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**JHA Statement on Criminal Justice Omnibus Bill**  
**January 13, 2021**

JHA applauds the sweeping changes to the criminal justice system that Illinois legislators approved today. These reforms will move us towards a more fair, humane, and effective criminal justice system. Improving transparency and accountability around police behavior, ending cash bond, and addressing sentencing disparities and excessiveness will make the system more fair and just.

JHA is thrilled that two initiatives we have focused on are among the reforms included in the legislation:

- **Death in Custody Reporting**: Increasing the information that must be made publicly available when a person dies in the custody of a criminal justice agency will allow for government actors to be more effectively held accountable for people's health and safety.
- **Modernization of Mandatory Supervised Release (MSR)**: Reducing the amount of time that many people leaving prison will be subjected to post-release supervision will improve outcomes and allow IDOC to use limited resources more effectively. The changes to MSR will allow Parole Officers to more effectively focus their time and energy on identifying and addressing the needs of people on their caseloads, and free many people from unnecessarily long post-release supervision terms.

JHA thanks the legislators who tirelessly worked on and fought for these important, much needed reforms. We are grateful for the amazing efforts and commitment of Senator Sims, Senator Peters, Senator Collins, Representative Slaughter, Representative Gordon Booth, Representative Ammons, Representative Buckner and Representative Harper, and the many others whose hard work paved the way for this victory. This legislation moves Illinois further towards a criminal justice system that is grounded in reality; rather than a reactionary one tainted by fear and racism.

We urge Governor Pritzker to sign this bill into law immediately so that the many changes our system desperately requires will be put into effect without undue delay for the betterment of Illinois.

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For more information about the John Howard Association please visit our website, [www.thejha.org](http://www.thejha.org). Please direct media inquiries to Jennifer Vollen-Katz, [jvollen@thejha.org](mailto:jvollen@thejha.org), 312-291-9183 ext. 205