

Strengthening Chicago's Youth (SCY) Quarterly Meeting

SCY's Policy Agenda Progress and Update for 2017-18 | Tuesday, November 22, 2016

Panelists

Richard Boykin, Cook County Commissioner, 1st District

Cook County Commissioner Richard R. Boykin, 1st District, began his career in public service as a Lyndon B. Johnson Intern for U.S. Representative Bobby Rush. He went on to serve as a Congressional Black Caucus Fellow for former U.S. Senator Carol Moseley-Braun. Commissioner Boykin went on to make his mark as Legislative Director and then Chief of Staff to U.S. Representative Danny K. Davis. He served as Congressman Davis' Chief of Staff for nine years, where he was instrumental in the Congressman's welfare-to-work, health care, energy and utility, and appropriations accomplishments. Raised in the Englewood community in Chicago, Commissioner Boykin spent a part of his childhood on public assistance. He attended Chicago Vocational High School and accepted an athletic scholarship to Central State University (CSU) in Ohio. While at CSU, Commissioner Boykin majored in Political Science, and consistently made the National Dean's List, going on to attain the President's Award for Outstanding Academic Achievement. He graduated Magna Cum Laude in 1990.

Following graduation, Commissioner Boykin returned to Chicago to teach in the Chicago Public Schools for a year. In 1991, he began his legal education at the University of Dayton, School of Law. In 1992 he received the prestigious Benjamin H. Logan NAACP Scholarship in recognition of his excellence in legal education. During law school, he worked for the Montgomery County Prosecutor's Office and served as a Law Clerk for Judge John W. Kessler. Commissioner Boykin continues to practice law in the Chicago and Washington D.C. offices of Barnes & Thornburg LLP, where he is a partner.

In November of 2014 he was elected Cook County Commissioner for the 1st District, and sworn in on December 1, 2014. His agenda on the County Board of Commissioners prioritizes the expansion of mental health services, criminal justice reform, jobs and economic development. Commissioner Boykin has been a champion for human rights. He demanded a Department of Justice investigation into allegations of Human and Civil Rights violations at the Homan Square Police site. Commissioner Boykin led the initiation to place referendum question regarding expanded funding for mental health treatment on the November 2014 ballot. In 2015, Commissioner Boykin was sponsor of a "no choke" ordinance that bans Cook County Law Enforcement from using chokeholds on suspects.

Kwame Raoul, Illinois State Senator, 13th District

State Senator Raoul was born in Chicago to Haitian-born immigrants Janin Raoul, M.D. and Marie Therese Raoul. Senator Raoul has served the people of the 13th Legislative District since November 6, 2004. Raoul, who is a lifelong resident of the Hyde Park/Kenwood area, was tapped to fill the vacancy left by former State Senator Barack Obama's election to the U.S. Senate. Since his arrival in Springfield, Raoul has championed legislation on criminal justice reform including the recent historic legislation that abolishes the death penalty, legislation creating the Torture Inquiry Commission and legislation promoting diversion programs for non-violent offenders. He also championed legislation aimed at breaking the code of silence by deterring intimidation of those who cooperate with law enforcement officers.

As chairman of the Senate's Pension and Investment Committee, Sen. Raoul has fought hard for pension ethics reform and has led efforts to expand opportunities for minority and women-owned financial service firms and ridding the State's pension systems of corruption. As chairman of the Senate's Redistricting Committee, Sen. Raoul introduced legislation that created the Illinois Voting Rights Act to protect racial and language minorities in the legislative redistricting process. In addition, Raoul serves as Vice-Chair of the Criminal Law Committee and a member of the Judiciary and Financial Institutions Committees.

When not serving in Springfield, Raoul serves as a partner with the law firm of Quarles & Brady. Raoul previously served as a prosecutor with the Cook County State's Attorney's Office and as in house counsel for the City Colleges of Chicago.

Raoul is a graduate of DePaul University (B.A., Political Science) and the Chicago-Kent College of Law. He is a resident of the Hyde Park community in Chicago where he lives with his wife Kali and his two children Che (13) and Mizan (11).

Juliana Stratton, Illinois State Representative Elect, 5th District

Over 20 years of experience in facilitating collaborative processes to effectuate change, build relationships, and reform systems. A change agent with an entrepreneurial spirit who understands how to identify current needs, interests and challenges and can envision and execute steps to improve outcomes and achieve mission. Strategic engagement consultant to non-profit and philanthropic organizations. Currently leading one of 10 research centers in the College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Previously served as Senior Policy Adviser to Cook County Board President on matters relating to criminal and juvenile justice, including leading community engagement strategy to reduce youth violence. In 2016, elected as Democratic nominee for Illinois State Representative for the 5th Representative District.

Former Local School Council member and long-time volunteer for organizations serving youth including serving on the boards of Public Allies--Chicago, the Chicago Children's Advocacy Center and the Juvenile Protective Association. A restorative justice practitioner with more than two decades of experience working directly with and mentoring youth in faith-based and community service organizations. For fun, a marathoner and triathlete.