

# Mother's day crafts Mom will cherish for years to come

Many mothers will attest that few things are better than a little rest and pampering on Mother's Day. And when it comes to gifts, homemade items are among the most heartfelt.

Although schools and day care centers may take the lead and guide children through Mother's Day crafts, parents and caregivers looking to encourage kids to make crafts at home can explore these ideas that can turn into wonderful gifts or decorative items for Mom.

#### Floral votive holders

Kids can create special can-

dle holders that they customize with pressed or paper flowers. New jars can be purchased from a craft store or empty jars at home can be repurposed. Using Modge Podge or another durable adhesive, children can attach dried, pressed flowers to the outside of the jar by painting the adhesive over the flowers; otherwise, paper flowers cut out from tissue paper or construction paper can be used. Once dry, attach a piece of decorative twine, yarn or ribbon around the mouth of the jar. Place a tealight candle inside for Mom to enjoy.

#### Writing pen bouquet

Why not give Mom something that is both beautiful and functional this Mother's Day? Children will have fun making flower pen bouquets. All it takes are a few inexpensive disposable pens, floral tape and artificial flowers. Place an artificial flower stem alongside the pen. It should be short enough that it will not impede writing, so cut if necessary. The petals of the flower should be up at the non-writing end. Starting at the non-writing end of the pen, begin to wrap floral tape snugly around the stem and pen to just before the tip of the writing end. It is bet-

ter to use too much floral tape than not enough. Repeat the process for as many pen flowers as you'd like to make, then offer as a gift in a vase.

#### Jewelry dish

Mom can keep her favorite pieces of jewelry safe with a heartfelt clay jewelry dish. It's easy to make with only a few materials. Using air-dry clay and a heart-shaped cookie cutter, children can roll out the clay and cut out the shape. Turn up the edges slightly to make a rim so that rings or earrings won't fall out of the dish later on. Then kids can press decorative items, such

as beads, small seashells, sequins, or faux gems, into the clay. The jewelry dish is beautiful as-is, or it can be painted after dry.

#### Faux stained glass

This project mixes paint with glue to create a stained glass effect. The colors can be painted on any acrylic surface, whether it's a flat, plastic photo protector in a picture frame or clear, plastic cosmetic bottles. When the light hits the items, it will produce a prismatic effect just like the real stained glass. Take painter's tape and mark off a desired design, such as writing "I Love Mom." Us-

ing separate small containers (an empty foam egg carton would work well), add a little bit of clear school glue and a few drops of desired colors or acrylic paint. Paint the different colors as they pertain to the design or pattern. The glue and paint should dry quickly and extra coats can be applied depending on how intense you want the color to be. Once the stained glass is dry, peel off the painter's tape and gift.

Kids can get busy crafting gifts that show Mom just how much she's loved and appreciated.

## Peoples Gas customers to see minor credits after settlement with AG's office

### The \$125 million agreement is expected to credit customers \$40-50 annually for the next three years

#### By Maggie Dougherty

CHICAGO — Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas Company customers are likely to see minor credits on their bills for the next three years, thanks to a \$125 million settlement agreement announced Thursday by Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul.

The benefit, if approved by the Illinois Commerce Commission, will average around \$50 annually this year and around \$40 each

in 2027 and 2028, or about \$3-4 monthly. Roughly a million natural gas customers in northeastern Illinois are expected to receive the credits.

"These bill credits are good news for Peoples Gas customers who have suffered so much financial pain because of the utility's wasteful spending," said Sarah Moskowitz, executive director of the Citizens Utility Board, a utility watchdog. "We look forward to continuing the important work ahead to

hold Peoples Gas accountable and seek justice for its long-suffering customers."

The settlement stems from concerns raised by the attorney general and consumer advocates regarding the costs of Peoples Gas' ongoing pipe retirement program to retire over 1,000 miles of old iron pipes that carry natural gas underneath Chicago.

Raoul's office alleged that Peoples Gas imprudently incurred costs for the work,

which are passed on to customers. According to a statement from the office, Peoples Gas customers paid an excessive surcharge for qualified infrastructure investments between 2017-2023.

As a result of the settlement, Peoples Gas also agreed to remove \$130 million in capital investments. Since those costs are paid by consumers over time, it is expected to save customers over \$350 million.

It also requires Peoples

Gas to implement further accountability and transparency measures in its pipe retirement program, including competitive bidding for contracts over \$25,000 and documenting and approving all cost changes greater than \$5,000.

A statement from Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas said the companies appreciated the support of Raoul, his staff, the ICC staff and CUB for reaching the unanimous agreement.

"This settlement will provide our customers with lower bills and allow us to focus on the important job of serving Chicagoans with reliable and safe energy," the statement said.

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## SAFE-T Act back in spotlight after killing of Chicago Police officer

### Pritzker, Republicans point fingers over blame for alleged killer's release

#### By BEN SZALINSKI Capitol News Illinois news@capitolnewsillinois.com

SPRINGFIELD — The SAFE-T Act is again generating controversy following the killing of a Chicago Police officer whose alleged shooter critics of the law say was only out of jail because of the state's pretrial laws.

While Republicans say the law needs to be changed to make it easier to hold a person in custody while they await trial, others say the judge who allowed the suspect's release had the authority to detain him but made the wrong decision.

Gov. JB Pritzker said the judge should have ordered the detention of Alphonso Talley — a man with a violent criminal history who is charged with shooting and killing Chicago Police Officer John Bartholomew at a hospital on the city's North Side on April 25.

The law creates a presumption of pretrial release and directs the justice system to order the least restrictive method of ensuring someone attends their trial. But it also lets prosecutors petition judges to detain individuals who they believe are a risk to the public or of fleeing prosecution.

Talley had previously served time in prison and been convicted of crimes such as aggravated armed

robbery and battery of a correctional officer.

According to WGN, Talley was granted pretrial release by a Cook County judge over prosecutors' objections while he faced armed carjacking charges. He was put on electronic monitoring, but he stopped showing up to court in March and his monitor went silent. A warrant was issued for his arrest, but he remained out of jail.

"The reality of the SAFE-T Act is stark," House Republican Leader Tony McCombie, R-Savanna, said at a news conference on Wednesday. "Individuals with extensive criminal histories or active charges are being released and committing crimes, serious crimes in their communities."

McCombie and Senate Republican Leader John Curran, R-Downers Grove, are proposing a specific solution in response to Bartholomew's killing. They want people who are on electronic monitoring pretrial and commit a new crime to automatically have pretrial release revoked until the case is resolved.

Since the law's early days, its Republican opponents repeatedly called for giving judges full discretion to keep dangerous suspects detained.

Pritzker told reporters in Chicago on Wednesday that judicial decisions have led to many of the high-profile re-

leases of people who've gone on to commit violent crime.

"In most of the cases where Republicans have complained about the SAFE-T Act, it's actually been the bad decision by an elected judge in Illinois, or no hearing at all because the prosecutor didn't bring it to the judge, and that has been a reason why somebody gets let out," Pritzker said.

In many instances, proponents have argued, repeat offenders could have been out on bail under the previous system.

State lawmakers passed the SAFE-T Act in January 2021 as part of a series of initiatives led by the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus in response to civil unrest and racial justice conversations following the 2020 murder of George Floyd.

#### On the campaign trail

Pritzker's Republican opponent this fall, former Sen. Darren Bailey of Clay County, held a news conference at the Statehouse on Thursday to call for the SAFE-T Act's repeal. However, some of his proposals mirror the existing Pretrial Fairness Act — the portion of the SAFE-T Act that deals with pretrial procedures and is the subject of much of the criticism over the law.

Bailey outlined his six-point proposal in a news conference. It would keep the no-cash bail system and



REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE for governor Darren Bailey holds a news conference at the Illinois Peace Officers Memorial outside the Capitol in Springfield on Thursday, April 30, 2026. Photo by Capitol News Illinois by Jenna Schweikert.

require judges to evaluate a person's criminal history, compliance with supervision and risk to victims. It would also allow judges to order detention of people who are deemed a public safety threat or flight risk before trial. All of those are components of the current law.

"If a judge believes that someone is more likely than not to be a danger to the community, they stay in jail," Bailey said.

Sen. Elgie Sims, D-Chicago, an architect of the SAFE-T Act, said he hopes other Republicans also come to realize the state is better off without cash bail.

"Certainly, it's recognition that that the policy is working," Sims said of Bailey's proposal. "And the (cash bail)

policy was certainly never about safety. It was always about the access to wealth."

Bailey's more specific changes to the law would create a presumption of detention for repeat violent offenders, while the current law requires prosecutors to prove a person must be detained. He also wants changes to electronic monitoring rules to end free movement requirements.

"It's basically the honor system. That ends," Bailey said. "Violent offenders will be supervised by real law enforcement, people with the authority to act when something goes wrong, and if you violate your monitor, even once, you're back in front of a judge within 48 hours — no loopholes, no excuses, no

second chances."

Pritzker also said he believes people should be "immediately apprehended" if they violate mandatory supervised release terms.

#### Legislative deliberations

McCombie and Curran say their proposal is common sense.

"This is saying that if you get a get-out-of-free-jail card, and you get a second chance, and you mess that up by committing another felony while on release, you don't get any more chances," Curran said.

Despite chatter from some top Democrats earlier this year that lawmakers could consider changes to the SAFE-T Act, nothing is immediately being considered in Springfield.

"If there is something that we need to work through, we certainly can evaluate that to see how that works," Sims said.

Cook County court records show 83% of people who have been released pretrial have not committed new crimes. Six percent have been charged with new violent crimes while 11% have been charged with new non-violent crimes.

Sims said the tragedy involving Bartholomew doesn't mean the law needs to be tossed aside.

"I wish that folks who were the purveyors of fear who want to just trot these issues out — the one-offs — they would take time to delve into the policy and how things are working," Sims said. "And that's what you see from folks, from academicians to practitioners, they're showing that we are making progress."

*Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service that distributes state government coverage to hundreds of news outlets statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.*

#### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

#### THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HERITAGE COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #8

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by the School Board of Heritage Community Unit School District 8, in the County of Champaign, State of Illinois, that the tentative amended budget for said School District for the fiscal year 2025-2026 beginning July 1, 2025 will be on file and conveniently available for public inspection at the District Office, 512 W. First Street, Homer, Illinois in this School District from 8:00 a.m. on the 13th day of May, 2026.

Notice is further hereby given that a public hearing on said final budget will be held at 6:50 o'clock pm., on the 15th day of June 2026, at Heritage Elementary/Junior High School in the Homer Band Room preceding the regularly scheduled meeting at 7 pm at the same location.

Heritage Community Unit School District #8,  
in the County of Champaign, State of Illinois.

President of the Board, Curt Elmore;  
Superintendent, Kimberly Norton;  
Board Secretary, Courtney Montgomery

**DEADLINE TO SUBMIT TO  
OUR COLUMNISTS: 10 a.m.  
Friday prior to publication**



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