

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Safe & Just**  
Michigan

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*Safe & Just Michigan Executive Director John S. Cooper on a legislative hearing about Michigan's cash bail system:*

“Today’s testimony before the House Oversight Committee highlighted the many problems inherent in the cash bail system that routinely harm Michiganders. The consequences of not being able to meet even a \$500 cash bail demand range from being locked up for weeks or even months at a time awaiting trial over minor offenses such as driving on a suspended driver’s license; losing jobs, housing and relationships because of jail detention, even if a person is ultimately found innocent or the charges are dropped; and the difficulties employers face because the inability to meet bail leads to unpredictable work absences. The cash bail system effectively creates a two-tier justice system — one that extends grace to those who have the means to make bail, and a harsher justice system for those who do not. Other states have already curtailed cash bail without seeing negative effects to public safety or the rate of return to court for upcoming appearances before a judge. Michigan would be wise to follow in the footsteps of other states that have enacted bail reform and are already seeing the more equitable justice system it creates.”

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Safe & Just Michigan ([www.safeandjustmi.org](http://www.safeandjustmi.org)) works to advance policies that end Michigan’s over-use of incarceration and promote community safety and healing. We partner with Michigan organizations and leaders from across the political spectrum, including business and community leaders, faith communities, crime survivor organizations, formerly incarcerated individuals, prisoners and their families, as well as Michigan taxpayers statewide.