

SAFE ACT OF 2019

HB 1643/SB 250 | Safe And Full Employment Zones

Law enforcement and the justice system alone cannot be expected to eliminate violence in our communities. Neighborhoods hit hardest by violence need support to address the underlying causes of violence. This legislation recognizes violence as a public health crisis requiring an extraordinary response, allowing government and communities to partner to identify and build on assets leading to investment in jobs, housing, employment training, childcare, health care and other necessary services.

The SAFE Act will:

1 Establish SAFE ZONES
Objectively identify the geographic areas, called SAFE Zones, with the highest concentrations of violence and returning people from the Department of Corrections.



2 Create LOCAL BOARDS
Establish local boards in the SAFE Zones to create community-designed plans to combat the violence tailored to local communities with state-supported technical assistance.



3 Assemble a RESPONSE TEAM
Create a state level board, the SAFE Illinois Coordinating Board, comprised of legislators, local public officials, state agency directors, service providers and recipients to oversee this process and support implementation of the local plans.



4 Reprioritize INVESTMENTS
Reprioritize and invest a select portion of existing departments' funding to ensure those plans are successful.



Key Considerations:

Violence is a statewide problem, not just a Chicago one. The three cities with the highest rates of violence in the state are all outside of Cook County. The state is in desperate need of a smarter solution to violence.



This bill is about good government. Identifying where the problems exist, establishes solutions that rely on the expertise of local actors and directs resources to the places and plans that need it the most.



The bill creates a fully transparent process, with multiple fiscal safeguards including yearly reporting to the General Assembly, a formal evaluation be conducted by a public university and application to GATA, Budgeting for Results, FOIA and the Open Meetings Act apply to this process.



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