



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Throwing Away the Key: Thirty Years After The End of Parole Public Forum Debates the Impact of Long-Term Sentencing In Illinois**

This year marks the anniversary of two notorious landmarks of Illinois corrections—it has been 30 years since the abolition of parole and 10 years since the opening of Tamms supermax prison. Now two House Bills have been introduced to restore some balance between punishment and rehabilitation. At a public forum called “Throwing Away the Key,” the proposed legislation will be discussed by ex-offenders, family members, educators, legislators and reform advocates. Speakers will discuss the shattering impact of long-term sentencing laws, and the psychological and physical damage caused by prolonged solitary confinement. StillPoint Theater will present an excerpt from “Sisters Rising” in which ten formerly incarcerated women tell their story. The event is held in anticipation of upcoming public hearings on HB 4154, the Elderly Prisoner Sentence Adjustment Act, and HB 6651, the Tamms Supermax Prison Reform Bill, and will be moderated by WVON talk radio host Cliff Kelley.

**WHAT:** “Throwing Away the Key”—public forum about the effects of long-term prison sentencing in Illinois

**WHO:** Ex-offenders, former supermax prisoners, family members of long-term prisoners, prison reform advocates, experts and state representatives--hosted by WVON radio host Cliff Kelley

**WHEN:** Wednesday, August 6, 2008, 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm

**WHERE:** Ferguson Theatre, 600 S. Michigan, Columbia College Chicago,

**WHY:** Thirty years after the abolition of parole in Illinois, and ten years after the opening of Tamms supermax prison, speakers and respondents discuss the need for House Bill 4154 and House Bill 6651.

**Co-sponsors:** John Howard Association, Citizens for Earned Release, the Tamms Year Ten Campaign, the Chicago Branch of the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, the Campaign to End the Death Penalty, Not In Vain, *Stateville Speaks*, the Justice Coalition of Greater Chicago, and the Liberal Education Department of Columbia College.