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SHERIFF'S OFFICE OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

RICHARD J. DALEY CENTER

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CHICAGO, IL 60602

THOMAS J. DART

SHERIFF

October 20, 2017

Honorable John P. Daley
Finance Chairman
Cook County Board of Commissioners
118 North Clark Street, Room 3 ½
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Re: 2018 Budget Reduction Plan

Dear Chairman Daley:

I have been asked to cut \$62,500,000 from my 2018 budget in response to the Board's repeal of the Sweetened Beverage Tax. These cuts would be *in addition* to the \$59,326,028 reductions I have made to date; reductions made possible by imposing significant restrictions to operating accounts, the elimination of critical positions in my office and dramatic reductions in our overtime budget. Cutting an additional \$62,500,000 from my 2018 budget is not possible, would threaten public safety and likely result in the jail being placed back under the Department of Justice oversight.

However, I understand the fiscal crisis the County faces and propose the following reductions and operational adjustments that will result in an additional reduction to my 2018 budget of \$33,450,000:

1. ELIMINATION OF COST OF LIVING AND STEP INCREASES - \$5 MILLION SAVINGS

It is irresponsible and fiscally reckless to award salary increases during a time of fiscal crisis. I strongly urge these increases be suspended until such time as the County can afford to pay them. Suspension of these increases will result in \$5,000,000 in immediate savings.



2. ELIMINATION OF FOREST PRESERVE POLICE DEPARTMENT - \$9.5 MILLION SAVINGS

A solution I have raised in the past and advance once again is to eliminate the Forest Preserve Police Department. The Sheriff's Police Department can assume the responsibilities of the Forest Preserve Police Department without the need for increased staffing or resources. Currently, the Sheriff's Police conduct all investigative work for the Forest Preserve Police. To maintain a separate police department for the forest preserves in Cook County is unnecessary and wasteful, particularly in these economic times.

3. BRANCH COURT CLOSURES - \$3.2 MILLION SAVINGS

There have been discussions for several years regarding the closure of Branch Courts, except for the County owned facility at 111th and Wentworth. While closure of these courts will create hardships for defendants and their families, the closures would result in substantial savings due to the redeployment and layoffs of staff.

4. REDUCED COURTHOUSE HOURS OF OPERATION - \$2.6 MILLION SAVINGS

Reducing the hours of operation at the Daley Center as well as Districts 2, 3, 4 and 6 to 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. will result in a savings of approximately \$2.6 million dollars. We would continue to provide security in the event of a late trial or other matter, however, staffing courthouses during hours with little or no activity or service to the public is wasteful and unnecessary.

5. CLOSURE OF 5TH DISTRICT COURTHOUSE - \$3.5 MILLION SAVINGS

Closing the 5th District Courthouse in Bridgeview will result in substantial savings due to the redeployment and layoffs of staff.

6. IMPLEMENTATION OF VIDEO STATUS HEARINGS - \$2.5 MILLION SAVINGS

Every day, my office transports over 500 detainees to courthouses across the county, only to have their cases continued. Over 80% of transports result in a continuance of at least 30 days. We must implement video status hearings that will result not only in cost savings of over \$2.5 million dollars, but will eliminate unnecessary disruptions in detainees' lives.

7. CLOSURE OF 3 DIVISION 2 BUILDINGS - \$3.5 MILLION SAVINGS

As our collective efforts at bond reform have been implemented over the past 18 months, we have worked daily to close tiers and divisions across the compound. There are 4 buildings that make up the minimum security Division 2. Closures of all but one of the buildings will result in significant savings and allow for the redeployment of staff. We propose to close buildings 1-3 of Division 2 and re-open Division 5 with a net savings of \$3.5 million dollars.

8. 2 FURLOUGH DAYS - \$3.3 MILLION SAVINGS

Requiring all staff to take 2 furlough days during FY18 will result in immediate savings of \$3.3 million dollars.

9. ESTABLISH FAST TRACK DIVISION


Despite a lower custodial population in the jail, those detainees that cannot bond out stay for far too long. We have seen great reductions in the length of stay for detainees eligible for the Rocket Docket, a process I created legislatively that requires certain low level offenses be adjudicated within 30 days or the individual be released from custody. I propose expanding this process, with the cooperation of State's Attorney Foxx and Public Defender Campanelli, to all persons charged with non-violent offenses. A recent analysis of our jail population reveals that resolution of non-violent offenders' cases within 30 days would result in a 910 person decrease in the jail population, and would allow for the closure of an additional division, resulting in significant savings.

10. ELIMINATION OF SHERIFF'S SECURITY DETAIL - \$350,000 CONTINUED SAVINGS

I will continue to forgo a security detail which has saved taxpayers at least \$350,000 per year since I took office.

I look forward to discussing these cost savings measure and options at next week's budget hearing. The adjustments set forth above, coupled with the previous cuts I have made bring the total reduction to my 2018 budget to \$92,776,028.

Sincerely,



Thomas J. Dart
Sheriff of Cook County

cc: Tanya Anthony, Director, Budget and Management