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Does electronic monitoring work?

More of Illinois has access to it than ever before. But it's still a lightning rod in public safety debate

By Madeline Buckley
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

During a court hearing on a recent afternoon, Cook County Judge Shauna Boliker looked at the 18-year-old woman before her and told her she was significantly concerned by her behavior.

The woman was accused of threatening to kill an acquaintance

who worked security at a South Side housing complex, then later tussling with him with a weapon in her bag, according to prosecutors.

Still, Boliker noted that this was her first arrest, which the law requires her to take into account. The woman's public defender pointed out that Cook County Jail can be a traumatic and destabilizing place for people, especially a young

woman just starting her life. "I hate to keep going around in circles, but this is really troubling," Boliker said.

In the end, the judge denied prosecutors' request to keep the woman jailed, but ordered that she be placed on electronic monitoring.

The woman now joins more than 5,500 others in Illinois who are being electronically monitored while they await trial, according to figures from the Illinois Supreme Court, which described the population as growing.

Since officials expanded electronic monitoring to many new parts of the state starting around 2023, more of Illinois has access to the technology than ever before, even as it is a frequent lightning rod in ongoing conversations about how best to keep the public safe and create a fairer criminal justice system — especially when high-profile offenses are allegedly committed by people who were being monitored.

The consistent flare-ups beg the question: Does electronic monitor-

ing work? "If electronic monitoring is supposed to be utilized, it should be under extremely limited circumstances with critical safeguards in place," said Claudine Constant, director of Beyond Jails Initiative for the Vera Institute of Justice.

Experts who study the criminal justice system say the technology should be reserved for narrow circumstances, such as people accused of some domestic violence

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Vance: Progress made in Iran talks

60-day waiver eases sanctions on oil sales, allows imports to US

By Aamer Madhani, Jamey Keaten, Seung Min Kim and Josh Boak
ASSOCIATED PRESS

OBBERGEN, Switzerland — Vice President JD Vance on Monday said his lengthy talks with senior Iranian officials in Switzerland created a "good foundation for a successful final deal" as they seek a permanent end to the war that the U.S. and Israel began in late February.

In other developments, the U.S. Treasury issued a 60-day license waiving sanctions on Iranian oil as part of the interim agreement. Notably, the license allows Iranian oil to be imported into the U.S., which has not imported significant amounts of Iranian oil since the 1990s.

Vance and U.S. officials claimed progress on multiple fronts, including the establishment of "mechanisms" to ensure the Strait of Hormuz, a vital waterway for global energy shipments, stays open and to address fighting between Israel and Iranian-backed Hezbollah militants in southern Lebanon, where a ceasefire appeared to be holding.

The vice president departed Switzerland as technical teams were still in place negotiating. President Donald Trump talked up the efforts to keep the strait open to create "an oil gusher" as he stressed that the key to resolving the war was "respect" from Iran.

"As long as they respect us, I don't want to use the word fear because that's an inappropriate word, but as long as they respect us, we're not going to have any trouble," Trump said from the Oval Office.

Iran effectively closed the

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Two male African penguins named Maynard, left, and Pilchard gather bedding materials on Friday in Lincoln Park Zoo. The pair have been a bonded pair for about seven years. E. JASON WAMBSGANS/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Same-sex penguin couple showcases animal diversity

Lincoln Park Zoo duo are 'serial monogamists' who love a bit of scandal

By Rebecca Johnson
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Maureen Cleary likens the love lives of the African penguins at the Lincoln Park Zoo to a soap opera. Pilchard and Maynard would probably be the couple starring in such a drama, said the zoological manager of birds.

The same-sex duo arrived in 2016 as additions to the zoo's newly opened penguin habitat, Cleary said. Maynard, now 22, hailed from Pueblo Zoo in Colorado and Pilchard, 11, from the New England Aquarium.

But Maynard was already in a relationship — at least at first. That is until the other half of his bonded pair, a female named Aiden, started hanging out in both Maynard and Pilchard's nest boxes, Cleary said.

Then, in another twist, Aiden set her sights on a different penguin, one whose mate had recently passed away. Maynard and Pilchard, however, decided to stick together. And about seven years later, they're still going strong, Cleary said.

"I've had some difficult conversations with guests in regards to, 'Is this natural?'" she said. "We give

our birds a lot of choice. We don't force our birds to do anything ... and so they're choosing to pair up that way."

During Pride Month, Chicago-area zoos are highlighting LGBTQ+ animals like Pilchard and Maynard. From dolphins to a desert grassland whiptail lizard, "wildlife displays for us the beauty of difference," said a news release from Brookfield Zoo Chicago.

One of the most interesting examples is the clownfish, said Mike Masellis, the lead animal care specialist for aquatics at Brookfield. They're what's called

a "protandrous hermaphrodite." While all clownfish are born male, they're led by a female. When the female dies, the largest and most dominant fish in an anemone changes into a female and takes on a leadership role, he said. A larger clownfish is able to lay more eggs. The second most dominant male will likely pair with her, he added.

"So in 'Finding Nemo' the mom gets eaten — spoiler alert," Masellis said. "But what would actually happen is the dad wouldn't hunt for Nemo, he would just proba-

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Bulls preparing NBA Draft strategy

The No. 4 pick is drawing all the buzz in Chicago this week, but for a young Bulls front office, the No. 15 pick could create the biggest stir, especially if new executive vice president of basketball operations Bryson Graham tries to trade up. **Chicago Sports**

Tribune completes Daily Herald sale

Three years after buying the Daily Herald printing plant, Tribune Publishing has added the storied suburban newspaper to an expanding Chicago-area portfolio. The purchase of the state's third-largest paper closed Monday. **Business**

Faith leaders call for new anti-violence office

Department would work to tamp down gun violence in city

By Jake Sheridan
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

A coalition of Chicago faith leaders and activists wants the city to create a new anti-violence office at City Hall with a community board shaping who the mayor picks as its top official.

The group called Monday for the City Council and Mayor Brandon Johnson to establish a Department of Gun Violence Prevention. They argued the change would protect policies like funding for violence interruption workers from political changes and put more focus on

driving down shootings.

The new department would replace the city's existing Office of Community Safety, which is headed by a mayor-appointed deputy mayor. Many faith leaders were upset when Johnson fired Garien Gatewood from that position earlier this year.

It would be much more difficult under the new rules for a mayor to unilaterally make such a move, instead vesting more of the authority in an advisory commission with members chosen by the mayor, which would select three finalists for the top job. The mayor would pick from among the finalists, but could then only fire the commissioner for cause.

Johnson indicated Monday he

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The Rev. Ciera Bates-Chamberlain, executive director of Live Free Illinois, speaks alongside other faith leaders and activists at a news conference at Chicago City Hall on Monday to call for a gun violence prevention office. ANTONIO PEREZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

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