

The PRETRIAL FAIRNESS Act

HOW DOES THE MONEY BAIL SYSTEM HARM JOBS & ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY?



The current system of money bond and pretrial detention **reduces job opportunities and economic prospects** for people in Illinois.

- People detained for as little as 72 hours are **2.5 times more likely to be unemployed one year later.**
- Requiring people to pay bond as a condition of pretrial release can lead to people spending a lot of time in jail only because of poverty. 60% of U.S. residents **don't have enough savings to cover a \$1,000 emergency.**
- People with criminal convictions face numerous legal barriers to employment. People incarcerated pretrial are more likely to accept a plea deal in order to be released for charges that they might otherwise not be convicted of, increasing conviction rates.
 - Illinois has over **900 limitations** on employment and volunteering, business and professional licensure, and occupational certification based on criminal convictions.
- Past incarceration **reduces annual income by as much as 40%.**
- Higher levels of policing and criminalization in Black and Latinx neighborhoods mean the harms of money bond and pretrial incarceration fall more heavily on communities of color and exacerbate existing economic inequity in Illinois.

How will the Pretrial Fairness Act **increase economic opportunity?**

The Pretrial Fairness Act will end wealth-based pretrial incarceration, which lowers the chance an accused person will lose out on jobs or end up with a criminal conviction. The bill eliminates money bond, and ensures that no one will be incarcerated pretrial simply because they don't have money. Fewer people will plead guilty simply because they want to get out of jail, which could mean fewer criminal convictions and employment barriers. The Pretrial Fairness Act also increases the supportive services available to people accused of crimes.

If governments paid less to incarcerate people pretrial, and families did not have to pay bond to free their loved ones, **where could that money go?**

Rather than paying an average of **\$38,268 per person per year** to incarcerate people who are awaiting trial, our local governments could spend those funds on public schools, job training, and higher education, all of which will increase earning potential and economic equity.