



The Greater Bloomington  
Chamber of Commerce

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## **The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce Community Conversation on Justice Reform to be held on Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Bloomington, IN – November 1, 2022** – The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce is inviting interested parties for lunch and conversation on Justice Reform on Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup> at the Elks Lodge located at 400 N. Walnut St. in Bloomington.

“This important discussion will inform the public on the many complexities of our local system of criminal justice including the need for a new jail facility in Monroe County,” said Eric Spoonmore, the Chamber’s President & CEO.

**What Justice Reform Entails.** There will need to be a new justice center to replace the one built in 1985. According to the [2020 Criminal Justice & Incarceration Study conducted by the RJS Justice Services](#), “The jail facility is failing and cannot ensure consistent and sustainable provision of constitutional rights of incarcerated persons. The report goes on to declare, “daily inmate population exceeded the jail’s functional capacity on most days since 2004 and all days per year consecutively since 2015.” Beyond the new justice center, the study reveals that 75-80% of the daily 250-320 inmates have some sort of mental illness or substance abuse issue. The current facility does not have the space nor the staff of mental health professionals to address this issue.

“While Monroe County Government alone operates and pays for the local jail and courts with their share of taxpayer funds, treatment of those who are incarcerated and how justice is delivered is a community-wide matter,” said attorney Margie Rice. “Safety and justice, including whether people who are addicted and mentally ill receive proper treatment, affects the quality of life in Bloomington and throughout Monroe County. These issues touch Indiana University, its students, and impact economic development. Simply put, if you live or work in Monroe County you need to care about and get involved in the Community Justice conversation.”

**Details on the Community Conversation.** Doors open at 11:15 am with lunch beginning at 11:30 am. The cost to attend is \$15 per Chamber member and \$20 for non-members. A panel discussion featuring perspectives on judicial reform from members of our community will be moderated by Margie Rice. Panelists will include Beverly Calender-Anderson (City of Bloomington), Monroe County Sheriff-elect, Lee Jones (Monroe County Commissioner) Erika Oliphant (Monroe County Prosecutor), Miriam Northcutt Bohmert (Indiana University Bloomington Criminal Justice Dept), and Liz Grenat (Criminal Justice & Mediation Center).

Register Here: <https://web.chamberbloomington.org/atlas/events/community-conversations-2241/register>

### **About the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce:**

The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce is a nonprofit membership organization serving as our community’s leading advocate for business. We offer unique leadership opportunities, meaningful volunteer activities, and exclusive business-building programs focused on critical economic, civic, and social priorities. Chamber members support each other and community initiatives, sharing information and resources to help create economic opportunity and community well-being. At the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce, we believe that better business leads to a better community.

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