

# TELL CHIEF JUDGE CLANCY BOLES: STAND UP FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

We believe Chief Judge Clancy Boles is violating Illinois' state labor laws, and is determined to destroy the longstanding pay system for Kane County's probation officers and youth counselors. Her actions may have compromised the public safety and forced these dedicated criminal justice workers to strike in protest of her attacks on their jobs.

The County recently cut spending on public safety and eliminated programs to monitor dangerous criminals awaiting trial. Now, after four weeks without these important Kane County criminal justice workers, there are an estimated 3,000 criminal offenders not being supervised by the same professional probation officers. The list of offenders includes approximately 150 sex offenders and 100 high-risk offenders.

This problem continues because Chief Judge Clancy Boles refuses to honor the longstanding pay systems for the dedicated probation officers and youth counselors who serve as one of the last lines of defense against crime in our communities.



**PROTECT OUR COMMUNITY.  
DEFEND THE COUNTY WORKERS THAT KEEP US SAFE.**

KANE COUNTY COALITION FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

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## Background

- Kane County, Illinois is a County of 530,000 people in northern Illinois. Its largest city is Aurora and the County seat is Geneva. Median household income is \$73,347.
- Kane County is governed by a 25-person County Board; the County Board Chairman is Chris Lauzen.
- Kane County District Attorney Joe McMahon's annual report for 2017 stated that Kane County felony filings were up for the second year, with an almost 7 percent increase in 2017. This reversed a multi-year trend of declining felony cases.
- The County's Circuit Court is the Illinois 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court. The Kane County Board sets the budget for the Circuit Court.
- The administrator of the 16<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court is Chief Judge Susan Clancy Boles from sub-circuit 4 of the 16<sup>th</sup> Circuit.
- The Kane County Board, led by Chairman Lauzen, cut the Circuit Court's 2018 budget. These cuts included ending an electronic home monitoring program, which offered 24/7 surveillance of defendants while they awaited trial.
- Board Chairman Lauzen has refused to intervene and assist in regard to the labor dispute. He was asked multiple times to use his leadership role to address and resolve the dispute and the related safety issues, but he has refused.

### Probation Officers and Youth Counselors in Kane County

- Probation officers and youth counselors in Kane County are employed by the 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court.
- Over 100 people work as adult and youth probation officers, drug court monitors, sex offender monitors and youth counselors. All of these employees have bachelor's degrees; many have master's degrees.
- In 2013, probation officers and youth counselors negotiated a 15-year step increase system with the 16<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court.
- Starting pay is approximately \$39,000 for new hires. Since 2013 workers in progression are guaranteed a 3.7% step increase every year until after the employee reaches their maximum salary of approximately \$60,000 on their 15th year of service.
- In December 2017, negotiations for a new contract began with the 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court. At that time, Chief Judge Susan Clancy Boles unilaterally rescinded the 15-year step increases. Judge Clancy Boles proposed replacing the previously-negotiated step increases with three years of much smaller wage increases instead.
- The union believes that Chief Judge Susan Clancy Boles violated state law by, among other things, failing to implement wage step increases after expiration of the collective bargaining agreement, and by failing to provide information regarding health insurance coverage as related to the labor dispute.
- On April 12, the probation officers and youth counselors voted to reject the Chief Judge's contract proposal that contained the pay cuts and authorized an unfair labor practice strike.
- Hoping to avoid a strike, the probation officers and youth counselors proposed sending the issue of their step wage increases to an interest arbitration process, where a neutral 3<sup>rd</sup> party would render a binding decision on the matter. Chief Judge Clancy Boles refused. The Chief Judge also refused a one year contract proposal made by the union intended to avert a strike.
- After the Chief Judge's first proposal was overwhelmingly rejected, Susan Clancy Boles proposed a menial \$200 a year bonus for only two years of the 3 year contract proposal, but no other changes were made. On April 27, 2018, as anticipated the probation officers and youth counselors voted down the second contract proposal and, given no other choice, went on strike.
- Probation officers and youth counselors had successfully negotiated new contracts with previous Chief Judges in charge for decades without any work stoppages. This is the first strike of this kind to occur in the history of the 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court.
- Due to the strike, approximately 3,000 criminal offenders on probation and approximately 7,000 other offenders receiving court-ordered services and monitoring are not being supervised by the highly-trained and professional public safety officers forced to go on strike. This includes people on probation for sex offenses, domestic violence offenses, drug offenses, and those on pre-trial supervision for a wide variety of charges.
- On May 10, Chief Judge Clancy Boles sent letters to striking employees threatening to replace them if they didn't return to work by May 15. Federal and state authorities have held that an employer may *not* lawfully hire permanent replacements for workers who are engaged in an unfair labor practice strike.
- After the strike began, Chief Judge Clancy Boles closed the Elgin and Aurora probation offices indefinitely. People on probation and receiving other court-ordered services now have to travel to the main courthouse in St. Charles.
- Rather than showing compassion and respect for her dedicated workers and making true efforts to resolve the strike, Chief Judge Susan Clancy Boles has refused to make any new offers and has refused to meet and negotiate a resolution.