



# Coalition to End Money Bond

July 10, 2024

The Honorable [REDACTED]  
Cook County Commissioner  
118 N. Clark St., Room [REDACTED]  
Chicago, IL 60602  
*Sent via email to [REDACTED]*

## **Re: Reduction of the use of pretrial electronic monitoring**

Dear Commissioner [REDACTED]

Since 2016, the Coalition to End Money Bond has worked with stakeholders to improve pretrial policy and practice in Cook County. We commend the Cook County stakeholders who have worked hard to successfully implement the Pretrial Fairness Act. The preliminary data shows a positive impact on both safety and fairness in our communities. More people are now able to return to their families, jobs and homes while awaiting trial without an increase in rearrests or missed court appearances. While the number of people incarcerated in Cook County Jail and on electronic monitoring have both decreased, there is still more work to be done.

Our organizations have supported hundreds of individuals subjected to pretrial house arrest with electronic monitoring and have researched best pretrial practices across the country. **We are once again 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.** This budget season presents yet another opportunity to act on these recommendations by reducing the use of electronic monitoring and consolidating the county's two electronic monitoring programs under the Office of the Chief Judge.

Even with significant reforms, Cook County remains home to one of the nation's largest pretrial electronic monitoring programs. Despite the increased protections for people on electronic monitoring provided by the Pretrial Fairness Act, the severe and arbitrary restrictions placed on people's liberty by the Cook County Sheriff's Office make it extremely difficult for people to work, access medical care, and perform basic tasks such as grocery shopping or doing laundry. Electronic monitoring shifts the responsibility and cost of incarceration from the state onto monitored people and their loved ones. 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](#).

We can build on the success of the Pretrial Fairness Act by addressing electronic monitoring in this budget cycle. Prior to the implementation of the Pretrial Fairness Act, our coalition cemented support for 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, including six Cook County Commissioners. The principles lay out a roadmap for respecting people's rights while working to end the use of this harmful technology. These principles include limiting the use of electronic monitoring,

treating people monitored with dignity, respecting privacy rights, and affording people movement in order to meet their basic needs and responsibilities of work, caretaking, and education. Electronic monitoring programs must also be transparent and respect due process. Finally, electronic monitoring must not disproportionately impact marginalized communities, and programs must ensure that credit is given for time served.

Our current reality does not yet align with the principles named above. 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](#). As noted in the County-commissioned Electronic Monitoring Review, consolidation of services under one agency could produce greater consistency, efficiency, and savings.

Cook County has long led the nation in pretrial reform. By addressing the harms caused by electronic monitoring, we can continue to show the country a pathway out of our state of mass incarceration. We urge you to take action this budget season to reduce the use of pretrial electronic monitoring and consolidate the electronic monitoring programs in Cook County. It is also essential that advocates and communities directly impacted by electronic monitoring are included in this process, especially considering that in October 2023, people were denied the ability to publicly comment on the Sheriff's budget at the Cook County budget hearing.

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 firsthand. If you are interested in this collaboration, please contact us at [info@endmoneybond.org](mailto:info@endmoneybond.org).

Sincerely,

The Coalition to End Money Bond

[The Principles for Respecting the Rights of Individuals on Pretrial Electronic Monitoring in Cook County](#) have been endorsed by:

**Illinois State Public Officials**

Former State Senator Ann Gillespie

State Senator Lakesia Collins

State Senator Robert Peters

State Senator Mike Simmons

State Senator Ram Villivalam

State Representative Carol Ammons

State Representative Kelly Cassidy

State Representative William Davis

State Representative La Shawn K. Ford

State Representative Will Guzzardi

State Representative Theresa Mah

State Representative Kevin Olickal

State Representative Justin Slaughter

## **County and City Public Officials and Agencies**

Cook County Justice Advisory Council  
Cook County Public Defender Sharone R. Mitchell, Jr.  
Cook County Commissioner Alma Anaya  
Cook County Commissioner Monica Gordon  
Cook County Commissioner Bill Lowry  
Cook County Commissioner Josina Morita  
Cook County Commissioner Anthony Joel Quezada  
Cook County Commissioner Tara Stamps  
Mayor Brandon Johnson, City of Chicago  
Mayor Daniel Biss, City of Evanston  
Alderman Leni Manaa-Hoppenworth  
Alderman Matt Martin  
Alderman Carlos Ramirez-Rosa  
Alderman Byron Sigcho Lopez

## **Organizations:**

33rd Ward Working Families  
A Just Harvest  
Access Living  
Apna Ghar, Inc.  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago  
Believers Bail Out  
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 (CUSP)  
Children's Best Interest Project  
Clergy for a New Drug Policy  
Color of Equity  
Color of Change  
Community Renewal Society  
Dignidad, Brandeis University  
Erie Neighborhood House  
Equity and Transformation  
Faith Coalition for the Common Good  
Gay Liberation Network  
Health & Medicine Policy Research Group  
Illinois Alliance for Reentry & Justice  
Illinois Black Advocacy Initiative  
Illinois NOW  
Justice and Witness Ministry of the Chicago  
Metropolitan Association of the Illinois  
Conference of the United Church of Christ  
Lawndale Christian Legal Center  
League of Women Voters of Cook County  
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  
Quaker Peace and Service  
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  
Social Service Workers United Chicago  
Students for Sensible Drug Policy

TASC, Inc. (Treatment Alternatives for Safe  
Communities)  
The People's Lobby  
Trinity United Church of Christ  
Unitarian Universalist Prison Ministry of Illinois  
United Church of Rogers Park  
United States Palestinian Community Network  
Uptown People's Law Center  
Youth Empowerment Performance Project  
(YEPP)