

Illinois House Quickly Passes Sweeping Police Reform Bill 3653 60-50 Wednesday Morning

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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SPRINGFIELD - The Illinois House of Representatives quickly passed the sweeping Police Reform Bill 3653 package by a dominant 60-50 vote Wednesday morning.

The bill already passed 32-23 in the Illinois Senate in the early Wednesday.

The Illinois Senate- and House-approved bill will now be sent to Governor J.B. Pritzker, where he is expected to sign it into law.

On Monday, Gov. J.B. Pritzker answered questions on a massive criminal justice omnibus bill supported by the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus. He said he is "generally in favor of the process and the work the Black Caucus has done overall."

When pressed on specific bill provisions that have been seen as controversial, especially as it relates to changes in how policing is done in the state, Pritzker said he would wait

until the final version of the bill is presented to him. Lawmakers had to January 13, 2021, to pass the bill, so today was the final day. The Illinois Law Enforcement Coalition was firmly against HB 3653, saying "it made the state less safe."

The bill is part of an overall larger plan authored by the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus to rid Illinois of, what it calls, "systemic racism."

One of the controversial parts of the package includes the elimination of cash bail. It would allow certain criminal offenders to be set free without waiting in jail for their court date because they can't afford bond.

As far as area House of Representative members, Rep. Monica Bristow did not vote on the issue, while Rep. Avery Bourne voted no, and C.J. Davidsmeyer voted no.

This was a statement on behalf of the Southern Illinois Police Chiefs Association (SIPCA) by Edwardsville Police Chief Jay Keeven earlier today: "The members of the Southern Illinois Police Chiefs Association (SIPCA) urge concerned citizens of Southern Illinois to contact their State Representative and the Governor immediately to express opposition to House Bill (HB) #3653.

"This legislation began as an amendment to a bill the Illinois Senate 'hijacked' from the Illinois House. When severe opposition was expressed regarding this dangerous bill, legislators moved the wording into HB 3653. In the opinion of the many police executives represented by the Southern Illinois Police Chiefs Association, if this bill becomes law it will have a devastating effect on the ability of Illinois police officers to keep their communities safe. One has to wonder why our legislators would rush a 600-plus page piece of legislation, attempting to keep the contents hidden from those it will impact."

Madison County State's Attorney Tom Haine issued this statement on behalf of the sheriff and other city police chiefs in unison about the bill: "The unanimous message of the Madison County law enforcement community to our legislature and Governor is: "This bill cannot become law, but should be paused and reconsidered next session. In our professional opinion, as drafted, this so-called 'reform' would in fact devastate our ability to keep our communities safe and enforce the law fairly and equally for all. Good intentions and some worthwhile reforms are not enough to justify the enactment of so many bad policies at the same time. Public safety and victim's rights are delicate issues that require time and serious consideration by all stakeholders.

"Here, only a week after a 600-plus page bill was proposed that revolutionizes virtually every aspect of the criminal justice system in Illinois, it is being rushed to the floor for a vote without consideration for unintended consequences. Illinois communities should

not become the testing ground for the rest of the country for rushed and ill-conceived ideas, especially where public safety is concerned. We urge the concerned citizens of Madison County to contact their legislators and the Governor to prevent the passage or signing of this disastrous bill.”

A bill drafted by Illinois State's Attorney Kwame Raoul would reform police certification and standards, has support from the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police, in contrast to other criminal justice legislation from the Black Caucus that has faced strong opposition from law enforcement.

[Chris Rhodes also contributed to this story.](#)