

# [***Illinois Republicans propose overhaul for Gov. Pritzker's 'anti-victim' parole board after stabbing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BPH-2021-JC5B-G2GH-00000-00&context=1516831)

The Associated Press

April 2, 2024 Tuesday 10:54 PM GMT

Copyright 2024 Associated Press All Rights Reserved

**Section:** DOMESTIC NEWS; STATE AND REGIONAL

**Length:** 695 words

**Byline:** JOHN O'CONNOR, AP Political Writer

**Dateline:** SPRINGFIELD, Ill.

**Body**

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — The Illinois Senate's minority leader proposed legislation Tuesday to overhaul Gov. J.B. Pritzker's Prisoner Review Board after it released a [*convicted domestic abuser who*](https://apnews.com/article/domestic-violence-parole-stabbing-chicago-d6a57e9c768c52ed0600ee0bed0abdd3) then attacked a pregnant Chicago woman with a knife and fatally stabbed her 11-year-old son.

Republican Leader John Curran criticized Pritzker and said he plans legislation to require that board appointees have 20 years of criminal justice experience as a prosecutor, defense attorney, probation officer or judge, and that each member undergo annual training on domestic violence and sexual assault and the warning signs that precede repeat attacks.

Other proposed measures would require advance notice to victims of board decisions to release perpetrators and more transparency on the members' deliberations in each case, including how they voted.

“For too long, these $100,000-a-year positions at the Prisoner Review Board have been given to political appointees who don’t have the requisite experience to make these life-and-death decisions,” Curran, who's from the Chicago suburb of Downers Grove, told reporters in a teleconference. “We must take ***politics*** out of the appointment process to create a qualified board with a deep understanding of the criminal justice system.”

Pritzker has acknowledged the parole board didn’t sufficiently consider evidence in releasing 37-year-old Crosetti Brand on March 12. The next day, Brand allegedly broke into the apartment of Laterria Smith, 33, who had an order of protection against him, attacked her with a knife and killed her son Jayden Perkins when he intervened to protect his mother.

The attack prompted the resignation on March 25 of board member LeAnn Miller, who conducted Brand's release hearing and wrote the report recommending he be freed. Later that day, board chairperson Donald Shelton also quit. Pritzker announced changes requiring the board to consult experts to develop training on domestic abuse and to improve the Department of Corrections' process for sharing information with the board.

Alex Gough, the governor’s spokesperson, said “much of what was proposed by Senate Republicans is already standard practice at the Prisoner Review Board.”

Gough said that victims [*may sign up with the review board*](https://prb.illinois.gov/prbvserv.html;%20https://prb.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/prb/documents/vregfrm.pdf) to be notified of perpetrators’ release; that a majority of board members currently have significant criminal justice experience, from work as a police officer or professor of criminal justice; and that information about the board’s deliberations in each case are found in reports that are available through the Freedom of Information Act.

Curran and his colleagues, Sens. Jason Plummer of Edwardsville and Steve McClure of Springfield, parried questions about whether Senate Democrats, who hold a supermajority, would entertain their plans.

“We’ve been warning about the lack of qualifications of some of the governor’s appointees for years,” Plummer said. “I don’t know why it’s taken a dead child for people to finally recognize some of these people are not qualified to serve on the board. My Democratic colleagues have largely taken a step back and allowed the governor’s office to drive the train.”

Brand and Smith had a relationship 15 years ago, police said. Brand was paroled in October after serving eight years of a 16-year sentence for attacking another ex-partner. He was shipped back to prison in February after going to Smith's apartment. But while seeking release in a Feb. 26 hearing before board member Miller, he denied trying to contact Smith in February and the Corrections Department failed to alert the board to Smith's attempt at an emergency order of protection on Feb. 22.

Smith recommended release in her report, in which two other board members concurred.

Pritzker said Monday that it's difficult to make appointments to the board because Republicans have “politicized” the process. Curran called such a suggestion “ridiculous.”

“I would hope that the Democrats in the Senate now realize that Gov. Pritzker has a policy of trying to get the most far-left, anti-victim people on the Prisoner Review Board,” McClure added. “My hope is that moving forward, the Democrats have learned their lesson.”

**Load-Date:** April 2, 2024

**End of Document**