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Date: August 1, 2022

SURGE IN VIOLENT CRIME

Muncie Indiana – Delaware County has seen multiple violent and tragic crimes in the past few weeks. My heart breaks for every victim and their families and friends. It is important to remember that the filing of a criminal charge is simply an allegation and is not evidence of guilt. All suspects are presumed innocent unless and until the State proves guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Delaware County is not alone in this senseless, seemingly never ending surge in violent crime. You can read about it occurring across the state and across the nation and it must come to an end. Our country needs to get the criminal justice system back on track.

- A number of years ago, I spoke out against some of Indiana's criminal justice "reform" measures. I feel then as I do now that reducing the penalties for drug dealing and removing minimum mandatory sentences was a huge mistake that has and will put people's lives in danger. Violent crime and dealing hard core drugs have always been linked together hand in hand. Treating drugs dealers with kid gloves does nothing but throw fuel on the fire of violent crime. Traditionally, the same people who traffic in cocaine, heroin and other hard core drugs, are the same people involved in violent crime.
- "Bail reform" has been a miserable failure. It is nothing but a revolving door for the criminal justice system.
- Habitual offenders must be taken off the street and serve lengthy prison sentences. A small fraction of the population are habitual violent offenders who commit most of the predatory violence in our society. This is the crime that is predictable and can be most effectively prevented by the intervention of our criminal justice system. The identity of these career offenders is not a mystery. They start committing crimes as juveniles – for which they are never held accountable – and kept on committing crimes as adults. They continued committing crimes whenever they were let out of custody on bail,

parole, and probation. To protect society we must identify, target and incapacitate by incarceration this hard-core group of offenders by making them serve appropriate sentences.

- Far too many violent and repeat offenders are let out of prison early. There needs to be truth in sentencing. The victim and their families deserve it and so does society.
- Convicted felons and the mentally ill in our country have easy access to firearms.
- There is inadequate treatment and monitoring of the mentally ill.
- Juveniles who commit violent crime need to be tried as adults and held accountable for their adult choices and decisions. The juvenile detention alternative initiative (JDAI) has been a miserable failure and many of its soft on crime components are putting people's lives in danger across this state every day.

Soft on crime policies and decisions need to come to an end. Public safety needs to be the number one issue. People who commit violent crimes, drug dealing and/or are habitual criminal offenders must be taken off the streets and held accountable to ensure public safety.

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