



6351 W. Montrose Ave, Suite 210

Chicago, Illinois 60634-1563

October 14, 2024

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Chief Judge Timothy C. Evans
Office of the Chief Judge
50 West Washington Street, Room 2600
Richard J. Daley Center
Chicago, IL 60602

Dear Chief Judge Evans,

We are writing to express our concerns regarding Judge Carol Howard's record and why we believe we should not vote to retain her in office. Recent events have highlighted a pattern of leniency that raises fundamental questions about her approach to justice and public safety. The case of Marcell Hunter is particularly troubling. Hunter, while on electronic monitoring, was allowed to attend a street party where he allegedly shot and killed 22-year-old Nikki Connor. This incident underscores the dangers of releasing individuals who have demonstrated a disregard for the law, especially when they have a history of violent offenses. Judge Howard's decision to release him back into the community, despite his previous violations of electronic monitoring, reflects a concerning trend of prioritizing leniency over public safety.

Moreover, the implications of the SAFE-T Act, which decriminalizes certain electronic monitoring violations, further complicate matters. It is alarming that Hunter, and others like him, can evade accountability for actions that put our communities at risk. This case is not an isolated incident; Hunter is the 37th accused felon on electronic monitoring to face serious charges, illustrating a troubling pattern that Judge Howard has perpetuated. Judge Howard's reputation for being "soft on criminals" is well-documented. From reducing bail for serious offenses to issuing light sentences for egregious acts, her decisions have raised concerns among law enforcement and prosecutors alike. For instance, releasing a man accused of multiple rapes on electronic monitoring and granting probation to offenders with histories of violence signals a judicial philosophy that seems misaligned with the principles of accountability and deterrence.

The community's safety must be paramount, and Judge Howard's record does not inspire confidence in her ability to uphold that responsibility. By continuing to support policies that allow violent offenders to roam free, we are compromising the safety of our neighborhoods and families. Considering these concerns, we urge you to consider the implications of Judge Howard's tenure and to think critically about the values we want to uphold in our justice system. It is crucial that we prioritize safety and accountability when making decisions about our judicial leaders. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Phil Tenerelli
President
Italian American Police Association of Illinois