



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on September 9, 2022

Illinois Law Favors Criminals

“Someone could live in your shed, and all we could do is give them a ticket,” Keith Pekau, the mayor of Orland Park, a suburb of Chicago, said this week, speaking of the terrifying law enacted last year by the Illinois Legislature — a law that can charitably be said to be more concerned with criminals than their victims.

“I can’t even begin to tell you how dangerous this act is,” Mayor Pekau said, emotionally urging the city council to pass a resolution denouncing the new law. Pekau added that the bill also ends cash bail for several offenses, including kidnapping, armed robbery, and second-degree murder.



The city council passed the resolution calling for the Illinois Legislature to at least modify the nearly 800-page bill, known as the SAFE-T Act.

Governor J. B. Pritzker, on the other hand, is a staunch supporter of the law, which he signed in February 2021. He says it is “Transforming the pretrial detention system so low-income people aren’t thrown behind bars while only the wealthy walk free, diverting low-level drug crimes into substance-treatment programs and reducing excessive stays in prison.”

While it is understandable that we do not want innocent people languishing in jail just because they cannot afford bail, the bill seems more designed to prevent the punishment of criminals than anything else. The abolition of cash bail is to go into effect on January 1, 2023. Even violent offenders are released with electronic monitoring, and law enforcement cannot do anything about it until the person is in violation of that monitoring for 48 hours. In other words, a person could simply hop in a car and travel hundreds of miles away, avoiding punishment for even serious crimes.

Several states’ attorneys wrote an op-ed in the *Chicago Tribune* heavily criticizing the new law, arguing it “gives violent offenders a pass.” Demonstrating just how bad the law is, they say that “Most egregiously ... is that this law substantially strips the people of this state of the ability to charge an individual with what is commonly referred to as ‘felony murder.’ This is a crime in which an individual commits or attempts to commit a forcible felony that results in someone’s death.” An example would be when someone is killed while an armed robbery is taking place.

Mayor Pekau also called attention to the new effort in the Illinois Legislature to remove “school resource officers,” which has already been done in Chicago. “I personally do not want to see the city of Chicago become the standard for how we conduct public safety because they have abandoned their police officers, abandoned their residents and created a war zone full of criminals.” With all of the concern about school shootings, this is particularly inexplicable.

Tasked with implementing many of the new law’s provisions is the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA), who offered a summary of some of the other provisions of the new law. The ICJIA said



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that the bill expands officer training on topics including “crisis intervention, deescalation, use of force, high-risk traffic stops, implicit bias, racial and ethnic sensitivity training, and emergency response.”

The law also creates a statewide decertification process for officers, and allows the attorney general to “investigate, initiate civil lawsuits, and enforce settlements against police agencies that have a pattern of depriving individuals of their rights.” And it allows for investigation of anonymous complaints against officers.

While accused persons have historically been allowed a phone call — which is usually made to a family member, friend, or lawyer — this bill “provides people in custody with up to three phone calls within three hours.”

Why in the world would anyone, even progressive, left-wing Democrats, want to support criminal activity at the expense of crime victims? Perhaps it should not be surprising, considering that many “progressives” routinely demonize hard work, private property, and “middle-class values.” Their platforms regularly violate the Ten Commandment condemnation of coveting — desiring someone else’s property. In some cases, some of the more extreme voices want to decriminalize shoplifting.

But this bill even requires the Illinois Department of Corrections to report the most recent address of a prison inmate to the State Board of Elections, to be used in redistricting legislative districts. This is likely an effort to increase the population totals in Democrat-leaning districts.

Amazingly, the new law even reduces restrictions on driver’s license suspensions, cancellations, and prohibitions of renewals based on failure to pay certain fines.

The amount of time that an individual must serve in mandatory supervised release (parole) is also reduced under the bill.

While some parts of this massive bill may be worthy of consideration, allowing all defendants charged with criminal acts to be released without posting monetary bail, will, in the words of the resolution passed by the Orland Park City Council, “cause major public safety issues.”

Sadly, this is probably an example of more such laws in those areas of the country that have increasingly left-wing legislatures, governors, and district attorneys — many of whom have been put into office with the financial backing of George Soros.

Back in 1968, Independent presidential candidate George Wallace, the governor of Alabama, elicited both support and disapproval for his condemnation of what he considered soft-on-crime measures being enacted at that time. He famously said, “Nowadays you can be held up and hit in the head on a Friday, and the criminal is out of jail before you get to the hospital, and then on Monday morning, they’re trying the policeman” for police brutality.

At the time this was understood as political hyperbole, but, sadly, it seems to be coming true today.



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