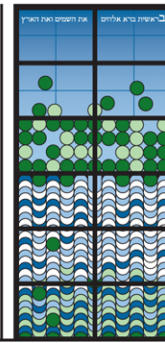


15 West Delaware Place
Chicago, Illinois 60610
Tel 312.867.7000
Fax 312.867.7006
www.chicagosinai.org



*My House Shall be a
House of Prayer for all People*

CHICAGO SINAI CONGREGATION

The Honorable Toni Preckwinkle
Cook County Board President
118 N. Clark Street, Room 537
Chicago, IL 60602

April 19th, 2020

Dear President Preckwinkle,

The spread of COVID-19 is a pernicious menace that has fortunately, here in Illinois and Cook County, captured the attention and dedication of our represented leadership. I am proud of all that our city, county and state have done to confront this crisis.

However, one major and obvious shortcoming in those efforts has been the protection of our incarcerated community. The outbreak of the novel coronavirus at Cook County Jail and other facilities—and the daily loss of life to which it leads—is a blight we need to rectify.

Here at Chicago Sinai Congregation, and together with nearly 40 Reform Synagogues united throughout the states in the Religious Action Center of Illinois (RAC-IL), we have been working from the first day of the shelter-in-place order to reduce the prison population and safely to decarcerate non-violent offenders and those whose only offense is their inability to pay money bail. Our leaders were parts of the protests outside of Cook County Jails from day one, and I am on record condemning the situation in the Chicago Sun-Times [<https://chicago.suntimes.com/2020/4/13/21219283/racism-coronavirus-covid-19-african-americans>].

I urge the Cook County Commission seriously to undertake decarceration efforts of non-violent offenders at your upcoming Board of Commissioners Meeting. Immediate action must be initiated to save lives.

I would be happy to connect with you or the commission personally on this in coming days, if that would be helpful. I would also be willing to convene a large group of concerned clergy to convince the commission of the need on this issue.

Sincerely,

Seth M. Limmer
Senior Rabbi, Chicago Sinai Congregation