

HISTORY AND IMPACT OF THE CHICAGO COUNCIL OF LAWYERS AND THE COLLABORATION WITH CHICAGO APPELSEED

1969

FOUNDING

The Chicago Council of Lawyers was founded in 1969 by lawyers still reeling from the prior year's Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

1970

COUNCIL V. BAUER

Chicago Council of Lawyers v. Bauer successfully challenges restrictions imposed by the federal district court on public comment by attorneys -- a major victory for free speech.

1971

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The Council successfully lobbies to put disciplinary procedures for attorneys under the direct control of the Illinois Supreme Court.

1973

CHICAGO LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICE

The Council opens Chicago's first Lawyer Referral Service for victims of police misconduct.

1974

LEGAL SERVICES DIRECTORY

The Council and the Fund For Justice release the Legal Services Directory, a comprehensive directory of private and public agencies providing free and low cost legal services to residents in Chicago.

1977

SOUTH SHORE LAW OFFICE

The Council and the Fund For Justice pioneer the South Shore Law Office, which offers legal services to persons of low and middle income, and the Legal Services for the Mentally Disabled of Uptown Law Clinic, helping mentally divergent clients.

1978

STUDY OF EVICTION PROCEEDINGS

The Council and the Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago complete a two-year study of 8,000 Cook County housing eviction cases. As a result, one eviction court judge is reassigned and another is subjected to disciplinary proceedings.

CRIMINAL DEFENSE REFERRAL PANEL

The Council begins its Indigent Criminal Defense Referral Panel, providing highly qualified attorneys to people who can't be represented by the public defender's office because of conflicts of interest.

RETENTION ELECTIONS

The Council is largely responsible for the defeat of Judge John Boyle in his bid for retention, who was serving as the Chief Judge of the Circuit Court of Cook County but the Council found that he performed in a "highly political, autocratic and incompetent manner."

1988

STUDY OF PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE

We released an 18-month study of the Cook County Public Defender's Office, detailing the needs of the Office to improve access to counsel for people in Cook County.

1990

STATE JUDICIAL EVALUATIONS

The Council releases its report evaluating 50 judges. Seven of the 11 judges that the Council found *Not Qualified or Not Recommended* were defeated by the voters.

1994

EXPANDED MALPRACTICE RIGHTS

The Council successfully advocates for change in statute of limitations period for legal malpractice cases, ensuring greater access to relief for meritorious claims.

1997

OPPOSITION TO THE DEATH PENALTY

The Council is the first local bar association in the country to urge a moratorium on the death penalty by submitting an amicus curiae brief to the Illinois Supreme Court.

APPELSEED + FUND FOR JUSTICE

In 1997, the Fund for Justice becomes an independent Chicago affiliate of the Applesseed Foundation—Chicago Applesseed Fund for Justice (now Center for Fair Courts).

1999

PRO BONO IMMIGRATION GRANT

Midwest Immigrant Rights Center, Chicago Bar Association, the Council, and Chicago Applesseed receive an American Bar Association grant to represent immigrants from certain Central American and former Soviet bloc countries.

2000

CANON 67 COMPLAINT

The Council takes the lead in filing a disciplinary complaint against Illinois Supreme Court candidate Morton Zwick for violating Canon 67 by using misleading television advertisements.

2007-08

CHICAGO POLICE OVERSIGHT

The Council assists in drafting the Chicago City Council ordinance that establishes an independent police investigatory agency.

CRIMINAL COURTS + BAIL REFORM

Chicago Applesseed and the Council help negotiate reform of bond hearings, including ending videoconferencing and establishing a pretrial services program.

2002

UNIFYING THE CHILD SUPPORT SYSTEM

Legislation is introduced and later passed incorporating the Chicago Applesseed/Chicago Council model of a unified child support system. We participated in the state child support agency's internal advisory committee.

2004

VOTEFORJUDGES.ORG

Chicago Applesseed initiates VoteForJudges.org, a voter education effort featuring non-partisan judicial information, including evaluations of the Council and other bar associations, through a website, which attracts one million hits and provides 100,000 downloadable pages.

2009

BOND HEARING REFORM

The Collaboration helps negotiate reform of bond hearings at the Criminal Courts Building at 26th Street and California Avenue. This included an end to videoconferencing in bond hearings and establishing a pretrial services program.

ASSEMBLY LINE INJUSTICE

The Collaboration and pro bono partners release a report on immigration courts, *Assembly Line Injustice*. Some of our recommendations are implemented, including hiring judges with diverse backgrounds and creating a website for public complaints about judges' conduct.

2011

VOTED BEST BAR ASSOCIATION

Chicago Council of Lawyers voted the "Best Bar Association" in *Chicago Reader's* "Best of Chicago 2011."

2012

REIMAGINING THE ASSEMBLY LINE

National Applesseed, Chicago Applesseed, the Council and pro bono partners release our report, *Reimagining the Immigration Court Assembly Line: Transformative Change for the Immigration Justice System*.

2013

DENIALS OF INDIGENCE HEARINGS

We uncovered judges routinely denying public defenders simply because someone posted a bond and not upon a statutorily required indigence hearing. Chief Judge Timothy Evans issued General Order No. 2013- 11 in response to our findings.

2014

CHICAGO POLICE TRANSPARENCY

Consistent with the March 2014 ruling of the First District of the Illinois Appellate Court in *Kalven v. City of Chicago*, the Council recommends that the city require the Chicago Police Department ("CPD") to issue annual reports disclosing officers named in high numbers of complaints.

2015

AMICUS ON JUDICIAL CAMPAIGN DONATIONS

Chicago Applesseed and Chicago Council of Lawyers are signatories on an amicus brief submitted in *Williams-Yulee vs. Florida Bar* before the Supreme Court with other state and local nonpartisan organizations committed to creating and maintaining an ethical judicial system and promoting the confidence of the public in that system in the brief.

2016

CHICAGO POLICE OVERSIGHT

In the wake of the police murder of Laquan McDonald, the need for greater police accountability was acute. The CCL issued a statement with recommendations for the U.S. Department of Justice investigation into a pattern and practice of misuse of force by the Chicago Police Department.

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2017

REIMAGINING THE ASSEMBLY LINE

The Collaboration for Justice released a *Practice Guide of Overcoming Obstacles in Immigration Court* – a guide prepared by pro bono counsel of Akin Gump on behalf of the Appleseed Network.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS COURT CHANGES

The Cook County Court took steps to modernize the Domestic Relations Division and improve the system for all families moving through the divorce, paternity, and child support processed. The Collaboration worked with the Court to bring about the consolidation and better utilize administrative hearing officers.

LIMITS ON UNAFFORDABLE MONEY BAIL

The Collaboration helped advocate for General Order 18.8A, which reshaped pretrial justice in Cook County by instructing judges to set money bonds only in amounts that people can actually afford to pay.

2018

OPPOSITION OF MICHAEL BRENNAN

Council issues statement opposing judicial nominee, Michael Brennan, for a lifetime judicial appointment on the Seventh Circuit due to being "[far] outside the mainstream of judicial thought."

DIVERSIFYING ASSOCIATE JUDGES

Associate judges are not elected, but apply to the Circuit Court and sitting judges vote to appoint them. Improving diversity on the bench requires critical assessment of how judges are elected and selected; citizen oversight and participation is necessary. We believe the associate judge process is a reminder toward vigilance in improving representation.

COMMENTS ON CPD CONSENT DECREE

The Council reviewed the proposed CPD consent decree and found that "the City has not been willing to go far enough" to improve the situation. We offered testimony at the hearings, emphasizing the importance of entering a consent decree that benefits the community.

OPPOSITION OF JUSTICE KAVANAUGH

The CCL evaluated then-Judge Kavanaugh's record, which "suggest[ed] that he does not regard the role of a judge as that of a neutral arbiter but as a means to reaching certain outcomes...while the Council does not ordinarily consider the substance of the candidates' views when evaluating judges, the Supreme Court is a uniquely powerful institution, and Judge Kavanaugh's views are uniquely extreme and troubling."

2019

ABA RESOLUTION 100A

The American Bar Association adopts Resolution 100A, recommending "the allocation of independent funding to central panels, directly from state legislatures," and more, based off our February 2019 report: *The Need for a Central Panel Approach to Administrative Adjudication: Pros, Cons, and Selected Practices*.

PROTECTING EVICTION APPEALS

Chicago Appleseed & Chicago Council of Lawyers established a coalition that has continuously advocated the court to install a recording or reporting system in Cook County's eviction courtrooms. After years of advocacy, the recording systems in Chicago's eviction courtrooms became officially operational on October 25, 2019.

LICENSE TO WORK ACT PASSES

SB 1786, the License to Work Act, passed in the Illinois legislature veto session in 2019 and became effective in 2020. We are members of the Transit Table Coalition, which advocated for this legislation to end the practice of suspending driver's licenses as a penalty for nonmoving violations, such as parking tickets and expired City stickers.

2020

PROTECTING PUBLIC HEALTH

In March, advocates write the first of many letters to Cook County and Illinois state officials to ensure the safety of people in jails and prisons during COVID-19.

CONDEMNING VIOLENCE AGAINST PROTESTERS

The Chicago Council of Lawyers releases a response to police violence at protests for Black Lives: "Chicago's long history of anti-black racism is well-documented and palpable...the violent actions of police over the past several days showed a general lack of restraint, disregard for public safety, and intolerance for dissent."

AMICUS ON VICTIMS' PRIVACY RIGHTS

The Collaboration for Justice filed an amicus on the case of *People v. Gomez-Ramirez (AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center, Bolingbrook, and Alexian Brothers-AHS Midwest Region Health Co., Contemnors-Appellants)*, where the State's right to search the victim's health records was improperly asserted.

OPPOSITION OF THOMAS KIRSCH

The Council opposed the confirmation of Thomas Kirsch, the United States Attorney for the Northern District of Indiana, to a seat on the Federal Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. President Trump nominated Mr. Kirsch five days before the appellate seat was officially open.

2021

PRETRIAL FAIRNESS ACT PASSES IN ILLINOIS

The SAFE-T Act created reforms in several areas of the Illinois criminal legal system—many of which the Collaboration have championed. This includes the Pretrial Fairness Act, pushed by the Coalition to End Money Bond, of which Chicago Appleseed is a founding member, which will abolish money bond in 2023.

OPPOSITION TO CHICAGO POLICE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT

The Council and coalition partners oppose the new Chicago Police Department's contract with the Fraternal Order of Police, which upholds the code of silence, stating: "these negotiations are an important opportunity to try and improve this contract, for the benefit of both the residents of Chicago and the police officers who are sworn to serve and protect them."

STUDY OF PRETRIAL ELECTRONIC MONITORING IN COOK COUNTY

Chicago Appleseed Center for Fair Courts and the Chicago Council of Lawyers publish *10 Facts about Pretrial Electronic Monitoring in Cook County*, which found more than three thousand people on house arrest -- a more than 30% spike in a year and a half.

MONITORING THE CLERK OF COOK COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT

Clerk of the Cook County Circuit Court, Iris Martinez, pledged transparency and reorganization of the Office while campaigning. The Collaboration and coalition partners have been monitoring the campaign promises, and have released two reports on the status of progress.

DEMANDING JUSTICE FOR ADAM TOLEDO

On March 29, 2021, a Chicago Police Department (CPD) officer shot and killed thirteen-year-old Adam Toledo after chasing him on foot. We write: "Requesting that the CPD reform itself has been a failure time and again, while communities across the city and country continue to suffer while calling for more accountable, transparent, and less violent policing."

CALLS TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY

The federal death penalty is inherently racist and unjust, and there is overwhelming evidence that is not carried out fairly or impartially. As such, the Chicago Council of Lawyers renewed our strong opposition to the death penalty and called on Congress to outlaw the practice.