



Madison County State's Attorney Thomas A. Haine Provides Views On SAFE-T Act

by Brian Brueggemann
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EDWARDSVILLE — Madison County State’s Attorney Thomas A. Haine on Wednesday said the implementation of a new state law known as the SAFE-T Act will result in the “greatest jailbreak” in county history.

Haine issued a full statement (below) in response to concern from the public about the law, which on Jan. 1 will result in the elimination of Illinois’ longstanding system of requiring certain defendants to post cash bail in order to be released from jail while awaiting trial.

“The greatest jailbreak in Madison County history will occur on Jan. 1, 2023,” Haine said. “On that date, approximately half of our present jail population must be released under the terms of the new SAFE-T Act, and cash bail will be eliminated throughout Illinois.”

Haine said defendants charged under entire categories of serious crimes – such as second-degree murder, robbery, burglary, arson, and aggravated battery -- will be “non-detainable” while awaiting trial under the new law. Haine said that even where the law allows pretrial detention it will be allowed only if prosecutors can convince a judge that the defendant poses a “specific, real and present threat” to others or has a “high likelihood of willful flight.”

Under the existing cash bail system, defendants seeking pretrial release from jail have routinely been required to post a monetary bond, at an amount determined by the court. Haine said the cash bail system has served as a way for the court system to safeguard the community against repeat offenders and violent offenders, as well as defendants who are flight risks, such as out-of-state drug traffickers. Haine also said the system has served to ensure that defendants show up for future court proceedings.

Haine, along with police chiefs across Madison County, opposed the passage of the SAFE-T Act.

[The full statement from Thomas Haine is here.](#)