

To the Cook County Board of Commissioners:

Hi, my name is Jerry Davis-EL. My professions are a Social Worker therapist, a Leader with The Peoples Lobby, and Youth Guidance's BAM Training Academy-Becoming A Man coach. Thank you for allowing me this space. I live in the South Suburbs, however I grew up on the Westside in the City of Chicago.

As a Social Worker and a person doing advocacy work on the front lines with The Peoples Lobby, I can attest to the fact that there is a much need in the Black and brown communities for resources such as Mental Health Counseling, Housing, Restorative Justice programs, and Health Care just to name a few. This pandemic has made visible the atrocities and neglect of those marginalized communities who lack availability to these resources! The County needs to create a strategy so that a Social Worker answers the call of someone who has a mental health disorder in the community rather than an untrained police officer.

I want to share a personal experience as I was a returning citizen in June 2010. One month prior to my release, my daughter Monica was murdered. Fortunately, I was able to receive counseling services and support to achieve my goals from 2011-2018: graduate and undergraduate Social Work degrees, which have allowed me to live my passion to help others less fortunate and with no voice. I vowed that my daughter's Monica death would not be in vain and vowed to make a difference. Thank you and I hope that we can continue to work together going forward.

Best Regards,

Jerry Davis-EL QMHP, MSW, CADC, CODP1