



ILLINOIS STATE SENATE REPUBLICAN CAUCUS

April 16, 2020

Hon. J.B. Pritzker
Governor, State of Illinois
100 W. Randolph St., Suite 16-100
Chicago, IL 60601

Governor Pritzker,

We have learned through the media that you have reduced the sentences of some violent criminals, including seven or more convicted murderers. We are concerned that you have done so without informing the victims, their families, witnesses who testified against them, local law enforcement leaders, the judges who decided their sentences, or members of the General Assembly. Are all of these commutations because of the COVID-19 crisis? We believe that the public deserves to know.

We do recognize that you commuted the sentences and did not pardon these inmates. This indicates that you do not dispute that they are guilty of the crimes they have been convicted of. A few weeks ago, you voiced outrage to the media at the President's public decision to lessen Rod Blagojevich's sentence by six years. Why did you decide to quietly commute the sentences of some murderers by 50 years?

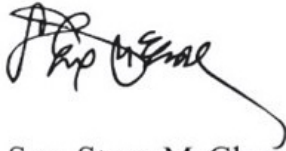
According to the Chicago Tribune, Alma Durr is one of the murderers whose sentence you decided to commute. Is this true? Ms. Durr took a revolver, held it to her 21-month-old son Darryl's head, and pulled the trigger. A news story from the trial indicated that Darryl moaned and suffered but did not die for another two hours. Despite DCFS's best efforts to protect Darryl, he will never get to see his 50th birthday. His murderer, at 50 years-old, will be leaving a prison that currently has no inmates infected with COVID-19 (according to IDOC's website). She had been sentenced to life.

Yesterday, the Fraternal Order of Police (Chicago Lodge #7) announced that they had additional concerns about the release of violent felons, including an inmate who was incarcerated for Aggravated Criminal Sexual Assault with a Weapon and released after only 60 days. While many of our state's businesses have had to keep their doors closed, why are you allowing the doors of our prisons to be opened for murderers and violent criminals? We respectfully request that you:

- 1) Notify and consult with the victims and/or their families, local law enforcement leaders, members of the General Assembly, presiding judges, witnesses, and state's attorney's offices before making any future commutation decisions;
- 2) Provide us a full list of the names of those convicted inmates who have been released and publish it on IDOC's website;
- 3) Provide us with a complete list of the names of any prisoners that are currently under review to be released;
- 4) Provide information regarding who you consulted before making each individual decision; and
- 5) Provide information regarding the capacity for parole officers to handle all of these new cases.

We know that these are challenging times. We also know that we can't short circuit the mechanisms in place to protect the citizens of our state. We look forward to your prompt response and thank you for your serious consideration of these important matters.

Sincerely,



Sen. Steve McClure



Sen. Jason Plummer



Sen. Brian Stewart



Sen. Chapin Rose



Sen. Jil Tracy



Sen. Paul Schimpf



Sen. Craig Wilcox



Sen. Dan McConchie