

THE MONROE FOUNDATION

PARTNERSHIP ASSISTING COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION



GRASSROOTS NEWSLETTER



The Monroe Foundation "Impact Convening on Re-entry, Justice Reform and Policies" Convenes Unheard "Voices" of Change at the Field Foundation Impact House.

Get Cleared, Illinois, the campaign of the Monroe Foundation that works to "Break The Generational Cycle of Recidivism" through organizing, policy action and civic engagement, convened representatives' of community-based re-entry and reform advocacy groups from throughout Illinois whose voices are often unheard or not invited to tables of discussions on re-entry actions and reforms.

The convening, held on May 3rd, updated participants on the current sealing and expungement process reforms implemented earlier this year by the Cook County Clerk of the Circuit Court that now enable individuals seeking to understand the process of petitioning the court, the opportunity to self-file their petitions and receive a court hearing the same day.

Additionally, Pastor Marvin Hunter of Grace Memorial Church and Minister Ralph Dunbar provided an update on HB4834, a bill drafted by Get Cleared, Illinois, that seeks to reduce the eligibility time for the individuals impacted by past incarceration from three to two years.

Just the week before the impact convening, the bill passed out of the Criminal-Judiciary Committee, after powerful oral testimony by Pastor Hunter, who was seated with bill sponsor State Representative LaShawn K. Ford, presenting "Voices Of Change": Darice Goodwin, Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County; Ms. Cynthia Cornelius, Cabrini Green Legal Aid; James Long, Teamwork Englewood; Rashad Williams, Proviso Leyden Council for Community Action; Kevin Johnson, Working Family Solidarity; and Ms. Athena Williams, Oak Park Regional Housing Center.

Otis C. Monroe, III, CEO of the Monroe Foundation and convening moderator, stated, "We have convened a diverse group of voices, some heard often and others not often, that are engaged in system-changing work on justice reform, and not just holding expungement events, when current polices in Springfield continue to be slow in making expungement and sealing equitable for the poor." The policy engagement work of the Monroe Foundation has resulted recently in a \$50,000 grant from the Justice Fund of the Field Foundation of Illinois. To learn more about the policy justice work of Get Cleared, Illinois, email: omonroe@themonroefoundation.org