

Chiefs Deliver Crime-Prevention Message to Top State Officials

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Fight Crime: Invest in Kids

Crime prevention via wise investments in children's well-being was the topic when several police chiefs joined sheriffs and prosecutors in recent conversations with top Illinois policymakers.

The law enforcement leaders are members of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, a bipartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening public safety by calling for greater support of research-proven programs that can put youth on a path to success and away from trouble.

Chiefs Dan Ryan (Leland Grove), Carla Redd (Rockford), and Fred Hayes (Elwood) came to Springfield to help deliver that message as part of Fight Crime's March 21 Day at the Capitol event. They joined other law enforcement officials in conversations with Senate President Don Harmon, Senate Minority Leader John Curran, and House Minority Leader Tony McCombie, among others.

Fight Crime members presented legislators with a letter — signed by nearly 150 Illinois police chiefs, sheriffs, and state's attorneys — supporting FY25 state budget increases to improve access and quality in preschool, child care, key birth-to-3 services, and afterschool programs. Over half of the letter signatories were police chiefs.

Earlier in March, Hazel Crest Police Chief Mitchell Davis assisted Fight Crime: Invest in Kids in a similar meeting with House Speaker Emanuel "Chris" Welch, stressing the crime-prevention significance of proven investments in early childhood care and education.



▲ Above: Police Chiefs Dan Ryan (Leland Grove), Carla Redd (Rockford), and Fred Hayes (Elwood) discuss FY25 crime-prevention priorities with House Minority Leader Tony McCombie, R-Savannah.

Throughout these conversations, Fight Crime members provided policymakers with examples of the extensive research demonstrating — for example — how high-quality preK services can improve children's likelihood of doing well in school, graduating, and finding gainful employment while also reducing their chances of involvement in criminal activity.

In 25 years of partnership with the ILACP, Fight Crime has helped secure hundreds of millions of dollars in new public resources and policy improvements for programs benefiting youth. The organization does not provide any of these services, itself.

Other participants in the group's March 21 event were Sheriffs Jeff Lower (Tazewell County) and Chris Watkins (Peoria), as well as State's Attorneys Bob Berlin (DuPage), Eric Weis (Kendall), and Eric Rinehart (Lake). In all, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids membership totals 350 Illinois law enforcement leaders, and participation incurs no costs or obligations.

If you are interested in learning more about Fight Crime, contact Sean Noble at snoble@fightcrime.org.