

April 16, 2020

STATEMENT: Names of Illinois Prisoners Granted Commutation Released

Legal Council has recently learned that the names of Illinois prisoners recently granted commutation as part of an ongoing effort to address the COVID outbreaks of Illinois prisons were publicly released. The implications of releasing these names deeply concerns us. **Legal Council strongly believes that releasing medically-vulnerable detainees improves safety for everyone in these settings—including detainees and prison employees—and helps protect the communities where those employees live and work.**

We are also aware that people of color are overrepresented in Illinois prisons and make up significant percentages of medically-vulnerable detainees. Likewise, Legal Council is [keenly aware](#) of the disproportionate burden of COVID infection and fatalities [affecting communities of color](#) in Illinois and across the country. We are actively participating in a broad, state-supported effort to provide wrap-around services to individuals who are released to help protect them and the communities they return to from COVID.

Legal Council believes that our shared priority as a state is to address the pandemic in the smartest, fastest, most compassionate, and most equitable way possible. With significant outbreaks in Illinois prisons, we know that releasing medically-vulnerable detainees and supporting them upon their return home are an important part of that effort.

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Legal Council for Health Justice uses the power of the law to secure dignity, opportunity, and well-being for people facing barriers due to illness and disability. All programs partner with health and hospital systems to train and support the care provider network, provide direct representation to referred patients, and conduct systemic advocacy to promote health equity among populations facing chronic, disabling, and stigmatizing health and social conditions. legalcouncil.org