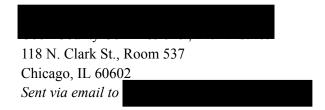


September 14, 2023



Re: Reduction of the use of pretrial electronic monitoring

Dear

We, the undersigned 61 community, legal, policy organizations and service providers collectively represent thousands of people from communities across Cook County. Our organizations have represented and supported countless individuals subjected to pretrial house arrest with electronic monitoring and have researched best pretrial practices across the country. We are writing to urge you to act upon the recommendations included in the Electronic Monitoring Review commissioned by the Cook County Justice Advisory Council in 2020, especially the call to reduce the use of pretrial electronic monitoring. It is essential that advocates and communities directly impacted by electronic monitoring are included in this process and that the transition plan adheres to the Principles for Respecting the Rights of Individuals on Pretrial Electronic Monitoring in Cook County, which have been endorsed by 58 organizations and 23 public officials and agencies.

Cook County is home to some of the nation's largest pretrial electronic monitoring programs. When the Electronic Monitoring Review was conducted, there were nearly nine times as many people on pretrial electronic monitoring in Cook County as there were in the entire state of New Jersey, which has dramatically reduced its use of pretrial incarceration without seeing an increase in missed court dates or rearrests. Since implementing General Order 18.8A in 2017, Cook County has jailed some 10,000 fewer people each year without an increase in rearrest rates or missed court dates. New Jersey's experience similarly shows that such a reduction in pretrial incarceration can be safely achieved without relying on electronic monitoring.

The \$35 million spent on Cook County's two pretrial electronic monitoring programs annually is of particular concern because there is no evidence showing that this technology improves community safety. The Electronic Monitoring Review found that electronic monitoring had "no substantial effect on failure to appear rates and rearrest rates, or on rearrest rates for violent crimes." A 2021 study by Chicago Appleseed Center for Fair Courts showed that people on electronic monitoring have the same extremely low rates of re-arrest as people who are released pretrial without monitors.

Pretrial electronic monitoring also disproportionately impacts Black residents of Cook County. Less than 25% of Cook County is Black, while nearly 75% of the people on electronic monitoring are Black. In 2020, the Cook County Board of Commissioners—including twelve of you serving on the Board today—voted in support of the Justice for Black Lives resolution, which acknowledged decades of disinvestment in Black communities and the harm mass incarceration has caused. Electronic monitoring destabilizes the lives of people surveilled under the technology and their families. Due to the extreme restrictions placed of Cook County Sheriff's electronic monitoring, many people have difficulty securing and maintaining employment. This makes it hard for them to pay for rent and basic necessities, and they are routinely denied the ability to leave their homes to go to the grocery store, doctor's appointments, and laundromat. The extreme rate at which Black residents are placed on house arrest exacerbates the pervasive community safety, public health, and economic crises many of our most marginalized communities are already experiencing.

It is our hope that Cook County will act swiftly in this urgent effort to reduce the use of pretrial electronic monitoring. As the County begins planning for the future of this technology's use, we offer our member organizations' expertise as a resource. We would appreciate the opportunity to review the Guidelines for Electronic Monitoring in Cook County with you and to connect you with people who have experienced this technology first-hand. If you are interested in this collaboration, please contact us at info@endmoneybond.org.

Sincerely,

## The Coalition to End Money Bond and supporting organizations:

33rd Ward Working Families

A Just Harvest Access Living Apna Ghar, Inc.

Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago

Believers Bail Out

Black Lives Matter Blono Books to Prisoners in Urbana Cabrini Green Legal Aid

Cannabis Equity Illinois Coalition

Chicago Abortion Fund

Chicago Appleseed Center for Fair Courts

Chicago Community Bond Fund Chicago Community Jail Support Chicago Council of Lawyers Chicago United Solidarity Project Children's Best Interest Project Clergy for a New Drug Policy

Color of Change Color of Equity Community Renewal Society Dignidad, Brandeis University Erie Neighborhood House

Faith Coalition for the Common Good

Gay Liberation Network

Health & Medicine Policy Research Group Illinois Alliance for Reentry & Justice Illinois Black Advocacy Initiative

Justice and Witness Ministry of the Chicago

Metropolitan Association of the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ

Liberation Library Live Free Illinois Loop Church Chicago Lucy Parsons Labs

Mandel Legal Aid Clinic of the University of

Chicago Law School

MediaJustice

National Lawyers Guild of Chicago

Nehemiah Trinity Rising

Nikkei Uprising

Organized Communities Against Deportations

Parole Illinois

Prison Policy Initiative

Pushing Envelopes Chicago

Represent Justice

Restore Justice

Rockford Urban Ministries

Saint Leonard's Ministries

Sana Healing Collective

Sentencing Advocacy Group of Evanston

She Votes Illinois

Shriver Center on Poverty Law

Social Service Workers United Chicago

Students for Sensible Drug Policy

TASC, Inc. (Treatment Alternatives for Safe

Communities)

The People's Lobby

Unitarian Universalist Prison Ministry of Illinois

United Church of Rogers Park

United States Palestinian Community Network

Uptown People's Law Center

West Town Law Office

Youth Empowerment Performance Project

(YEPP)

YWCA McLean County