



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 11, 2022

Chicago's Rising Crime Continues to Drive Big Companies Away

Even though, officially, Tyson Foods' [surprise announcement last week](#) that it was moving from Chicago to Arkansas had to do with something called "unlocking greater opportunities to share perspectives" among its key people, most observers know the real reason: those key people working in Chicago don't want to get mugged or carjacked on their way to work.

Said Tyson CEO Donnie King:

Bringing our talented corporate team members and businesses together under one roof unlocks greater opportunities to share perspectives and ideas, while also enabling us to act quickly to solve problems and provide the innovative products and solutions that our customers deserve and value.



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Chicago

Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot's "progressive" policies such as ending cash bail and defunding the Chicago Police Department (CPD) have allowed crime to explode. According to the latest statistics from the CPD, crime surged in both 2021 and thus far in 2022 to heights not seen in decades.

Murders are up 32 percent since 2019 ([with 526 murders so far this year](#)), violent crime is up 37 percent, while common low-level theft (property, vehicles, etc.) is up an astonishing 61 percent.

Chicago's homeless camps and open-air drug markets remind one of San Francisco, which Neighborhood Scout rates as a 4 out of 100 of the safest cities in the nation. Chicago rates a 10.

While King avoided any mention of the real reason for Tyson's sudden announcement, MacDonald's CEO Chris Kempinski wasn't so constrained. His company built a \$250 million headquarters in the city in 2018 and isn't persuaded (yet) that he should move. But he declared in a speech to the Economic Club of Chicago last week,

Everywhere I go, I'm confronted by the same question these days: what's going on in Chicago?

While it may wound our civic pride to hear it, there is a general sense out there that our city



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is in crisis.

He added,

We have violent crime that's happening in our restaurants.... We're seeing homelessness issues in our restaurants. We're having drug overdoses that are happening in our restaurants.

And, understandably, that's making it hard for him to recruit top talent to the Windy City:

The truth is, it's more difficult for me today to convince a promising McDonald's executive to relocate to Chicago ... than it was just a few years ago.

Tyson follows the departure of the city's richest man, Ken Griffin, and his companies. Griffin owns 80 percent of Citadel LLC, a multinational hedge fund, and all of Citadel Securities, one of the largest market makers in the country. Griffin echoed Kempinski:

If people aren't safe here, they're not going to live here. I've had multiple colleagues mugged at gunpoint. I've had a colleague stabbed on the way to work, countless issues of burglary.

Griffin himself experienced an attempted carjacking, and there continue to be reports of shootings, riots, and looting near some of his employees' homes.

Tyson also follows Boeing, which has been a corporate resident of Chicago's Deerfield suburb for three decades, and Caterpillar. Each is moving to safer locales: Arlington, Virginia, and Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas, respectively.

Food retailers Whole Foods and Aldi are reducing their presence in the crime-infested city. Said Aldi, "Our decision [to close at least one of its stores] was based on several factors, including repeated burglaries and declining sales. Out of concern for our employees and customers.... Keeping this store open was no longer a sustainable option."

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