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Illinois' Pretrial Fairness Act is a Positive Step Forward, More Must Be Done to Ensure a Fair, Equitable System

Washington, DC – In response to Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker [signing](#) the Pretrial Fairness Act, which eliminates the use of money bail in the state of Illinois, **Meghan Guevara, an [Executive Partner at the Pretrial Justice Institute \(PJI\)](#)** released the following statement:

“Today, Illinois becomes the only state in the nation to completely strike money bail from the law. This is an important move, and it is the culmination of years of effort by local advocates. We know that every single day, legally innocent people — particularly Black people and other people of color — are forced to languish in jail simply because they can’t afford to buy their way out. For years, this practice has caused people to lose their jobs, homes and even custody of their kids. Governor J.B. Pritzker’s decision to sign the Pretrial Fairness Act will end this inhumane practice in Illinois and serve as a critical step forward in initiating the urgent change this country needs to reform our deeply unjust and unequal legal system.

“Still, while eliminating money bail is a significant feat, we must recognize this simply isn’t enough. More must be done in every state across the U.S. to not only address the inequities in our legal system, but also to work hand-in-hand with impacted communities to reimagine a legal system without a reliance on incarceration or violent policing as a means of achieving public safety. This includes ensuring that the end of money bail doesn't simply result in an increase in people being jailed with no means of release or electronic surveillance in the community.”

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Pretrial Justice Institute’s core purpose is to advance safe, fair, and effective juvenile and adult pretrial justice practices policies that honor and protect all people.