



LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTION PARTNERSHIP

ADVANCING JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY SOLUTIONS

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April 4, 2022

The Honorable Emanuel Chris Welch

The Honorable Don Harmon

Members of the 102nd Illinois General Assembly

Statehouse

Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Speaker Welch, President Harmon, and Distinguished Assembly
Members:

As current and former Illinois law enforcement professionals, we urge you to ensure that Illinois prioritizes the fight against violent crime by **opposing any changes to the Pretrial Fairness provisions of the SAFE-T Act**. We believe that this current bail law will improve public safety by taking a smarter and more focused approach to pretrial detention.

The Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP) is a nonprofit group of police, prosecutors, judges, and other criminal justice professionals who speak from firsthand experience. Our mission is to make communities safer by focusing law enforcement resources on the greatest threats to public safety, addressing the root causes of crime, and working toward healing police-community relations.

We believe that the Pretrial Fairness Act is advancing our criminal justice system into the 21st century by moving us from a system of pretrial detention based on money to a system based on public safety. It prevents our jails from becoming overcrowded with people who pose little safety risk but are too poor to pay their bond.

Holding low-risk people in jail does not improve public safety, because it causes those individuals to lose their employment and housing, become separated from their family, and experience violence—all predictors of future crime. It should not be a surprise that the latest research shows that

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Formerly known as Law Enforcement Against Prohibition

holding people pretrial [is associated with a higher risk of rearrest](#). At the same time, many jurisdictions have reduced pretrial detention without any changes in court appearance rates. Experts agree that in order to better protect public safety, jurisdictions should invest not in pretrial detention, which aggravates the root causes of crime, but in community-based pretrial services that address those root causes.

Illinois's forward-thinking new system maintains police officers' discretion and power to arrest, and it ensures that judges can detain people pretrial if they pose a significant risk. We have included [a fact sheet](#) that we hope will help clarify some common misconceptions about the law.

This legislation was built on the experience of people most familiar with what happens on the ground in our communities and in the justice system. It was crafted in partnership with domestic violence experts and informed by the findings of the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Pretrial Practice, a commission that included multiple law enforcement agencies.

Maintaining the Pretrial Fairness Act as it currently exists is in the best interest of our speakers, the law enforcement community, and the millions of Illinoisans we protect and serve. Re-litigating the Pretrial Fairness Act—particularly when implementation is already in progress – will interrupt the critical progress we're making and force our state backwards.

We ask you to ensure that Illinois stands behind its commitment to these critical, groundbreaking reforms, and that you allow them to take full effect for the benefit of our communities.

Respectfully,

Officer Dave Franco (Ret.)
Chicago Police Department, IL

Officer Brian Gaughan (Ret.)
Iowa and Illinois Police Departments
Arlington Heights, IL

Officer Hannah Flint
Chicago Police Department, IL

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