



# ILLINOIS PRISONER REVIEW BOARD APPOINTEE SCANDAL

*UNCONFIRMED PRITZKER APPOINTEES MAKE CONTROVERSIAL VOTES,  
RELEASE POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS INDIVIDUALS ON THE STREETS*

ILLINOIS SENATE REPUBLICAN CAUCUS

# SUMMARY

Several Pritzker appointees are actively serving on the Illinois Prisoner Review Board and making controversial parole decisions despite never being confirmed by the Illinois Senate—all because of a shady tactic used by the Governor.

Between March 2019 and April 2019, Governor Pritzker appointed four individuals to the Prisoner Review Board, which is a body that determines if convicted felons should be released from prison. The Illinois Constitution requires that these appointees be confirmed by the Illinois Senate within 60 session days.

In March 2021, the clock was approaching the 60 session days and the Senate had failed to take up their confirmation. Rather than the Senate taking a vote on these individuals, Governor Pritzker withdrew their appointments and reappointed them just days later, which reset the 60 day clock. Therefore, these four appointees have been serving for over two years and continue to make potentially dangerous decisions, all while the Illinois Senate continues to provide the Governor cover by not forcing them to testify in front of the Senate Executive Appointments Committee and failing to vote on their confirmation.

Additionally, Governor Pritzker has appointed another six appointees to the Prisoner Review Board between February 2021 to September 2021, none of which have been confirmed either. This makes a total of 10 unconfirmed appointees that are currently serving on the 14 member Prisoner Review Board (currently one vacancy) without ever being approved by the Senate.

**71% OF ACTING PRISONER REVIEW BOARD MEMBERS ARE UNCONFIRMED**

# THE UNCONFIRMED APPOINTEES

**Arthur Mae Perkins:**

- Appointed on March 21, 2019
- Appointment withdrawn and reappointed on March 12, 2021

**Joseph Ruggiero:**

- Appointed on March 21, 2019
- Appointment withdrawn and reappointed on March 12, 2021

**Oreal James:**

- Appointed on April 2, 2019
- Appointment withdrawn on March 23, 2021 and reappointed on March 25, 2021

**Eleanor Wilson:**

- Appointed on April 2, 2019
- Appointment withdrawn on March 23, 2021 and reappointed on March 25, 2021

**Jared Bohland:**

- Appointed on May 6, 2021

**Max Cerda:** (convicted double murderer; recently voted to parole a cop killer he served prison time with in Stateville.)

- Appointed on March 19, 2021

**Virginia Martinez:**

- Appointed on February 8, 2021

**Jeffery Mears:**

- Appointed on March 19, 2021

**Kenneth Tupy**

- Appointed on May 3, 2021

**Lee Ann Miller**

- Appointed on September 2, 2021

**THESE UNCONFIRMED APPOINTEES HAVE SERVED A COMBINED 4,872 DAYS.  
THAT'S OVER 13 YEARS!**



# CONTROVERSIAL PAROLEES

## **Raymond Larsen:**

- Shot and killed Frank Casolari, a 16-year-old sophomore high school student who went fishing after school.
- According to the statement of facts, Larsen admitted that he went to the Schiller Woods with the stolen rifles looking for something to shoot.
- In 2018, Larsen came up for parole, but the Prisoner Review Board unanimously denied him on a 12-0 vote. One Board member warned, "There is something about inmate Larsen that makes him a spree offender, and he may be high-risk to reoffend."
- On April 29, 2021, the Prisoner Review Board granted Larsen parole on a 9-3 vote. Just days after his release, he went missing and was considered a fugitive. Larsen has since been located and was ordered back in IDOC.

## **Johnny Veal:**

- Veal and another man killed Sgt. James Severin and Officer Anthony Rizzato in 1970 as they walked across a field in the Cabrini-Green public housing complex. Veal, 68, and the now 74-year-old George Knights were convicted of the murders and sentenced to 100 to 199 years. Knights remains in prison. Veal bragged about the killing. While in prison, Veal was caught with a homemade knife and pleaded guilty to a weapons charge in 1987.

## **Joseph Hurst:**

- Convicted of killing Officer Herman Stallworth and wounding his partner after being pulled over for speeding in 1967.

## **Salik Abdullah (formerly known as Theodore Parsons):**

- Released on parole March 1, 2021.
- The State failed to inform the victims' family members of Parson's upcoming parole hearing.
- Parsons committed one of the most heinous crimes in Champaign County history – the brutal murder of two teens. The teens were targeted because Parsons, along with Gerald Gleckler and Robert Kirkpatrick, wanted to steal their car and use it to rob a liquor store they were casing. The murderous trio were on a spree when the murders occurred. Parsons participated in a gas station holdup in Oakwood, shooting and paralyzing an employee there.
- Then-Champaign County State's Attorney Thomas Difanis made a point at Gleckler's sentencing hearing when he urged then-Circuit Judge Harold Jensen to impose a sentencing range of 1,000 to 3,000 years or even 10,000 to 30,000 years — "any number that would leap off the page and convince even the pettiest bureaucrat that (Gleckler) must never be released."

## **Chester Weger:**

- Convicted in 1961 of the murder of one of three women found slain at Starved Rock State Park. A grand jury returned indictments against Weger for all three murders, as well as the rape and robbery at Matthiessen State Park, however the state chose to only try him for the murder of Lillian Oetting.

## **George Peter:**

- Pled guilty to raping a 15-year-old girl and raped and murdered a 14-year-old girl.

## **Paula Sims:**

- Killed her two infant daughters. The murders happend 3 years apart.

# SENATE REPUBLICANS FILE LEGISLATION

To put an end to the shell game of withdrawing and reappointing appointees of the Prisoner Review Board in an effort to bypass the Senate confirmation process, Senate Republicans have filed Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 1475.

SB 1475 requires members of the Prisoner Review Board to be confirmed by the Senate in a timely fashion—within 30 session days or 90 calendar days after the appointment, whichever occurs first. Failure to confirm or reject appointments within this time period would result in a rejected appointment.

Additionally, the bill prohibits the Governor from withdrawing a member of the Prisoner Review Board and reappointing them within two years. In other words, if a member of the Prisoner Review Board is withdrawn by the Governor, they would not be eligible to be reappointed for two years after the date of the withdraw.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What is the Prisoner Review Board?**

The PRB is an independent, 15-person body whose members are appointed by the Governor of Illinois. The PRB has the ability to grant or deny parole for those serving prison sentences. The Board also makes recommendations to the Governor relative to executive clemency petitions.

### **How do Prisoner Review Board appointments work?**

The Illinois Constitution allows for the Governor to appoint individuals to serve on the 15-member Prisoner Review Board. Once an appointment is made, the appointee can begin serving as long as the Illinois Senate confirms their appointment within 60 session days.

### **How is Governor Pritzker getting around the Constitution?**

Several current appointees have been serving on the Prisoner Review Board for over two years, despite the Illinois Senate never confirming their appointment. How? Once these appointees were coming up on their 60th session day, Governor Pritzker withdrew their appointments. Then, just days later, he reappointed them—which resets the 60 session days. Therefore, these appointees have been releasing prisoners for months, without ever being confirmed by the Senate.