seek to End System of 'Permanent Punishments (from laws and restrictions that make it prohibitively difficult for people with criminal records to rebuild their lives after incarceration):

June 27, 2021 report on WTTW television

<https://news.wttw.com/2021/06/27/fully-free-campaign-seeks-end-system-permanent-punishments>

Report from the Heartland Alliance

https://www.heartlandalliance.org/news_clip/fully-free-campaign-seeks-to-end-system-of-permanent-punishments/

Conversations with University of Chicago Professor Reuben Jonathan Miller about his new book: *Halfway Home: Race, Punishment, and the Afterlife of Mass Incarceration*

at the Ford School of Public Policy

<https://crownschool.uchicago.edu/reuben-miller-discussed-racial-issues-aftermath-mass-incarceration-ford-school>

and with NPR's Terry Gross:

<https://crownschool.uchicago.edu/reuben-jonathan-miller-talks-about-his-new-book-npr%E2%80%99s-terry-gross>

The book is available at:

<https://www.semcoop.com/halfway-home-race-punishment-and-afterlife-mass-incarceration>

Joining the ACLU's Redemption Campaign –

Sign its petition to the governors asking them to use their executive power to grant clemency to the thousands of people in their states who are unjustifiably imprisoned:

<https://action.aclu.org/petition/tell-governors-embrace-clemency-pathway-redemption>

Joining the Campaign to Free Incarcerated Survivors of Police Torture (CFIST)

Learn how to help in seeking pardons from Governor Pritzker at <https://www.caarpr.org/cfist>

Join the CFIST list serve by writing to cfist@caarpr.com

to participate in the monthly online CFIST meetings at 6:00 the first and third Thursday of each month

to help in drafting the survivor stories for these men. See

https://www.caarpr.org/survivor_stories

U.S. Justice Reform

Electing Reform-Minded Prosecutors

The Accountable Justice Action Fund equips local and national groups with the resources, relationships, and strategic insights to help elect prosecutors committed to justice reform. In the past two years it played a significant role in electing 29 new reform-minded DAs – 18 of whom are people of color – who now oversee a combined population of nearly 38 million people.

Contributing – If you are able to make substantial contributions to funding support for the election and reelection of reform-minded prosecutors in key races in 2021 and 2022, when more than 1,000 DAs will be on the ballot, consider joining the Accountable Justice Action Fund without initial obligation, by simply writing to Chris Maggiano <chris@cormierco.com>.

Monthly Briefings – Joining AJAF will give you access to a wealth of information and to AJAF's monthly briefings on the political landscape for these races at 4:00 central time on the second Tuesday of each month. The next briefing will take place at 4:00 on Tuesday March 9.

The Toxic Prisons Project is a participatory research initiative to map the environmental hazards that prisons, jails, and detention centers face from extreme heat, air pollution, flooding and more. Learn more about participating in the project at <https://www.toxicprisons.com/>

Advocacy for Proposed Federal Legislation

December 2024 Letter of the Clean Slate Initiative Urging the Trump-Vance Administration to Champion Clean Slate Legislation

<https://www.cleanslateinitiative.org/updates/trump-vance-letter>

"US judicial panel endorses independence for federal public defenders," a December 19, 2024 article by Nate Raymond of Reuters

<https://www.reuters.com/legal/government/us-judicial-panel-endorses-independence-federal-public-defenders-2024-12-19/>

End The Exception Campaign – Use the following link to email your members of Congress asking them to support the Abolition Amendment pending in Congress to end the exception in the 13th Amendment of the Constitution allowing slavery for those who are incarcerated:

https://endtheexception.com/?link_id=0&can_id=689bd60994fb87e18417721714bf5f2d&source=email-slavery-was-never-abolished-it-was-moved-behind-prison-walls&email_referrer=email_1801263&email_subject=slavery-was-never-abolished-it-was-moved-behind-prison-walls

Illinois Legislative Archive – Justice Reform Bills Considered in Prior Sessions of the Illinois General Assembly

- Bills proposing reforms that the Illinois General Assembly considered in its 2021 spring session

Earned Discretionary Reentry – House Bill 2399, Senate Bill 2333, discussed at:

<https://paroleillinois.org/2021/03/02/senate-bill-2333-earned-discretionary-reentry/>

The Judicial Quality Act - Senate Bill 0563, discussed at:

<https://www.chicagoappleseed.org/support-for-sb-0563-judicial-quality-act/>

Reducing Barriers to Recovery - House Bill 3447, discussed at:

<https://www.chicagoappleseed.org/support-for-hb-3447-reducing-barriers-to-recovery/>

Limiting Negotiations by Police Unions to Wages Only - House Bill 3891 and Senate Bill 2447, to repeal current provisions allowing police union contracts to overpower Illinois Law, discussed at:

<https://www.illinoispolicy.org/illinois-law-lets-police-union-contracts-overpower-state-law/>

Restoring eligibility of former felons for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families - House Bill 0088

Bad Apples in Law Enforcement Accountability Act – House Bill 1727

Abolishing Juvenile Life w/o Parole Sentences – House Bill 1821

Confidentiality of Restorative Justice Proceedings – House Bill 3248, Senate Bill 0064

Raising the Lower Age for Pretrial Detention – Senate Bill 0065

Criminal ID-Expungement Fee Reform – House Bill 2367

Theft and Retail Theft Sentencing Reform – House Bill 2402

Eliminating Felony Conviction as a Bar to Name Change – House Bill 2542

Torture Inquiry/Relief Commission - House Bill 2613

Torture Commission Restrictions – Senate Bill 2119

Criminal ID-Expungement Reform – House Bill 2743

Penalty Reduction – House Bill 34443

Restorative Sentencing Act – House Bill 3594, Senate Bill 2123

State Resentencing Motion – Senate Bill 2129

Criminal Penalties – Senate Bill 2186
 Accountability – Senate Bill 2276
 Jury Duty, Prior Convictions – Senate Bill 2437
 Felony Murder Reform – Senate Bill 2113
 Sentence Credit – Senate Bill 2115
 Community Emergency Services and Supports Act – House Bill 2784, Senate Bill 2117
 Elder Parole Bill – House Bill 2399, Senate Bill 2120
 Requiring Employment Background Checks To Be Conducted by the State Police –SB ?
 Minimum Wage for Prisoners – Senate Bill 0649
 Inmates Right to Seek Post Conviction Hearing – House Bill 2745
 The Mind Strong Act (mandating education about adult mobile crisis response services) -
House Bill 2944, Senate Bill 347
 Making firearms sentencing enhancements discretionary – House Bill 2989
 Making public grand jury proceedings regarding excessive use of force by a peace officer or
 discharge of a firearm by a peace officer resulting in death or bodily harm – House Bill 3230
 Use of Force Reporting – House Bill 3239
 Expungement and Sealing of Criminal Records – House Bill 3239
 Prohibiting No-Knock Warrants – House Bill 3261
 Crime Victims Compensation – House Bill 3295, Senate Bill 0627
 Officer-Worn Body Camera – House Bill 3347
 Re Bail-Rehearing Denial – House Bill 3361
 Re Failure to Appear – House Bill 3362
 Re Recognizance – House Bill 3363
 Reporting Prisoner Deaths – Senate Bill 0624
 Communication Rights for Those in Custody – Senate Bill 0625
 Decriminalizing Transmission of HIV– Senate Bill 0655
 Ex-Offender Preference – Senate Bill 1945
 Statewide point of contact for families with IDOC – Senate Bill 1976
 Assault Weapons Ban – Senate Bill 2510

- Other bills that were scheduled for consideration at the 2020 fall veto session, which was cancelled:

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HB1115 to Limit Electronic Monitoring for People on Mandatory Supervised Release,
Learn more about it in Shriver Center’s discussion of its the 2020 Veto Session at:
<https://www.povertylaw.org/article/veto2020/>

HB4613, HB4608 and HB4295, to limit the detention of juveniles in Illinois,
as discussed and supported in this letter to legislators the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus re Juvenile
Justice Priorities for the November Veto Session :

https://jjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/JJI-Reforms-Letter-9_15.pdf

from a coalition of Illinois organizations including the Juvenile Justice Initiative, the ACLU, the
 John Howard Association, The Chicago Urban League, Cabrini Green Legal Aid, the Cook County
 Public Defender and 20 other organizations – it addressee: pretrial detention, availability of counsel,
 legal privilege for communications in restorative justice proceedings, and beginning juvenile
 proceedings in juvenile court

- Partial List of other Illinois Bills to Support if and when they are considered in the future

The Violent Offender Registry Reform Bill (to reduce the time a person is on a public registry,
 to de-felonize all penalties, and to remove automatic 10 year penalty extension) and

The Restorative Sentencing Bill (to grant program sentencing credit eligibility for people
 sentenced under Truth in Sentencing)

The Employee Background Fairness Bill (to create reasonable standards in the hiring process
 for people with records) and

The Public Housing Access Bill (to minimize local housing authority restrictions/bans for people with records).

Contact Betsy Clarke or Luis Klein of the Juvenile Justice Initiative at

bcjuv@aol.com or lkjjustice@gmail.com

to learn more about the following Bills and how you can support them:

Illinois House Bill 4613, to reform juvenile detention law to change the standard for detention to ensure it is last resort, and require the Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission to include recommendations regarding the availability of youth services to address the use of detention in its annual report

Illinois House Bill 4610, to raise the minimum age for incarcerating children in juvenile detention from 13 to 14

Illinois Senate Bill 239, to expand the initial jurisdiction of Juvenile Court to include all young adults charged with misdemeanors (first defined as those 18 or younger and moving over time to those 20 and younger)

Illinois House Bill 4295, to establish a privilege for communications made during restorative justice proceedings

Illinois House Bill 4609, to expand the category of youth who must be accompanied by lawyers in any interrogation, up from 15 at present

Transfer Reform, to require a hearing in juvenile court to decide whether to prosecute a child under age 18 in adult criminal court.

ACLU's 2019 Illinois Legislative Wrap Up, with suggested Action Items for supporting enactment of the proposed License to Work Act, legislation to Ban the Box in Higher Education, and legislation for Defelonization of Drug Possession and for Increasing the Felony Thresholds for Property Crimes:

<https://www.aclu-il.org/en/news/2019-aclu-illinois-legislative-wrap>

ACLU October 29, 2019 Report on the passage of the Illinois License to Work Act (SB 1786)

<https://www.aclu-il.org/en/legislation/sb-1786-license-work-act>

- Legislative Action Illinois in the Spring of 2019 –

Before adjourning on May 31, in response to the hard work of many advocates, the Illinois General Assembly passed and sent to Governor Pritzker the following legislation making several important improvements our criminal justice system:

(thanks to Evan Freund of the Interfaith Criminal Justice Task Force for compiling the results of the legislative session):

Resources for Impacted Communities

HB 1438 legalizing the personal use and sale of Marijuana – will devote 25% of the revenue raised by the cannabis tax to communities defined by high levels of violence, of people returning from prison or jail and of childhood poverty

(Thanks to everyone who contacted their representative after the Senate added this provision to the House bill!)

(See a conversation about that important initiative between Sharone Mitchell of the Illinois Justice Project and Anna Lee of the Chicago Community Trust at:

<https://www.cct.org/2019/07/how-illinois-cannabis-laws-aim-to-reduce-violence-and-restore-communities/?fbclid=IwAR2sD1OIM5NHYUIXz0W0VgNLDu-vJGT1qbT3g-GwndZMg3u2k3Avt5pZIEU>)

HB1587 – provides harm reduction services to addicts

Driver's License Revocation

HB 3005/SB 1786 – License to Work Act – will limit driver license suspensions for nonpayment of fees, civil penalties or taxes - For discussion of the bill, see: <https://www.license2work.org/>

Policing

HB 0051 – Requires notice on default of fine 30 days prior to issuance of a warrant
HB 1613 – Combats racial profiling by maintaining data collection re traffic and pedestrian stops– see: <https://www.aclu-il.org/en/publications/racism-rear-view-mirror> and: <https://www.aclu-il.org/en/legislation/hb-1613-continue-traffic-and-pedestrian-data-collection-law-enforcement>

Definition of Offenses and Sentencing

HB 0094 – Grants sentencing credits for those convicted of offenses prior to 1998
HB 1587 – To reduce sentences for non-violent felonies -with probation, supervisory release

Pretrial Considerations

SB1609 – Increases “bail credit” compensation (deducted from fines) for pretrial incarceration to \$30 per day

Incarceration

HB2040 – Prohibits for-profit correctional institutions in Illinois
HB 2045/HB 2288 – Eliminates inmate co-payments for medical care

Post Release

HB 3061 – Enables initiation of background check prior to offer of employment in health care jobs
HB 3227/SB 1780 – prohibits landlords from using arrest records and records ordered expunged and sealed in rental decisions
HB 1438 legalizing the personal use and sale of Marijuana – will result in expungement of the individual's records for some minor drug offenses, after review by prosecutors

- Other Criminal justice reform bills considered in the 2019 session of the General Assembly:

Violence Prevention

HB 0327 – to provide Chicago Violence prevention targeted grants

Policing

HB 2519 – to repeal gang data base
(Passed the House, re-referred to the Senate Assignment Committee)
HB 0021 – to end practice of requiring sworn affidavit as basis for a policing complaint
HB 1616 – to require that police grant anyone taken into custody the right to three completed phone calls within one hour after arrival at the station
(2nd reading ,re-referred to the Rules Committee)
HB 0056 – to regulate police officer accountability

Restorative Justice

HB 1458 – to create a new “privilege” to prevent statement made in restorative justice proceedings from being used in court proceedings
(2nd reading, re-referred to the Rules Committee, held on calendar)

Definition of Offenses and Sentencing

SB 1610 – Guilty plea – Alien admonition
SB 1968 – Modifications for Class 3 and 4 Non-Violent Crimes < 4 months electronic Monitoring/Adult Transition Center
HB 1614 – to increase the felony dollar threshold for retail theft
(2nd reading, re-referred to the Rules Committee)
HB 1615 – to modify the level of responsibility required for conviction of felony murder
See: “5 Teens Charged Under a Rule That Must Change” by Dahleen Glanton in the Chicago Tribune, Aug 15, 2019
http://digitaledition.chicagotribune.com/infinity/article_share.aspx?guid=61853e92-45c7-484e-bfc8-27319961046d

HB 2039 – to allow those serving time for a crime for which the penalties have been

subsequently reduced to petition the trial court for an equivalent reduction
(2nd reading, re-referred to the Rules Committee)
HB2620 (see HB0094 above)– to provide sentencing credit for truth in sentencing
offences
(Amendment re-referred to Rules Committee)

HB 0055 – to limit imposition of sentence higher than documented pretrial offer
HB 1587 – to reduce sentences/probation/supervision for non-violent felonies

Pretrial Considerations

SB 1188 – to provide for diversion of mentally ill from the justice system pretrial
(Passed the Senate, sent to the House Judiciary/Criminal Law Committee)
HB 2046 (see SB1609 above) – to provide for incarceration credit compensation (deducted
from fines) to \$30 per day for unbailed incarceration
(2nd reading, re-referred to the Rules Committee)
HB 2689 – Pretrial Data Act – to require monthly reporting by counties of Pretrial Orders, Pretrial Bail
Proceeds, and Pretrial Custody and Release
HB 3347 – Equal Justice for All Act – to abolish money bail and govern pretrial proceedings

Juvenile Justice

- HB1478 – to raise the minimum age that one can be held in juvenile detention from 10 to 13
(2nd reading)
- HB 2305 – to raise the minimum age to 14 for a youth to be incarcerated in Illinois
- HB 1465 – to expand the jurisdiction of the juvenile court for young adults charged
charged with misdemeanors
- HB 1615 – to limit agency responsibility for murder for juveniles
See: “5 Teens Charged Under a Rule That Must Change” by Dahleen Glanton in the Chicago
Tribune, Aug 15, 2019
http://digitaledition.chicagotribune.com/infinity/article_share.aspx?guid=61853e92-45c7-484e-bfc8-27319961046d
- HB 2644 – Best Interest of the Child Act
- HB 2922 – to require a lawyer for children in interrogation in any case that could be
transferred to adult court

Incarceration

SB 1158 – to repeal indemnification by prisoners for prison costs
(2nd reading in the Senate, re-referred to Judiciary/Criminal Committee)
HB 0182 – to limit the use of solitary confinement
HB 2620/SB 2054 – Restorative Sentencing Act – to enact a program of sentence credit for prisoners
who participate in programs contributing to their rehabilitation to reduce time service to below the
85% or 100% of the prescribed sentence as otherwise required by law
HB 2649 – Bill of Rights for Children of Incarcerated Parents
HB 2925 – to establish a separate Ombudsman Bureau within the Department of Corrections
HB 3090 – to require prompt investigation and reporting of all deaths of people while in
custody – For discussion of this bill, see:
<https://www.wbez.org/shows/wbez-news/new-bill-would-force-transparency-on-how-people-die-in-prison/58b387b8-667c-4295-a76d-90337a3e9f2f>
HB 1617 – to regulate use of vending machines in prison facilities
HB 3060 – to provide sentencing credit for home detention and to include electronic home
monitoring in the definition of “custody”
HB 0179 – to address claims for wrongful incarceration of innocent individuals

Children and Family Considerations

HB 2444 – Best Interest of the Child Act – to require a Family Impact Statement and
consideration of alternatives to incarceration in sentencing a parent or guardian

HB 2649 – to require recognition of the rights of children to maintaining their relationship with parents who are incarcerated

Parole

HB 3214 – to implement parole in Illinois for all prisoners other than sex offenders and those who have committed two or more murders

Post Release

HB2474 – to limit reasons for denials of professional licensing to those convicted of crimes (deadline extended – hold for 2nd reading)

HB0097 – to expand expungement of criminal records (to be reintroduced)

HB 01115 – Limiting electronic monitoring with Mandatory Supervised Release or Parole (Passed House, re-referred to Senate Assignment Committee)

HB 3056 – Employee Background Fairness Act – to regulate how employers take into account prior criminal records of job applicants

HB 0044 – to regulate publication of Criminal records – innocent, sealed or expunged

HB 0932 – to provide for non-violent probationer to attend job training and pre-employment session

HB 3332 – to provide a tax credit for landlords who rent to people with a conviction record

- Bills opposed by criminal justice reform advocates as steps backwards:
- HB0221 – to allow counties to opt out of bail reform
- HB0244 – to impose life imprisonment for all First Degree murders
- HB0287 – to deny Internet use to paroled sex offenders
- HB2244 – to place additional conditions on parole, to limit associations

- Other bills on which the Legislature did not complete action in 2018:

SAFE ACT (2017 Illinois House Bill 5308), which passed the Senate but not the House in 2017 This legislation would mobilize state economic development and social service agency outreach to the communities most damaged by violence.

- For more information on the SAFE Act introduced in 2017, including a fact sheet and a supporters list, please visit www.iljp.org/thesafeact/.

Sentencing Reform:

2017 Illinois House Bill 3355 – To Implement Recommendations of the Illinois State Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing Reform
Learn more from: Ben Ruddell - bruddell@ACLU-il.org

Juvenile Justice:

2017 Illinois House Bill 4473 - to require that a juvenile be brought before a judge within 24 hours of arrest to determine whether he or she should be further held in pre-trial custody
Learn more at: jjj@jjustice.org

2017 Illinois House Bill 4543 - to implement youth support services to provide alternatives to detention and to prevent deeper criminal involvement
Learn more from: <http://www.uuani.org/>

Prisoner Rights and Opportunities:

2017 Illinois House Bill 4505 - to authorize Illinois to participate in the Federal Prison Industry Enhancement Certification ("PIE") Program, which would provide Federal funds to develop training programs for inmates in Illinois Prisons (details attached here)

Learn more from: Patrick Simon patrick.simon@illinois.gov or Michael Lane michael.r.lane@illinois.gov at the Illinois Dept. of Corrections

2017 Illinois House Bill 4741 - to safeguard prison visiting rights

Learn more from: Jobi Cates: jcates@restorejustice.org

2017 Illinois House Bill 4888 - to require improvements in conditions, treatment, accountability and communication and structural changes in the operation of the Department of Corrections, and collection and sharing of information and data

Learn more from Jennifer Vollen-Katz: jvollen@thejha.org

Restrictions on Rights and Opportunities of Former Inmates and those convicted of a crime: 2017

Illinois Senate "Path To Restoration" Bill 3489 - to allow individuals that are subject to registration after release from prison in the Violent Offender Against Youth Registry to amend incorrect information and appeal their inclusion in the database.

Learn more at <https://www.imancentral.org/support-path-restoration/>

2017 Illinois House Bill 3142 - to prohibit colleges, universities, and trade schools from asking or considering an individual's criminal record for purposes of admissions

Learn more from: Samantha Tuttle : stuttle@heartlandalliance.org

Records of Eviction Proceedings

2017 Illinois House Bill 4968 - to provide for sealing and impoundment of a court file for an ----- eviction action in which the court does not find that a tenant or an occupant has materially breached the lease

Learn more from Bob Palmer at bob@housingactionil.org

Availability and Allocation of Resources

Legislation to redirect budget priorities toward social services and away from incarceration See: <https://chicago.suntimes.com/opinion/recognition-of-budget-cuts-not-enough-time-tofund-up/>

Political Organizations - Engaging with Political Organizations with a Focus on Criminal Justice Issues

Law Enforcement Leaders To Reduce Crime and Incarceration - <http://lawenforcementleaders.org/>