



Illinois Public Health Association

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IPHA Statement on Governor Pritzker Signing Criminal Justice Reform Bill

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – Tom Hughes, Executive Director of the Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA), released the following statement on Monday:

“As leaders of local health departments, we serve on the frontlines of defending the public’s safety. It is our responsibility to not only protect communities from threats to their health, but to also address threats to the safety of people’s lives and wellbeing, which includes those lost or hurt by systemic racism. Today, we fully recognize the fact that racism is a public health crisis, and commend Gov. JB Pritzker for taking steps to end this crisis by signing House Bill 3653 into law and reforming the criminal justice system in Illinois.”

“In 2020, we joined communities in mourning the lives lost to systemic racism, including the horrific killing of George Floyd, as well as the murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade and countless others. Structural racism has existed in the criminal justice system for far too long, and House Bill 3653 seeks to make significant changes to help ensure the protection of the civil rights of all people and abolish discriminatory law enforcement strategies, which are goals also shared by the IPHA.

“Structural and systemic racism are woven into everyday life for people of color. We have stood with the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus in raising their voices against the injustices that have occurred in the past, and we thank them for developing policies to help prevent acts of racism and violence from happening in the future. As an organization, the IPHA will continue to encourage local health departments to educate the public on ways that structural racism damages lives and communities, and to take an active role in tracking and analyzing data on how racism creates further disparities in health and safety.

“Today marks a historic chapter in advancing our state and improving the physical, mental and emotional health of residents in Illinois. Again, we thank the governor for signing this legislation into law that will help end an epidemic that has threatened and claimed too many lives in our state. We look forward to continue working with the governor, our state legislature and our local community leaders to complete our mission of making a safer and healthier Illinois for all.”

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