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Legislation Text

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Committee on Public Safety Chicago City Council
Meeting September 21, 2022

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the 2021 Illinois Safety, Accountability, Fairness and Equity-Today (SAFE-T) Act eliminates cash bail on January 1, 2023 and may release violent, repeat offenders back onto the streets of the City of Chicago while awaiting trial; and,

WHEREAS, the residents of the City of Chicago have the expectation and the right to feel safe in all public places and all times; and,

WHEREAS, the residents of the City of Chicago have a right to safety in their homes, such as the 12 year old shot at a family party on September the 13th by Isaiah Renteria who was on pretrial release for a Class X felony; and,

WHEREAS, the residents of the City of Chicago have a right to safety in their vehicles, such as the victims of armed robberies and carjackings which took place during a spree from September 10th and 11th from the West Loop to Edgewater; and,

WHEREAS, according to CWB Chicago, "the actual number of murders and shootings committed by people on felony bail is undoubtedly much higher than the numbers seen here. Since 2017, CPD has brought charges in less than 5% of non-fatal shootings and 33% of murders, according to the city's data;" and,

WHEREAS, the pretrial release of violent offenders only serves to re-traumatize victims and their families while simultaneously denying them their constitutional rights, questioning if there is any recourse or safety for them and their families in cooperating with authorities; and,

WHEREAS, all offenders may be eligible for pretrial release may be accused of armed robbery, kidnapping, second degree murder, drug-induced homicide, aggravated DUI, and threatening a public official; and,

WHEREAS, in the case of a juvenile with a weapon, the community and school's interest in knowing their name eclipses their purported right to privacy in the commission of crimes; and,

WHEREAS offenders who deface a place of worship should not be released pretrial; offenders who commit a hate crime should not be released pretrial; offenders who have a history of stalking or threats against a public official should not be released pretrial; and,

WHEREAS, the uncertainties of law enforcement and community safety caused by the SAFE-T Act have raised questions about the administration of justice both for the accused as well as for the thousands of victims annually within the City of Chicago; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF CHICAGO, that we, the members of the City Council of Chicago, call upon the Committee on Public Safety to convene a public hearing to examine how the City can be prepared to protect residents after the elimination of cash bail on January 1, 2023.