



May 2018

Lawmakers Join IIP's Lead to Protect the Innocent from "Jailhouse Snitches"

Today a bill that will help prevent wrongful convictions in Illinois sits on Gov. Bruce Rauner's desk, awaiting his signature.

The bill, spearheaded by IIP in collaboration with the Innocence Project in New York and members of the General Assembly including Sen. Mike Hastings and Rep. Art Turner Jr., limits the use of "jailhouse informant" testimony, which is notoriously unreliable.

The improper use of jailhouse informants is one of the leading causes of wrongful conviction in Illinois. These incarcerated individuals provide information about other inmates to law enforcement. They typically expect and often receive benefits in return, which creates a strong motivation to perpetuate lies that can result in the conviction of an innocent person.

Taxpayers bear the cost of wrongful convictions. The 17 Illinois exonerees who were wrongly convicted due to jailhouse informants cost taxpayers \$88.4 million in state compensation and civil awards. IIP's [Herb Whitlock](#) is one of those exonerees who spent 21 years wrongly imprisoned.

Strengthening laws to protect the innocent is one way to prevent wrongful convictions. **We urge Gov. Rauner to sign SB1830.**

CALL TO ACTION: You can help! Call Gov. Rauner at (217) 782-0244 and ask him to sign [SB1830](#).

Best Wishes to Our IIP Graduates

Sadly, each spring we must say goodbye to our graduating UIS students. These undergraduates have spent a year or more engaged in the heart of innocence work, researching requests for assistance, translating applicant communications to English, presenting cases to Project attorneys, searching for evidence and many other tasks to support IIP staff.

You have endeared yourselves to us and we miss you already, Aaliyah, Blanca, Jackie, Jayde and Tommie!

From L to R, students and their plans for next year:

Aaliyah Williams – pursuing a master's degree in Human Services at UIS

Blanca Gonzalez – pursuing a master's degree in Human Services at UIS

Jackie Fabing – pursuing work as a youth counselor at a local juvenile detention center

Jayde Schlesinger – pursuing a master's degree in Public Administration at UIS

Tommie Redmond – pursuing a master's degree in Public Administration at UIS