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Illinois Coalition Joins National Effort to Improve Pretrial Justice 3DaysCount™ Campaign Offers Path to Smaller Jail Populations and Greater Public Safety

LOMBARD, Ill. — Illinois Supreme Court Chief Justice Rita B. Garman, State Representative Carol Ammons, Administrative Office of Illinois Courts Director Mike Tardy and Cherise Fanno Burdeen, CEO of the Pretrial Justice Institute (PJI), today announced that Illinois is joining 3DaysCount™, a national campaign to make pretrial justice safer, fairer and more effective. The campaign will focus on examining pretrial justice laws and court rules—the crucial structures that support good criminal justice policies from the point of arrest to when cases are resolved. Illinois is the second jurisdiction to announce its participation in 3DaysCount, which will support state-level partnerships aimed at improved public safety and better outcomes.

“It's time we implement a smart on crime mindset,” says Rep. Ammons. “Illinois simply cannot afford to continue indiscriminately locking people up and we have a moral obligation to treat our fellow community members with humanity and fairness—especially when doing so makes us all safer. The current money bail system fails in all of these areas.”

“We are particularly excited to have Illinois joining 3DaysCount. Illinois is approaching this initiative with cooperation and understanding from all three branches of government, including a commitment and history of pretrial reform from the court system itself,” said Cherise Fanno Burdeen, CEO of the Pretrial Justice Institute. “We are looking forward to working with this dynamic coalition, and the people of Illinois to support commonsense statewide solutions that are safe, fair, and effective.”

Over the next four years, Illinois will work with 3DaysCount representatives to:

- Restrict pretrial detention, after due process, to people who pose an unmanageable risk to public safety or of failing to appear in court,
- Provide information and options for judges to help guide the pretrial release decision, and
- Increase public safety.

As a nationally recognized resource for legal and evidence-based solutions to common pretrial challenges, PJI will both support 3DaysCount sites' reform agendas and also lead a national action campaign to directly engage communities in calling for transparency and needed change.

A Significant Opportunity for Illinois:

The following stakeholders and system leaders support 3DaysCount as an opportunity to make Illinois a national leader in pretrial reform.

Hon. Rita B. Garman, Chief Justice, Illinois Supreme Court — “Every day, in courthouses throughout our state, judges are called upon to make decisions that balance the safety of the community with the rights of the accused. Whether to allow a defendant to post bond and be released pending trial or to keep the defendant in custody is a complex and weighty decision. On the one hand, a defendant who presents a high risk of reoffending, especially if the charged crime is one of violence or one that is punishable by a long prison sentence may pose a danger to the community. On the other hand, a defendant who is charged with a non-violent crime, or one who holds a job and has a family, may present little or no risk. The challenge for the judge is making well-informed decisions, based on reliable and objective information. The Illinois Supreme Court is committed to implementing innovative processes that aid judicial decision making at bond hearings. Our participation in the 3DaysCount campaign is an important step towards the goal of protecting public safety while providing prompt and fair consideration of the need for pretrial incarceration in individual cases.”

Cherise Fanno Burdeen, CEO, Pretrial Justice Institute — “Illinois has a history of leadership in pretrial justice and joining the 3DaysCount campaign demonstrates a continued commitment to this critical issue. Leaders in the state and their constituents want systems that treat people fairly—regardless of income, race or ethnicity, or locale—using resources wisely and keeping communities safe. 3DaysCount will help Illinois achieve these goals.”

Carol Ammons, Illinois State Representative, 103rd District — “As in most of the country, too many low-risk people are awaiting trial in Illinois jails, simply because they are too poor to post money bail. No one feels this unequal burden more than people of color, who are more likely to be arrested and detained, and face higher bond rates, on average, than statistically identical white people. We can and must do better than this.”

Hon. Joseph G. McGraw, Chief Judge, 17th Judicial Circuit — “The 17th Judicial Circuit Court has been a progressive force in court innovation and has pioneered numerous successful evidence based court programs. We are proud to see Illinois address reforming pretrial justice.”

Mike Tardy, Director, Administrative Office of Illinois Courts — “The Illinois Judicial Branch has been working to transform pretrial justice statewide by applying a validated risk-based framework to assist in bond decisions. Illinois has been providing specialized pretrial supervision training to enhance pretrial officers’ skills and competencies and is currently piloting the evidence-based risk assessment tool – the PSA – in Cook, Kane and McLean counties.”

Stakeholder Support for 3DaysCount in Illinois:

The next step is to develop a statewide coalition to invest in the success of this initiative. Interested stakeholders should provide contact information and submit to 3dcil@staterepcarolammons.com. 3DaysCount is a comprehensive reform initiative that will radically change the way pretrial justice operates in Illinois; to be successful, support from a variety of individuals, agencies, and organizations is needed. Please join us.

About Money Bail:

Today, nearly half a million people are held in U.S. jails awaiting trial, at an aggregate annual cost to taxpayers of nearly \$14 billion. Most of these men and women could be released to await trial in the community and be counted on, with a little support, to appear in court and not be rearrested while their cases are pending. They remain detained often because they are unable to afford money bail. It is unfair and illogical to hold a poor person in jail while another person who poses a similar risk level can pay money and be released. It is also unsafe. Research shows that as little as three days in jail can destabilize the things we know make people low-risk: jobs and housing, education and healthcare, family support,

and connections. Moreover, current money bail systems threaten public safety—half of the highest-risk people exploit the system and purchase their freedom without any supervision by the courts.

About the Pretrial Justice Institute:

Since 1977 the Pretrial Justice Institute (PJI) has been a national resource for policymakers at the federal, state and local levels. PJI's core purpose is to advance safe, fair, and effective juvenile and adult pretrial justice practices and policies that honor and protect all people. We work to achieve this by monitoring the state of and advocating for pretrial justice in America; convening, educating, and supporting stakeholders to transform their colleagues and systems; and demonstrating that change is possible by working directly with jurisdictions on implementation. For more information about PJI and 3DaysCount, visit www.pretrial.org and www.pretrial.org/3DaysCount.