

MEDIA ALERT

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Restore Justice Applauds Governor Pritzker, Senator Fine, Representative Gabel, and the Illinois Department of Corrections for Supporting Families with Incarcerated Loved Ones

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We applaud Governor JB Pritzker, Senator Laura Fine (D-Glenview), Representative Robyn Gabel (D-Evanston), and the Illinois Department of Corrections for making Senate Bill 3180 law. Governor Pritzker signed this family-support measure into law today, and Senator Fine and Representative Gabel ushered the bill through passage in their respective chambers.

SB 3180 will require the Illinois Department of Corrections to publish an annual report on issues being raised by family members. With the annual report, legislators can identify opportunities to address significant concerns in future policymaking.

“While I was confined in the Illinois Department of Corrections for more than 20 years, my loved ones visited many times. These visits were so important to me. On more than one occasion, a loved one traveled from out of the country to see me and was denied a visit. We did not have a meaningful remedy at the time. Thankfully, today, the calls and needs of people who are currently and formerly incarcerated and our families will no longer go unanswered. Together, [Public Act 102-535](#) (passed in 2021) and Senate Bill 3180 will cast light on conditions and issues that need fixing,” said Marcelo de Jesus Velazquez.

“Families of men and women who are incarcerated can seek help without worrying whether their incarcerated loved ones would be subjected to further harassment. This is the reason why this legislation is so valuable.”

The Illinois General Assembly established the Family Liaison (also called the Point of Contact) in 2021 by unanimously passing [Public Act 102-535](#). This position gives family members someone to call if they are turned away from or mistreated in visiting rooms; people with incarcerated loved ones can share complaints, suggestions, and requests with the Point of Contact to help ensure they are able to communicate with their family members. However, many family members who call and email the Point of Contact say their issues are left unresolved.

Senate Bill 3180 will ensure families have additional transparency and accountability by identifying significant areas for improvement.

“This legislation addresses family members and loved ones. We are talking about mothers and fathers, people who will now have recourse when their visits are denied or if they feel they have been mistreated,” said Julie Anderson, who has a son incarcerated in Illinois.

Senator Fine and Representative Gabel also championed the Point of Contact bill. We are grateful for their commitment to families and to improving conditions for people who are incarcerated and their family members.

Restore Justice, which comprises [Restore Justice Foundation](#) and [Restore Justice Illinois](#), works to address issues faced by those serving life or de-facto life sentences, their families, and their communities. Founded in 2015 by a dedicated group of advocates that included the late former Congressman, Federal Judge, and White House Counsel Abner Mikva, Restore Justice trains and supports advocates, conducts research, nurtures partnerships, and develops policy solutions that will roll back ineffective “tough on crime” policies of the past, replacing them with compassionate, smart, and safe policies for the future.