

THE LOCAL PULSE – DO YOU FEEL SAFE?



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*"Chicago reached at least 800 homicides in 2021, a level not seen in 25 years" – Chicago Tribune
1/3/22*

"Intentional killing of law enforcement officers reach 20-year high, FBI says" – CNN 1/13/22

"2021 crime stats the worst in nearly 30 years" – Axios Chicago 12/3/21

If these headlines worry you, you're not alone. And it's not just Chicago that has experienced a spike in violent crime. Criminals have brought violence to the suburbs. Carjackings and flash mob robberies are on the rise. Consider recent bike shop burglaries. Naperville is not immune.

In 2020, the [General Assembly](#) debated a sweeping set of criminal justice reforms. Nearly every law enforcement agency in the state was opposed to the radical changes.

I remember distinctly how experts in law enforcement warned the consequences would be catastrophic. I also watched the bill's authors ignore these warnings and heard the lead bill sponsor say the trailblazing reforms would have an immediate effect in Illinois.

Well, he was right about that. The effects have been immediate. But they certainly haven't been positive. Unless you're a criminal.

Remember, these reforms were approved in the middle of the night during a lame duck session of the General Assembly one year ago. Since its passage, the legislature has come back twice with trailer bills to fix problematic areas of the mammoth bill. And now, the bill's supporters with serious cases of "buyer's regret" are backpedaling while trying to justify a vote that has increased crime and made communities, including this one, less safe.

I have the utmost respect for the hard-working men and women of the Naperville Police Department, and it's really too bad they must fight crime with one hand tied behind their backs because the legislature believes the comfort of the accused is more important than your right to feel safe in your house, in your car, and in your community.

The good news is that "We the People" have the power here. We can tell our elected officials that enough is enough, and that their new laws have swung the pendulum way too far in the other direction. We can tell lawmakers who file bills like [HB 110](#), which would legalize opioid abuse in certain locations, that making hard drug use easier does nothing to address the opioid crisis and sends the wrong message to kids curious about drug use.

The statistics don't lie. Weakened accountability has led to increased crime. As a community, it's time to stand up and demand that criminals know their illegal acts will be met with harsh consequences rather than simply a slap on the wrist.