

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF COOK COUNTY  
FINANCE COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC HEARING

Taken Wednesday, July 15, 2015  
at 10:00 a.m.

Cook County Board Room  
County Building  
118 North Clark Street  
Room 569  
Chicago, Illinois 60602

PRESENT:

CHAIRMAN: MR. JOHN P. DALEY

VICE-CHAIR: MS. DEBORAH SIMS

COMMISSIONERS: MR. LUIS ARROYO JR.  
MR. RICHARD R. BOYKIN  
MR. JERRY BUTLER  
MR. JOHN A. FRITCHEY  
MS. BRIDGET GAINER  
MR. JESUS G. GARCIA  
MS. ELIZABETH ANN DOODY GORMAN  
MR. GREGG GOSLIN  
MR. STANLEY MOORE  
MS. JOAN PATRICIA MURPHY  
MR. TIMOTHY O. SCHNEIDER  
MR. PETER N. SILVESTRI  
MR. ROBERT STEELE  
MR. LARRY SUFFREDIN  
MR. JEFFREY R. TOBOLSKI

ALSO PRESENT:

MS. LYNNE M. TURNER, Deputy Secretary  
MR. ANTHONY W. LISANTI, Court Reporter

1                   CHAIRMAN DALEY: Good morning. The Finance  
2 Committee of the Cook County Board will come to  
3 order.

4                   Will the Secretary please call the  
5 roll?

6                   SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Arroyo.

7                   COMMISSIONER ARROYO: Here.

8                   SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Boykin.

9                   COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Here.

10                  SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Butler.

11                  COMMISSIONER BUTLER: Here.

12                  SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Fritchey.

13                  COMMISSIONER FRITCHEY: Here.

14                  SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Gainer.

15                  COMMISSIONER GAINER: Here.

16                  SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Garcia.

17                  COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Here.

18                  SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Gorman --

19 Commissioner Gorman is absent.

20                               Commissioner Goslin.

21                  COMMISSIONER GOSLIN: Here.

22                  SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Moore --

23 Commissioner Moore is absent.

24                               Commissioner Murphy.

1 COMMISSIONER MURPHY: Here.

2 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Schneider.

3 COMMISSIONER SCHNEIDER: Here.

4 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Silvestri.

5 COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: Here.

6 SECRETARY TURNER: Vice-Chair Sims.

7 COMMISSIONER SIMS: Here.

8 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Steele.

9 COMMISSIONER STEELE: Present.

10 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Suffredin.

11 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: Here.

12 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Tobolski.

13 COMMISSIONER TOBOLSKI: Here.

14 SECRETARY TURNER: Chairman Daley.

15 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Here.

16 SECRETARY TURNER: Mr. Chairman, you do  
17 have a quorum.

18 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Thank you very much.

19 With leave, we will have a statement  
20 from the President of the Cook County Board,  
21 President Toni Preckwinkle.

22 PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: Good morning,  
23 everyone.

24 Thank you, Chairman Daley.

1                   As Cook County Board President, I  
2 typically leave the Finance Committee meetings in  
3 the able hands of Chairman Daley. However, as the  
4 topic for today's meeting is critical to the County,  
5 I wanted to join him on the dais.

6                   I have said it before: I am probably  
7 the last person in Cook County who wanted to  
8 increase the sales tax; however, I know it is the  
9 right -- the only -- course of action to ensure the  
10 long-term sustainability of our County Government.

11                   I stand by that -- and I want to  
12 explain why.

13                   Five years ago, during my first budget  
14 as President, I committed to decreasing the sales  
15 tax. That is because when the sales tax was  
16 previously increased in 2008 it was used to balance  
17 and grow daily operations. As I walked in the door  
18 to a half billion dollar budget deficit, I knew that  
19 County operations could be run more effectively and  
20 efficiently, and that we could work together to make  
21 the necessary reforms.

22                   Together, Commissioners, we have  
23 passed five budgets that closed over \$1.4 billion in  
24 deficits during the last five budget cycles. We

1 have cut costs, streamlined operations, and improved  
2 services. We have reduced taxpayer funding to the  
3 health system and reduced the pretrial detainee  
4 population at the jail by twenty percent.

5 At the same time, we were able to  
6 return \$1.5 billion to County residents during the  
7 last five budget cycles as our economy went through  
8 a very soft recovery.

9 But today is not about the current  
10 County operations; it is about the County's future.  
11 Our proposed sales tax increase is a plan for our  
12 long-term financial sustainability. It is targeted  
13 to three specific areas.

14 First, it will allow us to address  
15 legacy debt service payments. Next year, there is a  
16 \$25 million increase in required debt service  
17 payments. In comparison, in 2010, when the sales  
18 tax was last in place, there was an increase of  
19 roughly \$100 million in debt service payments on the  
20 horizon. With your assistance, we have reduced and  
21 refinanced our debt. We reduced our debt by our  
22 \$200 million, taking advantage of lower interest  
23 rates, and created a phased-in ramp to the higher  
24 legacy debt service costs we face, but that bill is

1 coming due.

2 Let me just say that Cook County has  
3 5.3 million people. Los Angeles has about 11.2  
4 million people. It is the largest county in the  
5 country. It has half as much debt as we do. There  
6 has been some very injudicious decisions over the  
7 last several decades that led us to the point where  
8 we have these very high debt service payments.

9 Secondly, it will allow us to  
10 establish a long-term commitment to our  
11 infrastructure. Over the last two decades, motor  
12 fuel tax money has been partially diverted to  
13 support court services; permissible, but not a good  
14 idea. In fiscal year 2016, we will begin to  
15 decrease that diversion so that by 2017, two years  
16 from now, all MFT funds, motor fuel tax funds, will  
17 be allocated to the Department of Transportation and  
18 Highways for infrastructure improvement projects.

19 John Yonan, if he were here, would be  
20 jumping up and down.

21 Let me just say -- during my entire  
22 career in public service, I have been a staunch  
23 advocate for investing in public transit and  
24 transportation. As a major transportation hub, not

1 only for the Midwest, but for the entire country, we  
2 know the importance of the role we play.

3 We will soon be releasing our Long  
4 Range Transportation Plan, the first the County has  
5 produced in seventy years, which lays out the  
6 multimodal needs of our residents and the County's  
7 plan to address them. I am grateful to those who  
8 gave their time and expertise to this effort, a few  
9 who might be in the room today.

10 Finally, almost ninety percent of the  
11 sales tax increase is dedicated to solving our  
12 pension crisis. The pension fund's shortfall now  
13 stands at \$6.5 billion -- \$6.5 billion -- and the  
14 meter keeps running, to the tune of a million  
15 dollars a day. So every month we don't address our  
16 pension crisis, we are \$30 million further in the  
17 hole.

18 We can't wait for Springfield to act,  
19 and we cannot resort to the practice of kicking the  
20 can down the road. Nor can we engage in borrowing  
21 gimmicks or smoke-and-mirrors financing schemes. We  
22 cannot ignore the reality that borrowing, and  
23 watching our pension liabilities grow exponentially,  
24 will keep taxes low today, but raise them on our

1 children and grandchildren.

2 Now I know there are some who have  
3 asked, "Why the rush?"

4 I am a firm believer in a responsible  
5 budget process. As President, one of my first  
6 actions was to issue an executive order requiring a  
7 preliminary budget forecast, which we released on  
8 June 30, as well as a preliminary public hearing,  
9 which will be held on July 31, so that we can engage  
10 the public. You have all been briefed on this  
11 preliminary budget forecast for 2016, and are aware  
12 of the scale of the challenges that we face.

13 We simply cannot push this off until  
14 later this fall. We must inform the State of our  
15 sales tax rate by October 1, or the change cannot  
16 occur until July 1, 2016, pushing the County's first  
17 receipt until October, 2016. We will be working  
18 with you, and the offices of our separately elected  
19 officials, to target over \$100 million of  
20 expenditure cuts in the coming year from a host of  
21 initiatives. We cannot do this with expenditures  
22 alone, however. We must have a clear revenue source  
23 to address the pension crisis. Failure to enact the  
24 sales tax by January 1 would result in the pension



1 fund's shortfall growing by an additional \$270  
2 million of unfunded interest on these pension  
3 liabilities in the coming year, and a \$231 million  
4 loss of revenue. Time is literally money.

5 I will say it again: this is  
6 posturing our political maneuvering. We are trying  
7 to be honest with ourselves and our residents about  
8 a plan that will put Cook County on a long-term path  
9 to financial stability.

10 Thank you.

11

12 (Applause - applause - applause)

13

14 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Please add Commissioners  
15 Moore and Gorman to the roll call.

16 We will now begin with the public  
17 speakers. Certain individuals, as Commissioner  
18 Suffredin has indicated, signed up at the Board  
19 level. They wanted to testify with this Finance  
20 Committee.

21 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: I would ask leave  
22 that they be allowed to testify before the Finance  
23 Committee. I think it was confusing when they were  
24 signing up online as to which meeting they wanted to

1 testify at.

2 CHAIRMAN DALEY: We will begin with the  
3 public speakers.

4 SECRETARY TURNER: We will call public  
5 speakers in groups of five. Please make your way to  
6 the podium and the Sheriff will direct you.

7 Our first is Don Finn, IBEW; Jacky  
8 Grimshaw; Vernard Alsberry from the Village of Hazel  
9 Crest; and Vivian Covington from the Village of  
10 University Park; and Mayor Dorothy Armstrong,  
11 Village of Dixmoor. Bona Heinsohn, and Apostle  
12 Kenneth McEastland. If you will please come to the  
13 microphone.

14 CHAIRMAN DALEY: We will enter into the  
15 record a letter from the pension fund that we  
16 received as well as a letter from the City of  
17 Markham.

18  
19 (Whereupon said documents are  
20 in words and figures as follows:)

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INSERT #1

Letter dated 15 July 2015  
from County Employees' and Officers' Annuity  
and Benefit Fund of Cook County  
to The Honorable John P. Daley  
Finance Committee, Chairman  
Cook County Board of Commissioners

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INSERT #2

Letter dated 14 July 2015  
from David Webb, Jr., Mayor, City of Markham  
to Cook County Board of Commissioners

1 \* \* \* \* \*

2

3 MR. FINN: Good morning.

4 PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE: Good morning.

5 MR. FINN: My name is Donald Finn. I am  
6 the Business Manager and Financial Secretary of  
7 Local 134 of the IBEW, and I am also the COUP  
8 chairman for eighteen building trades that are  
9 represented and do work for Cook County.

10 The sales tax increase -- I would like  
11 to add a few points on that. That is very, very  
12 near and dear to our hearts, and the County's  
13 workforce, and the County's taxpayers.

14 Since 2010, under President  
15 Preckwinkle, Cook County Government has become  
16 smaller, more efficient, while at the same time  
17 continuing to improve the quality of services  
18 provided to the taxpayers. Over the last five  
19 years, the President and this Board of Commissioners  
20 were able to put \$1.5 billion back into the  
21 taxpayers' hands. Despite implementing these  
22 reforms over the past five years, Cook County is  
23 facing a \$479 million deficit for the fiscal year  
24 2016.

1                   With that being said, the solution to  
2 the budget shortfall and the future of the financial  
3 stability is threefold. Number one, we need to  
4 continue to reduce expenditures without question.  
5 Number two, we need to implement a collaborative  
6 with the communication of all labor of reform at the  
7 County level. Last, but certainly not least, we  
8 have to look at this increase to the sales tax  
9 square in the face.

10                   The County's pension crisis is a  
11 result of years of kicking the can down the road  
12 like other municipalities. We need to take matters  
13 into our own hands, take control of our future, and  
14 enact measures that will now ensure the long-term  
15 fiscal stability for Cook County taxpayers.

16                   This is not the **end-all be-all** of  
17 pensions. This is not just about pension. It is  
18 also about infrastructure. There is money that is  
19 going to be due from the sales tax that we can put  
20 back into the County to get the projects that we  
21 need done without raising other taxes.

22                   Since the pension reform bill does not  
23 appear imminent with what is going on in  
24 Springfield, we cannot wait for Springfield to fix

1 our pension and our other problems.

2 I am in support of this, and I stand  
3 in support of all of the unions for the coalition in  
4 this.

5 Thank you for your time today.

6 MS. GRIMSHAW: Good morning. My name is  
7 Jacky Grimshaw. I am from the Center for  
8 Neighborhood Technology.

9 We have a project that is called  
10 "Transit Future". I am here as a transit advocate  
11 representing that campaign.

12 We support the sales tax increase and  
13 the ending of the diversion of the gas tax.

14 The gas tax has been diverted for many  
15 years from transportation funding to public safety.  
16 This is unfair to taxpayers, and it is not  
17 sustainable.

18 I believe that by shoring up past  
19 debts, such as our pension deficits, we have the  
20 ability to fund future investments. Those  
21 investments should be centered around making our  
22 region economically viable, lowering the cost of  
23 living, and improving the quality of life for  
24 residents.

1           Public transit is the backbone of our  
2 economy. Right now we are saddled with an  
3 antiquated hub-and-spoke nineteenth century transit  
4 system that is hindering us from competing with  
5 other cities in the US.

6           As elected members of the Cook County  
7 Board, you have inherited difficult challenges. As  
8 responsible members of the Board, you have gone a  
9 long way to restore in Cook County Government. In  
10 the last five years, you have made progress, making  
11 County operations run more smoothly and efficiently,  
12 saving taxpayers money.

13           Although you have done this great job,  
14 there are still some fiscal challenges leftover from  
15 the past. This one percent sales tax will shore up  
16 our mounting pension debt, and is a prime example of  
17 this Board's commitment to making Cook County work.

18           The Board must also consider investing  
19 in our future. Start by ending the diversion of the  
20 gas tax in 2016 and totally by 2017. It is an  
21 important first step towards this goal.

22           We need to think about expanding our  
23 transit system as part of the 2016 budget. Cook  
24 County residents still use essentially the same



1 transportation system that they did in the Great  
2 Depression. Cook County's transit does not work  
3 well for all residents -- seventy-five percent of  
4 County residents' commutes take longer than ninety  
5 minutes. Twenty-five percent of jobs in Cook County  
6 are not accessible by any transit. Transit Future  
7 is advocating for a transit system that will meet  
8 the County's needs for the next century and beyond.

9 An investment in transit will bring  
10 immediate benefits. We will have shorter commute  
11 times for transit users and drivers. It will spur  
12 economic development. It will make the region more  
13 attractive to millennial and empty-nesters. It will  
14 result in thousands of dollars saved in  
15 transportation and car ownership costs for families  
16 and economic costs for businesses, from employees  
17 and goods stuck in traffic, reduce traffic  
18 congestion, and short- and long-term economic  
19 stimulus. And fewer cars on the road mean less wear  
20 and tear on our already aging and crumbling  
21 infrastructure, roads and bridges.

22 We support the sales tax. We support  
23 transportation investment in Cook County, and we  
24 encourage you all to do the same.

1 Thank you very much.

2 MR. ALSBERRY: Good morning, everyone. I  
3 am Vernard Alsberry, Mayor of the Village of Hazel  
4 Crest; also here representing the Southland Regional  
5 Mayors Black Caucus and also the Southland Regional  
6 Mayors Clergy group. We come out to speak in  
7 support of the sales tax.

8 You may not have to time me, because I  
9 am not going to be that long.

10 But what I want to say, you have heard  
11 all of the issues why. What we think is the most  
12 important thing is the stabilization of the County.  
13 We have an issue with the State; we have an issue  
14 with the City; and we have an issue with the school  
15 board, the CPS. We do not need to be destabilizing  
16 the County as these branches of government are.

17 It is always hard to vote for an  
18 increase. As the Mayor of my community, if we voted  
19 for an increase, I probably would have had one  
20 hundred people in my village hall complaining why.  
21 We know we can't increase the property taxes in the  
22 Southland because that will destabilize the  
23 Southland.

24 This one percent tax is something that

1 we have to have in order to survive in Cook County.  
2 We all know that is a reality. The Commissioners  
3 know that that is a reality. The State knows it is  
4 a reality, and you saw what happened when they did  
5 not do it.

6 Let's put all of the politics aside.  
7 Let's be real, and let's vote for the tax. You know  
8 we need it, Commissioners. There is no ifs, ands,  
9 or buts about it. You have got to bite the bullet.  
10 You know that you don't like to increase taxes. You  
11 have to move things around -- you can't continue to  
12 move stuff around.

13 This is the time to step forward and  
14 move towards the future. Not only for us, but for  
15 all of the children, the kids, the seniors, the  
16 organizations that depend on that one percent for  
17 their future.

18 That is all I have to say.

19 Thank you very much.

20 MS. ARMSTRONG: I am Mayor Dorothy  
21 Armstrong from the Village of Dixmoor. I concur  
22 with Mayor Alsberry.

23 Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Our next speakers, please.

1                   SECRETARY TURNER: Our next speaker is  
2 Kenneth McEastland, along with Patricia Samuels, and  
3 Lisa Miller.

4                   MR. McEASTLAND: I represent Chief Apostle  
5 Doctor William McCoy, Our Brother's Keeper, and also  
6 the community out in Chicago Heights. Standing with  
7 me are Patricia Samuels, Lisa Miller, and Diane  
8 Howard, who are part of our congregation in the  
9 community.

10                   As we know, our communities are  
11 impoverished. We are here to support the sales tax  
12 increase so that it can help to better things for  
13 our parishioners and those in our community.

14                   One of the concerns is the Medicaid.  
15 We want you to reconsider those cuts to Medicaid, if  
16 you will. It affects our community, and our concern  
17 is that nearly \$800 million of proposed cuts to the  
18 hospitals will result in the loss of 12,500 jobs and  
19 \$1.7 million of economic activity. This will be  
20 devastating to our community.

21                   Our people need Medicaid. Without it,  
22 it compromises and eliminates access to lifesaving  
23 treatments and preventative medications. That is  
24 for 3.1 million people who have forms of Medicaid

1 coverage.

2           These proposed cuts will also result  
3 in the closure of the Illinois Poison Center. We  
4 will be the only state without a poison center.

5           Our hospitals are the backbone of our  
6 community. They invest in the community as well.  
7 They contribute more than \$1.4 million in charitable  
8 benefits. They also make a significant contribution  
9 in providing jobs. They give free and reduced  
10 healthcare services to the region. All of this  
11 affects our children, our elderly. It affects our  
12 disabled and our impoverished.

13           We are asking that you would please  
14 reconsider the cuts to the Medicaid program. We  
15 would lose many through this particular cut. We  
16 would rather gain by allowing these hospitals to  
17 operate as they are at this point.

18           We need your help. We need you to  
19 think about considering to pass this particular bill  
20 for the benefit of the people in our community.

21           Thank you.

22           MS. HEINSOHN: My name is Bona Heinsohn. I  
23 am with the Cook County Farm Bureau. As many of you  
24 know, we are the County's largest general farm

1 organization.

2 We stood here several years ago and  
3 complimented this Board on rolling back the sales  
4 tax increase. We remain committed to that policy.

5 However, I don't want to downplay the  
6 steps that this Board, under the leadership of this  
7 President, has taken to improve the County's  
8 economy. However, at this junction, increasing the  
9 sales would cause negative impact on businesses,  
10 especially small businesses and especially those  
11 small businesses in border communities.

12 The Cook County Farm Bureau, in short,  
13 is opposed to the increase. We ask you to oppose it  
14 as well.

15 SECRETARY TURNER: The next group of five  
16 is Kyahna Haynie, Brian Mitchell, Mark Maher, George  
17 Blakemore, and Michael Tierney.

18 Please make your way to microphone.

19 The next group of five can get ready  
20 as well: Valencia Winstead, Doctor Barbara Norman,  
21 Craig Horwitz, Pamela Cannon, and Arlean Myers.

22 First is Kyahna Haynie -- Kyahna  
23 Haynie -- Brian Mitchell.

24 MR. MITCHELL: Good morning. My name is

1 Brian Mitchell. I am the Administrator for the  
2 Village of Matteson, as well as the Chairman of the  
3 Board of Trustees of Governors State University.

4 What I want to say today is that we  
5 have very difficult decisions that we have to make  
6 at the local level. In order for us to make our  
7 decisions, we count on the decisions that are made  
8 with the leadership of Cook County.

9 As well as hearing the other reasons  
10 that you heard this morning, what we look at is  
11 economic development. This is for jobs and for more  
12 businesses to our community. To do that, we need  
13 the infrastructure. We need to be able to say that  
14 the MFT funds will be put back so that the  
15 infrastructure, the roads will be put back into  
16 condition not only for today, but for the future.

17 What I want to say is that the Village  
18 of Matteson is in support of this tax. Although it  
19 is very hard, we understand the reasons and the  
20 rationale behind the decisions that you have to make  
21 today. The Village stands right beside the  
22 President and the Board of Commissioners.

23 We have to make a difference. We can  
24 no longer put off the hard decisions we have to make

1 to move Cook County forward to be able to provide  
2 the needed and necessary services to all of our  
3 residents and constituents.

4 At this particular time, it is my  
5 pleasure to be before you, and we are in full  
6 support of the one percent tax.

7 Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Thank you.

9 SECRETARY TURNER: Mark Maher.

10 MR. MAHER: President Preckwinkle, Board  
11 members, guests, thank you for the opportunity to  
12 address you today. My name is Mark Maher. I am the  
13 Political Director of the Chicago Regional Council  
14 of Carpenters.

15 The Chicago Regional Council of  
16 Carpenters supports President Preckwinkle's proposed  
17 solution as it puts Cook County on the path towards  
18 fiscal responsibility.

19 I don't want to reiterate everything  
20 that has already been discussed. But you must  
21 recognize that for far too long we have been  
22 pointing fingers and blaming each other for what is  
23 going on and ignoring the core problems. The  
24 taxpayers of Cook County deserve an honest plan that



1 addresses the issues we are facing. This plan does  
2 just that, and has earned the support of the Chicago  
3 Regional Council of Carpenters.

4 We must now approach these issues with  
5 long-term plan and stop the short-term of kicking  
6 the can down the road.

7 We appreciate your support, and we ask  
8 all of the Commissioners to support this tax  
9 increase.

10 Thank you.

11 SECRETARY TURNER: George Blakemore.

12 MR. BLAKEMORE: As a concerned citizen, I  
13 want it to be on record that I oppose this tax  
14 increase for various reasons. I will state these  
15 reasons.

16 The elected officials haven't been  
17 good steward with the taxpayers' money. They talk  
18 about the fuel tax, the highway tax. They were  
19 mandated to go into the infrastructure. What did  
20 they do? They put that money into something else.  
21 That was unlawful.

22 Now they are coming to the poor people  
23 of this great county asking them to sacrifice and  
24 pay ten percent on a sales tax. This is outrageous.

1           The only way that I would support a  
2 sales tax is the same political hacks that put us in  
3 this shape are no longer there, are no longer in  
4 their positions. They have been kicking this can.  
5 The more you give to a hog, the more he will eat.

6           You heard me. It is not a problem of  
7 money. It is a problem of irresponsible elected  
8 officials -- irresponsible. They have not been good  
9 shepherds with public money.

10           All of the above. The unions should  
11 have watched these annuities. The elected officials  
12 should have watched these annuities. The State  
13 Senators and Representatives should have watched  
14 these annuities.

15           Now they are out of control and you  
16 are going to try to fix them on the backs of poor  
17 people of color, blacks, Hispanics, poor whites.  
18 This is ridiculous.

19           Again, but they announced that my  
20 three minutes is up. As long as these officials are  
21 still sitting in those seats, I will not support it.  
22 So you are giving the fox money to watch the  
23 henhouse. If they wasn't there, I probably would  
24 support it. So it is kicking the bucket -- who

1 kicked the bucket? These elected officials.

2 I have been heard, I have been seen,  
3 and the ancestors and other good citizens will  
4 appreciate me. You are not in the business of  
5 highways. You have got your highways, the Highway  
6 Department is a wreck.

7 I will say my three minutes, young  
8 lady. I will say my three minutes. When Todd  
9 Stroger was here, you didn't support the three  
10 minutes. Not the three minutes, the tax increase.  
11 Now the Sheriff -- I am going to be seated.

12 SECRETARY TURNER: Michael Tierney, and  
13 after Michael Tierney is Doctor Valencia Winstead,  
14 and Barbara Norman.

15 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you.

16 Plumbers' Local 130 stands in support  
17 of the sales tax and behind President Preckwinkle.  
18 We urge you all to vote "yes".

19 Thank you.

20 MS. WINSTEAD: Good morning. I am Valencia  
21 Winstead; Doctor Barbara Norman is coming.

22 I am Valencia Winstead. Thank you so  
23 much.

24 Today I stand before you, co-owner of

1 a small business, a small minority-owned business, I  
2 might add. I actually stand in support and applaud  
3 President Preckwinkle for her tough choice on this  
4 tax increase.

5 Number one, first and foremost, since  
6 she has been here we have seen her eliminate waste,  
7 fraud, and mismanagement.

8 Like my prior speaker said, I want you  
9 to hear me well. She has done this. She is not  
10 asking for a one percent increase that is going to  
11 buy new clothes, buy new cars, or buy things that  
12 could be considered frivolous. This is going to be  
13 something, like myself as a business owner makes  
14 decisions that are going to affect my children and  
15 grandchildren down the road. I make responsible  
16 decisions. I think this, too, is a responsible  
17 proposal to actually increase it, to do the sales  
18 tax increase and not to kick the can down the road.

19 I have two points that I want to make  
20 and then I will be done. That is my favorite. Yes,  
21 corruption did exist and it still does. But I think  
22 that she has done her fair share of eliminating it  
23 and making it not responsible.

24 We have to address pension reform now.

1 There is not one person in this room that has not  
2 heard on the radio or the TV shows or the newspaper  
3 that we are in trouble. We have been in trouble for  
4 a long time. So, yes, we do have to take the bull  
5 by the horns and we are going to have to address  
6 pension reform.

7 President Preckwinkle has attempted to  
8 do this, not only in the County, but in Springfield,  
9 for the last two years. Every day our pension fund  
10 liabilities grow by a million dollars a day, and we  
11 heard her say other figures earlier in her address.

12 It is clear that additional funding is  
13 critical to improve and repair our deteriorating  
14 infrastructure. Ten million dollars of additional  
15 funding is planned for 2016, and \$64.5 million for  
16 2017. The dedicated motor fuel tax is enough for me  
17 to say yes in support of this because I rode, when  
18 we drove down here, I heard the Mayor talk about  
19 this right here in the City of Chicago. Where can  
20 you drive where our streets are not torn up, where  
21 we don't have potholes, sinking streets, if you go  
22 out on the road? I am out on the road all the time.

23 We do need that and I applaud her for  
24 actually dedicating the motor fuel tax to support

1 this. We stand in support of the one percent  
2 increase.

3 Thank you.

4 SECRETARY TURNER: Barbara Norman is next.

5 DR. NORMAN: My name is Barbara Norman.  
6 Yes, I am Doctor Barbara Norman. I am the former  
7 Director of OB/GYN at Cook County Hospital at the  
8 time when it was right here on Taylor. I remember  
9 sitting here when I was young like many of you and  
10 they were talking about a tax increase. I would  
11 say, "No, not now." In my thirties, a tax increase  
12 -- "No, not now." At forty years old, when they  
13 started to talk about pension plans, I said, "No,  
14 not now." At fifty and sixty -- now after seventy,  
15 I am before you to say, "Yes, right now." That is  
16 true today.

17 I am here on behalf of the many Cook  
18 County retirees and our faithful taxpayers who have  
19 invested in our system for many years. We all  
20 combined and we probably thought we had enough. We  
21 didn't have the insight then as we have with  
22 President Preckwinkle who brought this to us today.  
23 I come before you in support of that tax.

24 In addition to being a doctor, I know

1 you hear about taxes as the young man before me  
2 said. It does create a visceral feeling, like a GI  
3 tract that is getting tight. I just want to kind of  
4 breathe a little bit because as I was sitting here I  
5 didn't know that we had to bring in a CPR team.

6 Let's just relax. It will be over and  
7 it will be passed. Because I do believe that we are  
8 all here for the same thing: quality care, quality  
9 health, good life, quality of life, safe streets,  
10 good streets, transportation. I can go on and on  
11 and on. I think philosophically we all agree.

12 The question is: how do we get there?  
13 If you look at it and if you analyze it carefully,  
14 you don't have that much of an alternative. With me  
15 with Medicare, with me with pension, with me with  
16 retirement -- it sounds good, doesn't it? With me  
17 with Social Security. One percent is not going to  
18 hurt me, but it will hurt me if I lose what I need  
19 to maintain a quality of life. If I had to pay one  
20 cent on a dollar, I can survive. Give them all to  
21 me; I will do this.

22 I will conclude to say that I ask that  
23 you support it. I don't need to go through the  
24 numbers. You got it in the press conference. You

1 see it on TV. We have our points. Everybody read  
2 it, rehashed it, and as we close in a summary  
3 conclusion, let's get to closure and say, "Let's do  
4 the right thing." Not just for me, but for what we  
5 are here to serve.

6 When I first started in OB, we took  
7 care of one mother with a father and a child. When  
8 I left OB, many of you who are probably sitting here  
9 that I have delivered. I am on the second and third  
10 generation of mothers that I am working with. I  
11 know that it is time to retire.

12 I also know that it is time. Let's do  
13 the right thing. Let's pass this budget and let's  
14 go get something to eat and pay that one percent for  
15 the restaurant.

16 Thank you and God bless.

17 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Thank you, Doctor.

18 SECRETARY TURNER: Craig Horwitz followed  
19 by Pamela Cannon, followed by Arlean Myers, followed  
20 by Pastor T.L. Barrett with The Reverend Earl  
21 Grandberry.

22 MR. HORWITZ: My name is Craig Horwitz. I  
23 am a co-owner of Chicago's oldest family-owned  
24 jewelry store, H. Horwitz Company, founded in 1899.



1 We are located in Water Tower Place. We have been  
2 there since 1975.

3 Our family has survived 116 years,  
4 including depressions, multiple recessions, and many  
5 other economic and business climate challenges. But  
6 the sales tax challenge this week is one we all need  
7 to fight.

8 Please say "no" to the public becoming  
9 a "money faucet" each and every time the government  
10 needs more money. I used this often at tax levies  
11 in the Village of Buffalo Grove, where I live, the  
12 school districts. It is a proven concept. Whenever  
13 there is a need for money, you just come to us, the  
14 taxpayers.

15 Today the County is considering  
16 Resolution 15-4291, raising the sales tax from 0.75  
17 to 1.75; but that is not really the truth. The  
18 whole truth is if this resolution is passed by the  
19 seventeen Cook County Commissioners, the total sales  
20 tax for my business, and in your business, too, if  
21 you own a business in Cook County and Chicago, will  
22 be 10.25 from an already challenging 9.25. That  
23 would possibly make our county the highest sales tax  
24 in the United States -- yes, higher than New York,

1 California, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Florida, and  
2 Washington. Ladies and gentlemen, this is not how  
3 one rebounds from a three-year recession. This is  
4 how you divert business to other counties like Lake,  
5 other states like Wisconsin and Indiana, and even  
6 worse to the Internet, unless you have a location in  
7 every state where you pay no sales tax.

8 I understand the County needs to  
9 generate new revenue. This is not the answer. From  
10 what I see in looking at the revenue stream, sales  
11 tax represents twelve percent of the \$2.9 billion in  
12 revenue that this County generates.

13 For me, it is simple. Our average  
14 sale is about \$500. When a customer buys something  
15 from us, for \$500, under the current sales tax he  
16 will pay \$46. Under the proposed, he will pay \$51.  
17 It is not really a matter of the dollars. They look  
18 at the sales tax and they see no value.

19 I am hopeful that all of you agree  
20 that this one percent, to 1.75, might be less  
21 impactful if the Cook County retailer did not have  
22 an additional 8.5 in sales tax; but the 6.25 of  
23 Illinois, the 1.25 of the RTA, and the one percent  
24 of Chicago are not going away any time soon.

1 I urge you all to not pass this  
2 increase, and I thank you very much.

3 SECRETARY TURNER: Pamela Cannon.

4 MS. CANNON: Good morning, Cook County  
5 Board President Toni Preckwinkle, and the Cook  
6 County Board Commissioners and guests.

7 My name is Pamela Cannon. I am a  
8 current employee of the Cook County Department of  
9 Transportation and Highways, as well as an SEIU  
10 Local 73 union steward.

11 In the past four or five years, I  
12 recall furlough days, shutdown days. That was the  
13 sacrifice for us as County employees to help balance  
14 the County budget funds.

15 I am in support of the one cent sales  
16 tax because it will increase the Cook County general  
17 fund. When I retire in the future, I want the money  
18 to be available for me because I have already put in  
19 money. I want the current retirees to continue to  
20 get the money that they put in prior as well.

21 I encourage each and every one of the  
22 Commissioners to vote "yes" to the one cent sales  
23 tax increase.

24 Thank you.

1 SECRETARY TURNER: Arlean Myers.

2 MS. MYERS: Good morning. My name is  
3 Arlean Myers. I am a retiree. I retired in 2010  
4 from the Cook County healthcare system. I worked  
5 there for thirty-three and a quarter years.

6 I support her one percent tax increase  
7 because I intend to live another twenty years. My  
8 pension needs to be funded. I started at County  
9 when I didn't pay a med tax so, of course, I don't  
10 have Medicare or Social Security. I need my money.  
11 So please support that one percent so that those of  
12 us that retired early can get our money.

13 Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Thank you.

15 SECRETARY TURNER: After Pastor Barrett  
16 will be Brent Lewandowski, Emir Hardy, David Posley,  
17 and Eleanor Folks.

18 MR. BARRETT: Good morning, President  
19 Preckwinkle, good morning, Chairman Daley, and good  
20 morning, Commissioners.

21 In general, please allow me as a  
22 forty-seven-year pastor of one church to give a  
23 special good morning to one Commissioner in  
24 particular. If I would have had my congregation

1 this morning standing behind my sacristy, I would  
2 encourage my congregation to give a round of  
3 applause to the "Iceman", who is Commissioner Jerry  
4 Butler, who has meant so much to us. I thank you  
5 all so much.

6 I stand in support of this tax  
7 increase. The reasons have been given, but I would  
8 like to take a different slant on this.

9 The reason I would like for the  
10 Commissioners to consider, and for the citizens of  
11 our County to know, is that there are some things  
12 that will not be affected by this tax, such as  
13 nonprepared foods for sale at grocery stores and  
14 other outlets that do not prepare food. Also, there  
15 will be no taxation on prescription medications and  
16 nonprescription items that have medicinal value.

17 You need to consider this. All  
18 consumer medical devices will not be taxed, such as  
19 prostheses, dentures, and what are called eyeglasses  
20 -- everybody says eyeglasses, but we have two eyes.  
21 They won't be affected. None of those things. I  
22 just thought that that should be put forward for  
23 your consideration when your constituents say,  
24 "Everything will be taxed." No, everything will not

1 be taxed. Many of these items are very, very  
2 necessary for us.

3 So thank you very much.

4 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Thank you.

5 MR. LEWANDOWSKI: Good morning, Chairman  
6 Daley, President Preckwinkle, and Commissioners.  
7 Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

8 My name is Brent Lewandowski. I am  
9 representing Teamsters Local 700.

10 The Cook County pension fund is in a  
11 state of emergency. According to the 2014  
12 independent actuarial evaluation, the fund needs an  
13 additional \$449 million per year in contributions if  
14 County workers and retirees are to get their  
15 pensions under the current statutory regimen.

16 The current contribution mechanism is  
17 not sufficient to fund the Cook County pension fund  
18 in any actuarial sound manner. The independent  
19 actuarial recommends a funding policy that is  
20 sufficient to pay the normal costs of the active  
21 plan members, plan expenses, and unfunded actuarial  
22 accrued liability. Further delaying paying toward  
23 the unfunded liability will compound the problem.

24 Had this Board taken up the same vote

1 in 2008, according to the independent actuarial  
2 evaluation of 2007, the shortfall payment would have  
3 been \$148 million. In seven years, that payment  
4 recommended by the actuarial has tripled to the  
5 compounding nature of an unfunded liability.

6 In order to ensure the solvency of the  
7 pension fund for our members, Teamsters Local 700 is  
8 urging this Board to vote "yes" on the resolution to  
9 increase the sales tax. Participants in the pension  
10 fund and their surviving spouses won't receive  
11 Social Security. They deserve the surety of knowing  
12 that their pensions are secure.

13 Thank you.

14 SECRETARY TURNER: Emir Hardy, David  
15 Posley, Eleanor Folks.

16 Michael Reeve. Following Michael  
17 Reeve will be Apostle Bradshaw, with Pastor Jeffery  
18 Ball, followed by Valerie Dean and Emma Lozano.

19 This is a final call. Emir Hardy,  
20 David Posley, Eleanor Folks.

21 Michael Reeve --

22 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Mr. Reeve.

23 MR. REEVER: President Preckwinkle,  
24 Chairman Daley, and Commissioners. My name is

1 Michael Reeve and I am the Vice President of the  
2 Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce. Our members  
3 represent the breadth and diversity of this region's  
4 economy, providing over 400,000 jobs and over \$24  
5 billion in gross revenue.

6 Our members include corporate leaders,  
7 the midmarket, and neighborhood business  
8 entrepreneurs.

9 On behalf of the Chamber, I would like  
10 to open by recognizing the work of President  
11 Preckwinkle and the County Board in what they have  
12 accomplished in reforming County Government and  
13 making it more responsive to the people you serve.

14 We understand that you are increasing  
15 the County sales tax today because the General  
16 Assembly has not passed the pension reform for  
17 County employees. Further, we understand that  
18 President Preckwinkle supports rolling back the  
19 sales tax increase, if pension reform is passed.

20 Nonetheless, the Chicagoland Chamber  
21 of Commerce opposes the proposed one percent  
22 increase to the sales tax. As presented today, the  
23 revenue increase will come before the promised or  
24 necessary cost-saving reforms in legislation that



1 would typically show up through the regular budget  
2 process. You are asking the Commissioners and the  
3 taxpayers to trust that this revenue will not be  
4 used outside of the stated purpose of pension  
5 payment relief.

6 We want to trust and we can, if  
7 presented with a complete budget package. Further,  
8 as the State continues its budget discussions,  
9 including Cook County pension reform, the sales tax  
10 may not even be needed. In fact, the Chamber is  
11 committed to supporting a Cook County pension reform  
12 proposal, and will work with the President to get a  
13 clean up or down vote in Springfield.

14 With this tax hike, the taxpayers in  
15 Chicago and Cook County will again be paying the  
16 highest sales tax in the nation. This regressive  
17 tax increase for citizens with the least financial  
18 resources the most. It leaves Cook County  
19 businesses at a competitive disadvantage as shoppers  
20 will easily travel to the collar counties to shop  
21 and play.

22 We know this to be a fact because we  
23 already lived it when this tax was put in seven  
24 years ago. It is why we so strongly supported

1 rolling back this tax five years ago when President  
2 Preckwinkle first led the offer.

3 At a time when businesses and  
4 individual taxpayers for that matter are getting hit  
5 from both sides by all levels of government, it is  
6 time we give thought to a more comprehensive  
7 approach to all levels of government. Your action  
8 today speaks to preempt Springfield and your own  
9 budget process, to raise a regressive tax which  
10 amounts to a race to the bottom to fix our  
11 collective financial crises.

12 That is why I stand up here to ask you  
13 to slow down. The business community needs you to  
14 work with Mayor Emanuel, Governor Rauner, and the  
15 Legislature to ensure that Illinois emerges from  
16 this fiscal nightmare stronger and more prosperous  
17 than ever.

18 A decision to raise the sales tax  
19 should be part of a larger County budget discussion  
20 and in cooperation with Springfield. The Chamber  
21 stands opposed to this increase.

22 Thank you for your time and  
23 consideration.

24 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Thank you.

1 MR. BRADSHAW: Good morning. I am The  
2 Reverend G.E. Bradshaw. I stand with the Southland  
3 Ministerial Health Network and my constituency, the  
4 clergymen of the Southland community.

5 We stand with President Preckwinkle in  
6 her decision to raise this tax. I think we are at  
7 an impasse, an unavoidable impasse at this point.  
8 To do nothing is not a solution. We must do  
9 something very powerful and very quick.

10 We are standing with President  
11 Preckwinkle because she has shown us that she has  
12 integrity and stability in her decision-making, and  
13 the concerns of the citizens are at the top of her  
14 list of priorities.

15 There is no need for me to be  
16 redundant; only to say that we stand with her at  
17 this very critical time.

18 Thank you very much.

19 MR. BALL: Pastor Jeffery Ball agrees.

20 SECRETARY TURNER: Valerie Dean.

21 MS. DEAN: I am Valerie Dean Emanuel.  
22 Thirty-four years of service at Cook County  
23 Hospital, currently retired. I walked away from my  
24 job in 2008 thinking I am safe. No more need to

1 read the clocks. No more short pay. No more doing  
2 four people's jobs. I am just one person. When I  
3 walked away I thought my pension should have been  
4 secured.

5 I am going to support this one percent  
6 tax if it is going to help me.

7 When I walked away, I went to Public  
8 Aid for a Link card. I was told I couldn't get a  
9 Link card because I had \$6.37 too much on my check  
10 to receive this Link card. I am hungry. I want to  
11 support these taxes, but I seen a lot happen. But  
12 somebody needs to do something to fix this problem.

13 You have people coming behind me. I  
14 am going to make eighty - ninety years old. The  
15 County promised me a check the rest of my life. I  
16 am going to get it.

17 I am going to support this tax and you  
18 need to find a solution for that problem. I wish I  
19 didn't have to come here like this. I don't need  
20 the three minutes.

21 SECRETARY TURNER: Emma Lozano, followed by  
22 Claire Williams and Jorge Perez and Brian Hickey.

23 MR. PEREZ: Good morning, Commissioners.  
24 My name is Jorge Perez. I am the Executive Director

1 of HACIA. That is the Hispanic American  
2 Construction Industry Association. I am joined  
3 today by our Board President, Ivan Solis from Solis  
4 Construction.

5 On behalf of the Hispanic American  
6 Construction Industry Association, and its Board of  
7 Directors, I would like to extend our support for  
8 the Cook County sales tax increase that is currently  
9 being proposed. We feel very strongly that  
10 additional revenue is needed if we are to improve  
11 and properly maintain our current infrastructure,  
12 which is a key component for our region's economic  
13 competitiveness.

14 Our support is based on a combination  
15 of factors, including one, the improved management  
16 of the County's finances. Two, the need to maintain  
17 and modernize the County's infrastructure system,  
18 and, three, the positive impact that continued  
19 investment on capital improvement projects has on  
20 diverse businesses and communities which make up  
21 over half of the County's population.

22 As the northeast region of Illinois  
23 continues to recover from the economic downturn,  
24 Cook County has taken the necessary steps to ensure

1 they are managing the finances and operations in an  
2 efficient manner, from making the painful and  
3 necessary cuts to their operating budget, to  
4 identifying and implementing strategies that have  
5 led to annual recurrent savings and the streamlining  
6 of operations.

7           The current Administration has managed  
8 to put a big dent in the budget deficit. In  
9 addition, of all of the local public authorities,  
10 Cook County is the one that has the limited amount  
11 of capital improvements and capital improvement  
12 programs. We understand that the diversion of the  
13 State of Illinois motor fuel tax in Cook County has  
14 prevented this from taking hold. As a result, the  
15 County's maintenance for the roads is limited,  
16 resulting not only in deferred maintenance that will  
17 eventually be costlier, but also diminished  
18 opportunities for firms in the design and  
19 construction phases.

20           We are committed to working with the  
21 County's current Administration in order to enhance  
22 and develop new strategies that will improve the  
23 participation of a more diverse workforce, provide  
24 better opportunities for minority- and women-owned

1 construction and professional service firms while  
2 making the best use of this capital program.

3 Cook County President Toni Preckwinkle  
4 should be commended for her leadership.

5 Founded in 1979, HACIA is an advocate  
6 organization that represents close to three hundred  
7 construction companies, professional service firms,  
8 and construction-related businesses that employ  
9 thousands of workers. HACIA's diverse membership  
10 includes firms and organizations representative of  
11 all minority- and women-owned businesses.

12 SECRETARY TURNER: Brian Hickey, Mike  
13 Ciaccio, James Marks, Mark Robinson, and James  
14 Phipps.

15 Will the following group please  
16 prepare: Walter Hunter, Pastor Steve Nelson, Bishop  
17 Charles Mickens, Pastor William Jenkins, Bishop  
18 Stevenson, Reverend Leon Finney, Pastor Samuel  
19 Hinkle, Pastor Steve Jones, Pastor William Fleshman,  
20 and Apostle Timothy Treadwell.

21 MR. PHIPPS: Good morning, ladies and  
22 gentlemen. I am with SEIU and I am a County worker  
23 as well.

24 I am supposed to retire -- I know I

1 don't look sixty-four, but I am. At this point, the  
2 way things look, my Medicare and Social Security  
3 isn't exactly right.

4 Unless we get some relief about our  
5 pension situation -- I heard somebody saying that  
6 the penalty is a million dollars a day. Shakespeare  
7 said, "In order for evil to triumph is to do  
8 nothing."

9 When Jesus came up on the people in  
10 Galilee, he didn't talk about -- well, I have got to  
11 duck for cover for my pension. If I do the wrong  
12 thing I am not going to be reelected or people don't  
13 like me. Jesus talked about the brokenhearted. He  
14 talked about the poor, the captive. Those who could  
15 not speak for themselves.

16 I can look around in this room and I  
17 can look at Commissioner Sims and I can look at  
18 Commissioner Murphy and a few others. My good man  
19 who talks about only the strong survive. This is a  
20 situation today where we are dealing with only the  
21 people who must survive.

22 When I left Mississippi as a boy of  
23 fourteen years old, I didn't know anything about a  
24 pension. If you didn't pick cotton, you didn't eat.



1 When I got to Chicago, I worked. I worked at  
2 Montgomery Ward. I made a dollar eighty-three cents  
3 an hour on Chicago Avenue. When I came to the  
4 County, they talked about how I was going to have a  
5 future when I got older. I was going to have a  
6 pension. It was something unheard of. I couldn't  
7 even spell it.

8 So, out of all of these years I am  
9 looking forward to my pension. Let's do the right  
10 thing for people. Most of the people in this room,  
11 we can make it. But there are a lot of folks  
12 outside who cannot make it.

13 Can you imagine someone who has  
14 retired, and you sent a letter through the mail  
15 telling them -- you ain't got no more money. You  
16 know how that feels? You know what would happen if  
17 pensions are cut substantially? Do you know what  
18 burden that would have on the mental and medical  
19 institutions in this County? Where you would spend  
20 far more because people would commit suicide, they  
21 would have all types of problems.

22 Being a preacher I know it takes up a  
23 lot of time, but I try to say what I mean and mean  
24 what I say.

1                   Let's stand up and be men and women.  
2           I support President Preckwinkle's tax extension. We  
3           need this. We need this here in order to fund not  
4           only pensions, but a whole lot of other things, like  
5           the people who testified earlier.

6                   I am glad to be in Cook County. I am  
7           proud to be in Cook County. I am certainly not  
8           going to go back to the days where I come from,  
9           where I heard nothing about pensions. I am looking  
10          forward to the day of enjoying my pension because I  
11          put in my time.

12                   I just want to say I am one hundred  
13          percent in support of the penny.

14                   Thank you very much.

15                   SECRETARY TURNER: Pastor Marvin Hunter --  
16          Pastor Steve Nelson --

17                   MR. NELSON: Madam President, Board Chair  
18          of the Board, and all of the people of Cook County,  
19          and to my Commissioner, Robert Steele. Of course I  
20          am going to give him a shout-out because he is my  
21          friend.

22                   I am here in the capacity of the  
23          President of the Lawndale Black Chamber of Commerce,  
24          along with one of my executive board members, Mr.

1 Willie Porter, which is a business owner in our  
2 community.

3 I support this tax because I realize  
4 that there has been a real effort to make sure that  
5 this County does the right thing by the constituents  
6 of the County of Cook. The President has made a lot  
7 of things happen that I think are positive for the  
8 constituents of Cook. Such as she has made economic  
9 development a priority for this County Board,  
10 creating the Bureau of Economic Development,  
11 assembling a council of economic advisors, meeting  
12 with business leaders, and speaking with the local  
13 chambers of commerce, such as the Lawndale Black  
14 Chamber as it pertains to the physical wellbeing of  
15 Cook County.

16 I think that is a great thing. It is  
17 important for the business community to be able to  
18 depend on a stable government.

19 We know how important this is for the  
20 long-term fiscal health and stability of Cook  
21 County. So I urge every Board member to vote in  
22 favor of passing this particular bill for the people  
23 of Cook County.

24 Thank you.

1                   SECRETARY TURNER:  Pastor Steve Nelson.

2                   MR. NELSON:  I am Pastor Steve Nelson.  I  
3 sit here listening -- we are not going to try to  
4 give you back all of the statistics.  I think we  
5 have been statisticked-out.  But I will say that as  
6 a citizen of this great State and this County --  
7 born in Cook County Hospital sixty-six years ago  
8 also, and I thank God for that.

9                   But I want to say, listening and  
10 observing -- one of my high school teachers at  
11 Cregier said, "If you are going to be of help, you  
12 must first learn how to listen."  I discovered from  
13 that -- he said that irresponsible listening becomes  
14 a child of inadequate preparation.

15                  As I sit here and watch the elected  
16 officials, I am almost offended.  Because some of  
17 you act like you are lording over us because you are  
18 not listening to the people that took the time to  
19 come out and to share.

20                  Pensions are important.  I worked for  
21 the CTA for over twenty years.  When I retired, I  
22 felt the pain of all of those years that those that  
23 lorded over us from the seventies to the nineties,  
24 when they allowed the pensions to not have to be

1 contributed to. We feel that when you leave there.  
2 They never made that up. The State forgave them.

3 But let me stop because I feel the  
4 preaching mode coming up. I am going to simply say  
5 this: When David got ready to make his transition in  
6 death, he turned to his son, Solomon, and he told  
7 him that he that ruled over people must be just.

8 Those of you that are over us in these  
9 positions need to understand and remember that you  
10 were not always here. You also need to remember  
11 that the decisions that you make are not for special  
12 interests, but it is for the people of this County  
13 that has put their trust in you by giving you their  
14 vote; that you are going to look out for them and  
15 not those -- no harm meant, but most of those in  
16 here cannot go and pay \$500 at a store at one time.  
17 Five hundred dollars ain't even some of our rent,  
18 let alone going shopping.

19 So, remember those of us who gave you  
20 our voice. I support the tax increase.

21 SECRETARY TURNER: Bishop Charles Mickens,  
22 Pastor William Jenkins, Bishop Stevenson, Samuel  
23 Hinkle -- we are waiting for Bishop Charles Mickens  
24 to come to the mike or Pastor Leon Finney.

1 MR. CROWN: My name is Victor Crown.

2 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Victor, did you sign up?

3 We gave leave --

4 MR. CROWN: I followed the rules.

5 CHAIRMAN DALEY: We do have a list of  
6 public speakers.

7 MR. CROWN: I followed the rules.

8 CHAIRMAN DALEY: We do have a list of  
9 public speakers.

10 MR. CROWN: I am for civil rights.

11 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Prior to you coming in, we  
12 gave leave for everyone who was not on the initial  
13 list --

14 MR. CROWN: Pardon me?

15 CHAIRMAN DALEY: There are a number of  
16 people ahead of you, yes.

17 MR. CROWN: I'm sorry, but I followed the  
18 rules. The civil rights, voting rights rules and  
19 against rigging.

20 SECRETARY TURNER: Pastor Leon Finney.

21 MR. FINNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and  
22 President Preckwinkle. To so many of my friends  
23 that I have served with down through the last thirty  
24 or forty years that are members of this great

1 legislative body. Of course, I don't want to call  
2 each one of your names individually; I might miss  
3 somebody.

4 I am here representing the  
5 Metropolitan Apostolic Community Church located in  
6 the historic Bronzeville community, which represents  
7 about over 100,000 residents and voters, seventy-  
8 five percent of whom supported President Preckwinkle  
9 in the last election. I am here also representing  
10 the Woodlawn Community Rental Corporation, where we  
11 manage 6500 rental apartments across the south side  
12 of the City of Chicago and thereby 18,000 residents  
13 live in properties that we manage. I am here to  
14 speak on their behalf.

15 We are in support of the sales tax  
16 increase for all of the reasons set forth by  
17 President Preckwinkle in her opening statement. I  
18 believe the yield that will be derived by virtue of  
19 the tax will benefit our most vulnerable citizens,  
20 our retirees. That is very, very important to us  
21 because this is a longstanding problem that must be  
22 resolved, and this is a great opportunity to resolve  
23 it.

24 While at the same time this particular

1 enactment will not penalize those who have to go to  
2 the grocery store and shop for groceries. It will  
3 not apply to those who have to buy drugs and medical  
4 devices. It will not tax the not-for-profit  
5 charities and the arts groups, etcetera. It will  
6 exclude them. So it will rest entirely on those  
7 elements in our society that do not need further  
8 protection.

9 I believe at this particular point it  
10 is time for us to make a decision on behalf of the  
11 5.3 million people who reside in the County of Cook.  
12 This one percent tax I believe will benefit  
13 materially those residents. Thereby I urge you to  
14 vote "yes" for the benefit of the five and a half  
15 million residents. Vote "yes" for our retirees, and  
16 vote "yes" for the future and stable government of  
17 Cook County.

18 Thank you very much.

19 SECRETARY TURNER: Reverend Jeanette  
20 Wilson. Deno Andrews. Laurence Msall. Don Finn --

21 CHAIRMAN DALEY: He already spoke.

22 SECRETARY TURNER: Laurence Msall.

23 MR. MSALL: Thank you, President  
24 Preckwinkle, Chairman Daley, and members of the



1 Finance Committee, and members of the County Board.

2 I am Laurence Msall, the President of  
3 the Civic Federation, a 120-year-old nonpartisan  
4 government research organization. Our membership  
5 includes the major corporations, institutions, and  
6 service firms of Greater Metropolitan Chicago.

7 The Civic Federation has applauded  
8 many of these accomplishments of this Administration  
9 and this Body in what you have done to modernize  
10 Cook County. The success of the County Hospital's  
11 care system, in bringing down the number of  
12 uninsured and underinsured truly has had a positive  
13 impact.

14 Much of the efficiencies of President  
15 Preckwinkle that President Preckwinkle has  
16 championed and continues to champion, the Civic  
17 Federation continues to applaud.

18 We cannot support a one percent  
19 increase in the sales tax that is not tied to an  
20 actual budget proposal. We can't support a one  
21 percent income tax increase that will give the City  
22 of Chicago combined, when it is fully applied, the  
23 highest sales tax of any major metropolitan area in  
24 the United States.

1                   We have seen what happens when we  
2                   increase the sales tax that is not tied to an actual  
3                   spending plan in terms of where the money would go.  
4                   President Preckwinkle received and will continue to  
5                   receive great platitudes for her willingness to roll  
6                   back the previous one percent sales tax in Cook  
7                   County. That money did not go where it was  
8                   purported to go in terms of supporting the  
9                   healthcare and the Health System.

10                   We saw that money go for retroactive  
11                   pay raises. We saw that go for increased spending.  
12                   We cannot support the sales tax increase.

13                   The County is going to need more  
14                   money, right? The Civic Federation has supported  
15                   the County's proposal for pension reform. But I  
16                   think it is important to point out that the pension  
17                   underfunding has been identified by the Civic  
18                   Federation and by other groups for decades. It was  
19                   less than two years ago that we finally had a  
20                   proposal that came from this Body that went to  
21                   Springfield.

22                   All of us are frustrated by what is  
23                   going on in Springfield. All of us are impacted by  
24                   the State's inability to balance its budget and to

1 come up with a reasonable spending plan for its own  
2 fiscal year. But that does not justify and does not  
3 mandate that you move forward on a sales tax  
4 increase that will keep other governments from  
5 addressing their financial needs.

6 I have heard today sitting here that  
7 people are supporting increased public transit.  
8 What money is going to be left for the CTA or the  
9 RTA if we take the entire one percent sales tax for  
10 Cook County?

11 There needs to be a balancing of the  
12 interests. There needs to be recognition that other  
13 governments -- the City of Chicago, the Chicago  
14 Public Schools, the Chicago Park District -- are in  
15 a financial crisis even greater than the County's.

16 We do not see how passing this sales  
17 tax increase now will even guarantee that the money  
18 goes into the pensions since there are real legal  
19 questions as to whether you can put money into the  
20 pensions except, under State law, from the property  
21 tax levy.

22 For all of these reasons, the Civic  
23 Federation urges you to take the time, put your  
24 budget together for the fiscal year 2016, and when

1 it comes time to consider additional revenues you do  
2 it within that structure on an actual budget so that  
3 we can see that everything has been done that is  
4 possible to avoid the tax increase rather than being  
5 told.

6 SECRETARY TURNER: Our next speaker is  
7 Scott Price, followed by Tanya Triche, followed by  
8 Bernard Garvey, followed by Victor Crown, and  
9 followed by Betty Boles.

10 MR. PRICE: Good morning. My name is Scott  
11 Price. I am President of Toms Price Furniture. We  
12 are a 108-year-old family-owned business here in the  
13 Chicagoland area. We have five locations. Two of  
14 them are here in Cook County, one in Skokie and one  
15 in South Barrington. We have two locations in  
16 DuPage County and one in Lake County.

17 I am coming forth today to speak  
18 against the proposed sales tax increase. I want to  
19 tell you a little bit about my story. I feel like  
20 we have been down this road before, because we have.

21 It is not often, when we talk about  
22 proposed legislation, that we can talk about a  
23 certainty of outcome. But I feel like in this case  
24 there is a certainty of outcome. When the sales tax

1 went up to ten percent the last time around, our  
2 store in Skokie saw a forty percent decrease in top  
3 line revenue. Our store in Lincolnshire, Illinois,  
4 which is in Lake County, saw a twenty-five percent  
5 increase in top line revenue. The shift was clearly  
6 from consumers who were driving from Cook County to  
7 Lake County in order to avoid the higher sales tax  
8 rate. The differential at that time was three  
9 percent. Today it would be 2.75% under this  
10 proposed sales tax increase.

11 I was very concerned about that  
12 because, of course, I had to lay staff off at our  
13 Skokie store, but I actually had to hire people in  
14 Lake County and the collar counties. But that  
15 impacted us. We are a family business. These are  
16 like members of our family and it was a horrible  
17 thing for me to do.

18 In the midst of an economic recession,  
19 of course, this higher tax went into effect. I  
20 called Larry Suffredin, our Commissioner, and told  
21 him my story. He encouraged me to share that. We  
22 actually had the opportunity to speak with President  
23 Preckwinkle. She came to our store. I want to say  
24 to her, "Thank you very much for living up to your

1 campaign promise to roll back the sales tax." It  
2 had an enormous impact on our business and I am sure  
3 on countless other businesses, on consumers, and on  
4 the employees of retail business.

5 Our top line revenue has recovered to  
6 a prerecession level; that is in our Cook County  
7 stores. I don't want to see these fantastic gains  
8 that have happened in the last several years get  
9 rolled back because it means jobs, it means a real  
10 impact on families, their lives, and, of course, a  
11 significant impact on the consumer.

12 I understand that there is a very  
13 significant pension crisis in the State of Illinois  
14 and certainly in Cook County, and I applaud the  
15 President on her running of the County at this time.

16 I would strongly encourage you today  
17 to vote "no", to first come back to your  
18 constituents with efficiencies, with continued cuts,  
19 and then once all of those things have been done,  
20 and with what President Preckwinkle outlined this  
21 morning, the \$100 million that [REDACTED]  
22 [just buzzing; bad tape] then to come in  
23 with revenue, but not to lead with it.

24 Thank you very much.

1                   SECRETARY TURNER:   Deno Andrews.

2                   MR. ANDREWS:   Madam President and  
3   Commissioners, my name is Deno Andrews.  I am the  
4   President of Felony Franks, which is a restaurant  
5   and a company that exclusively hires ex-felons and  
6   people who have been incarcerated.  We are in the  
7   process of expanding our business.  Our first store  
8   is in Oak Park, which is here right in the heart of  
9   Cook County.

10                   Any increase, in my opinion, to our  
11   already embarrassingly high sales tax rate is going  
12   to hurt small businesses, which is the staple of our  
13   economy.  It is going to disproportionately affect  
14   underserved areas and constituents who live in those  
15   areas, and it is going to stifle economic growth.

16                   As a business owner who regularly  
17   works his own cash register, I have a front row seat  
18   as to the effect of sales tax and how it hits our  
19   customers.  Now one-third of my customers, because  
20   we are in Oak Park, live in an area where the median  
21   income is \$145,000.  A one percent sales tax  
22   increase isn't going to have any effect on those  
23   people.  But because we straddle areas like Austin  
24   and the Belmont/Cragin areas, two-thirds of our

1 customers live in areas where the median income is  
2 less than \$45,000. And it is shrinking because  
3 there is no economic growth there.

4 Our customers literally -- this is no  
5 exaggeration -- count pennies at our register to  
6 stay within their means and to order the food and  
7 have the meals with their families, like one-third  
8 of our customers who have absolutely no problem  
9 doing.

10 I regularly get complaints from our  
11 customers about how much the sales tax is. Taxes  
12 not only affect my business, but they affect other  
13 businesses, and they affect the County. When people  
14 have less money to spend, they are going to spend  
15 less money. People are going to travel out of the  
16 County -- it is a very short drive to other counties  
17 -- where they can buy very expensive goods, such as  
18 electronics and appliances.

19 Our retail base, even in Oak Park  
20 where we have a thriving community, our retail base  
21 is shrinking to service-based companies, which as  
22 you all know don't really have a lot of sales tax.

23 The County's problems have not been  
24 caused by its citizens. Why should us citizens and



1 small businesses be further burdened with this  
2 County's historic inability to live up to its  
3 fiduciary responsibilities?

4 Our solutions, or, I should say, my  
5 opinion on the solutions would be better financial  
6 planning and spending by the County, efficiencies in  
7 government, and a thriving and growing business  
8 community which requires less taxes, not more taxes.

9 I believe this increase is being  
10 penny-wise and pound-foolish. I am only one of  
11 thousands of small entrepreneurs that are trying to  
12 grow out companies. Despite the fact that I am  
13 willing to stand up and speak for us, there are  
14 thousands more just like me who aren't going to say  
15 anything. They are just going to do business  
16 elsewhere.

17 Thank you for your time this morning.

18 SECRETARY TURNER: Our next speaker is  
19 Tanya Triche.

20 MS. TRICHE: Good morning. My name is  
21 Tanya Triche. I am counsel with the Illinois Retail  
22 Merchants Association. Thank you for having me  
23 today.

24 At a time when Cook County residents

1 are stretched thin, economic recovery in parts of  
2 this County are tepid at best. It is a great  
3 concern to retailers and restaurant owners that this  
4 Body is considering an increase in the sales tax by  
5 one percent. Not only would this measure give  
6 Chicago the very dubious distinction of having the  
7 highest sales tax in the nation, at ten and a  
8 quarter -- don't forget that eleven and a quarter if  
9 you are in the McPier District, which many retailers  
10 and restaurants are in. But it is another strain on  
11 businesses who are close to this County's borders.

12 Shoppers have proven time and again  
13 that they have no problem crossing the county line  
14 to shop, if they think they are going to get a good  
15 deal. If the reality is that taxes are high in Cook  
16 County, they will make it a point to look elsewhere  
17 to make their purchases. Encouraging residents to  
18 develop bad habits is not only a problem for this  
19 budget, but it will continue to be a problem for the  
20 County in the years to come.

21 It is no secret that those folks who  
22 live near Indiana are shopping there and they are  
23 filling their cars with gas. And DuPage, Lake, and  
24 Will have all benefited from the lower sales taxes

1 that they have.

2 Our main concern is for the businesses  
3 that have invested on this side of the border who  
4 are paying taxes and employing people. When  
5 something like the sales tax increases, it shines a  
6 light on those businesses as places to avoid. With  
7 tight family budgets, the penny on the dollar adds  
8 up very quickly. People start making choices.

9 I am here today to contend that those  
10 choices are not going to be good for the County in  
11 the future. We are not just assuming that people  
12 just leave the County to shop. We actually took the  
13 question right to the people that you represent. We  
14 first asked them if they were in support of  
15 increasing the sales tax to help pay for pensions.  
16 Seventy-five percent of those respondents said "no".

17 We then asked them if they were more  
18 likely, if the sales tax increase would make them  
19 more likely to shop outside of the County; sixty-  
20 eight percent said "yes". We then asked them would  
21 it make them more likely to shop online. Forty-five  
22 percent said "yes".

23 I should emphasize that point. As the  
24 online sales continue to increase year after year,

1 we should be cognizant that until there is true  
2 sales tax reform on Main Street at the Federal  
3 level, the County will continue to lose its portion  
4 of the sales tax as shoppers avoid the tax  
5 completely by shopping with online only sellers.

6 I joined some of my colleagues in the  
7 development community earlier this year to attend  
8 meetings with mayors and representatives in cities  
9 and villages in southern Cook County. They were  
10 trying to figure out how to attract more development  
11 in that part of the County, which is struggling to  
12 attract business. While we intended to give them  
13 some good advice, those tools don't mean anything if  
14 you adopt policies that send customers across the  
15 county line.

16 If I am the developer, I will go where  
17 shoppers are more likely to go because I know that I  
18 will be able to attract tenants who are confident  
19 that they will make money. Businesses don't operate  
20 in a vacuum.

21 In the last year alone, they are  
22 dealing with the financial effects of the ACA.  
23 Property tax assessments in Cook County have reached  
24 near thirty percent increases. Businesses in the

1 City of Chicago are dealing with the effects of the  
2 increased minimum wage and a plastic bag ban, of all  
3 things, that has tripled supply costs for grocers.

4 Both of those initiatives have made  
5 doing business in the City of Chicago and Cook  
6 County very uncertain. Chicago is also rumored to  
7 be considering increases in the property tax, which  
8 the business community pays disproportionately more  
9 of, and now our customers will be asked to pay more  
10 when they come into our businesses because of the  
11 sales tax increase.

12 I will leave you with this: You have a  
13 month and a half before you need to tell the State  
14 that you might raise the sales tax. There is no  
15 policy reason why this vote has to happen today.  
16 While we are fully aware there isn't a lot of hope  
17 for what may come out in Springfield today, a lot  
18 can happen in forty-five days. We encourage you to  
19 take full advantage of this time and talk to your  
20 consumers, talk to your residents, talk to your  
21 businesses.

22 We respectfully ask that you vote  
23 "no".

24 Thank you.

1           SECRETARY TURNER: Bernard Garvey, followed  
2 by Victor Crown, followed by Betty Boles.

3           MR. GARVEY: Good morning. My name is  
4 Bernard Garvey. I am the President of Garvey Office  
5 Products. We are the largest distributor of office  
6 products in Cook County. We employ eighty-eight  
7 individuals and over ninety percent of our employees  
8 live in the County. We compete for B-to-B (??)  
9 office product sales with many brand name  
10 organizations, such as Staples, Office Depot, Will  
11 (??), Amazon, and Shop Will.

12           Our company competes very well with  
13 these organizations when customers consider price,  
14 service levels, speed of service, quality of  
15 products, and programs. Unfortunately, there is one  
16 area where my competitors have me beat. That is  
17 sales tax.

18           You see, each of the companies that I  
19 mentioned have strategically located their  
20 distribution centers outside of the grasp of the  
21 Cook County tax collectors. When a Cook County  
22 business purchases from one of these companies, not  
23 one cent of Cook County sales tax is collected. We  
24 are told that Staples and Office Depot lead their

1 sales presentations with this fact. They reinforce  
2 the concept when quoting on large purchases for  
3 furniture installations.

4 We also compete for business in Lake,  
5 DuPage, McHenry, and Will Counties. These counties  
6 charge a sales tax rate that varies from zero to  
7 three-quarters of a percent. Raising Cook County's  
8 sales tax from three-quarters of a percent to one  
9 and three-quarters of a percent will be bad for  
10 business, and will likely end up reducing tax  
11 receipts from us as well as other distributors.

12 Where business is looking to cut costs  
13 in all areas, the temptation to avoid sales tax is  
14 very real -- why not? It is easy. Just change  
15 vendors.

16 When Staples ships from Wisconsin they  
17 charge the state tax rate. Office Depot ships from  
18 DuPage County, where the county rate is a quarter  
19 percent. Will (??) ships from Wisconsin and they  
20 charge no sales tax. Amazon ships from Wisconsin;  
21 they charge the state rate.

22 Shop \_\_\_\_\_ (??) is an online out-of-  
23 state retailer, and they charge no sales tax. Any  
24 distributor would have to consider moving to remain

1 competitive while taking their jobs with them.

2 I encourage you to consider other  
3 means to make ends meet. People in businesses have  
4 choices where they source their merchandise. Just  
5 like we have to compete on price, Cook County does,  
6 too. You can't be two to seven times higher or more  
7 expensive than the next guy and expect to stay in  
8 business.

9 SECRETARY TURNER: Victor Crown.

10 MR. CROWN: This is a procedural thing. Is  
11 Laner Muchin the legal counsel advising the Board in  
12 this? Laner Muchin, the law firm.

13 CHAIRMAN DALEY: We are proceeding with  
14 this public hearing. This is a public hearing and  
15 it is information on the proposed resolution.

16 MR. CROWN: I am speaking on the sales tax.  
17 Are they advising the County? Is it true?

18 CHAIRMAN DALEY: I do not answer questions.  
19 You know, Victor, we abide by the rules. We don't  
20 answer questions during a public hearing.

21 MR. CROWN: I am asking the Republican  
22 Party then to vote against this until we get answers  
23 regarding the billing on Laner Muchin. I am filing  
24 a lien against them in the Federal Court. I am



1 going to seek to bar them from being paid in  
2 representing the County on this matter.

3 As this Board knows, I have a Federal  
4 writ of mandamus that was ordered by Judge Zagel.  
5 You folks are not complying with the rules. If you  
6 don't comply with the rules, you are going to get  
7 into trouble.

8 I am working with Governor Rauner's  
9 office on producing a statement on voting rights and  
10 civil rights. We know that the Republican Party is  
11 going to be aggressively in favor of Hispanic voting  
12 rights and against **Evan Low versus Abbott**. The  
13 Republican Party, which is against rigging, is going  
14 to support the Obama Administration --

15 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Mr. Crown, as you know,  
16 the items before us are three items.

17 MR. CROWN: I am getting to that.

18 CHAIRMAN DALEY: So if you would address  
19 the three issues that are before the Board.

20 MR. CROWN: The issues before the Board is  
21 more taxes, higher taxes, and more spending, and  
22 higher sales taxes, which is detrimental to economic  
23 growth. Higher taxes runs, and it is inconsistent  
24 with the Republic Party general platform, which goes

1 back to Reagan.

2 Government isn't taxing too little.  
3 You are spending too much. How are you going to do  
4 this without having a detailed financial audit  
5 consistent with what Judge Zagel is asking us for?  
6 You have to have a detailed financial audit of the  
7 law firm's billing records, of Laner Muchin, which  
8 is the firm advising you on this, and on this the  
9 State's Attorney, we are in agreement on this. We  
10 should have financial audits and that should include  
11 the Citibank, the banks that are the depositories,  
12 before you raise taxes.

13 SECRETARY TURNER: That concludes your  
14 public speakers for the Finance Committee.

15 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Is there anyone here who  
16 has signed up and not been called to testify?

17 SECRETARY TURNER: I am so sorry. Betty  
18 Boles.

19 CHAIRMAN DALEY: We will come back to the  
20 individuals who were called -- your name, sir?

21 MR. KYLE: William Kyle.

22 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Leave was granted. We  
23 don't have you, but leave was granted, so you will  
24 be the next speaker.

1 MS. BOLES: Good morning, President  
2 Preckwinkle. Commissioners, good morning.

3 My name is Betty Boles. I serve as  
4 the Vice President of SEIU Local 73.

5 I stand here today solidly in support  
6 of President Preckwinkle's sales tax proposal. You  
7 have heard me say before that after more than two  
8 years of trying to work with the State Legislature  
9 to try to get our County pensions well funded, and  
10 being rejected, she is taking this to the next  
11 logical step.

12 President Preckwinkle needs to pass  
13 the sales tax increase in order to stop the deficit  
14 which is growing on a daily basis.

15 Her plan is to improve and repair the  
16 deteriorating infrastructure in Cook County. She is  
17 promising to immediately include another \$10 million  
18 of additional funding in 2016, and \$64.5 million in  
19 2017. In the future, all of the funds from the  
20 motor fuel tax will be expended on improving the  
21 infrastructure and roads in the future.

22 Your responsibility as Commissioners  
23 is to bite a tough bullet so that we do not dig  
24 ourselves into a deeper hole. Although the original

1 promise was to cut the sales tax, this cannot be  
2 done if we do not have fiscal responsibility. We  
3 will continue to vote to go in the hole for millions  
4 if we don't fix our own house in Cook County today.

5 Sometimes doing the right thing is  
6 unpopular. Today it means making the unpopular  
7 choice to make sure that millions of County  
8 residents have the best possible care, roads, and  
9 services. President Preckwinkle and this Board have  
10 done a terrific job at balancing the County's budget  
11 in the worst financial times we have seen. No other  
12 government body in this State has done as well in  
13 the last few years.

14 Unfortunately, even with the best of  
15 intentions and some cuts, it is not enough. Revenue  
16 is needed now more than ever.

17 Change is also needed to our pension  
18 system. Our union has worked side by side with  
19 President Preckwinkle and this Board on their  
20 pension reform for all Cook County employees. This  
21 reform must be passed in Springfield in order to  
22 save the County's pension system.

23 We simply can no longer kick the can  
24 down to future generations. The County's pension

1 system is currently underfunded by approximately \$6  
2 billion and growing, while Governor Rauner continues  
3 to hold legislators and working families hostage  
4 over a budget. Springfield needs to take action and  
5 vote on County pension reform before it is too late.

6 A penny will go a long way. This one  
7 penny will generate millions of dollars to help the  
8 County have the best services possible. Without  
9 this penny, County residents would suffer. Wait  
10 times in the County Hospital would skyrocket.  
11 Hospital services would be cut to the bone. Roads  
12 and bridges would be left uncared for. Our veterans  
13 may not receive the treatment and services they need  
14 and deserve.

15 And voting for this penny is the best  
16 result for Cook County before it is too late.  
17 Please vote "yes" for Cook County's future.

18 Additionally, I would ask that you  
19 keep in mind that the employees of the Cook County  
20 system are taxpayers, County taxpayers as well.  
21 That is something over and above that you should  
22 consider and we strongly urge you to vote in favor  
23 of this.

24 Thank you.

1 SECRETARY TURNER: Mr. William Kyle.

2 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Is there anyone else? Has  
3 everyone spoken who has signed up?

4 Sir, you are next. If you can come to  
5 the microphone, please.

6 SECRETARY TURNER: Please state your name  
7 when you come to the mike.

8 MR. KYLE: Good morning, everyone. William  
9 Kyle, K-Y-L-E.

10 Good morning, everyone. My name is  
11 William Kyle. I am here as a citizen. I don't  
12 represent anyone. I am very, very disturbed about  
13 this tax increase.

14 I live in a neighborhood where tax  
15 increases are shuttering us. We have got vacant  
16 lots. We have got boarded-up buildings. We have  
17 got many young people that stand on the corner with  
18 nothing to do. We are losing population. People  
19 are moving away from Cook County because the cost of  
20 living is getting out of control.

21 I see that people here all have  
22 something to gain, coming up here and telling you to  
23 vote "yes" on this tax increase. They have knives  
24 to sharpen. They have things that they want to get

1 over on you. They represent a lot of members and  
2 their unions and other things like that.

3 Well, we have got a lot of people here  
4 that don't belong to those particular entities. We  
5 want to be recognized, too. We don't want to see  
6 our County go down and people do their shopping in  
7 counties where they don't have this tax. You are  
8 telling car dealers don't come to Cook County. Who  
9 would pay the taxes on a brand-new car in Cook  
10 County when they can go some other place and not  
11 have to pay that kind of tax?

12 Who would buy a refrigerator or a  
13 stove in Cook County when they can go to another  
14 county and not pay that kind of taxes?

15 We should really be one of the  
16 cheapest counties around. We don't have a money  
17 problem. We have a spending problem. That is where  
18 our money is going. We are spending money that we  
19 do not have, and that wave should be stopped  
20 immediately. That government of the people, by the  
21 people, and for the people should continue to exist.

22 Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Thank you.

24 Our next speaker.

1 MR. HANIG: Good morning. I am Peter  
2 Hanig. My son, Daniel, and I own Hanig's Footwear,  
3 which is a seventy-year-old retail shoe business  
4 started by my father.

5 We currently have three stores in Cook  
6 County, and we both live in Cook County, along with  
7 most of our employees.

8 The reason I oppose the sales tax  
9 increase is that it creates an additional incentive  
10 for residents not to shop in Cook County. Today,  
11 our competition is not the shoe store around the  
12 corner. Our competitors are out-of-state Internet  
13 and catalog businesses that sell to Illinois  
14 residents without collecting Illinois sales taxes.

15 Even if our shoes are priced the same  
16 as our competitors, the County resident  
17 automatically gets a nine percent discount by buying  
18 from outside of Illinois. Any increase in the sales  
19 tax will create more incentive for them to buy out-  
20 of-state.

21 We estimate that during the past  
22 seventy years our business has recirculated \$50  
23 million back into the Cook County economy, through  
24 employee salaries and local purchases. Internet



1 businesses that have no presence in Illinois do not  
2 create any benefit for our local economy. They  
3 simply take money out.

4 The other reason I opposed the sales  
5 tax increase is that it makes taxes in Cook County  
6 more regressive. It will create an additional  
7 burden on our residents who are struggling to enter  
8 or stay in the middle class. In addition to  
9 increasing income inequality among our residents,  
10 this sales tax increase will lead to reduced  
11 economic activity in the County. If our residents  
12 have less money to spend, economic activity will be  
13 reduced leading to a further loss of jobs.

14 I urge you not to take this action  
15 that will force more businesses to close in Cook  
16 County.

17 Thank you.

18 SECRETARY TURNER: Please state your name.

19 MR. CAMPBELL: My name is The Reverend  
20 Findley C. Campbell. I am the Program Coordinator  
21 of the Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship  
22 Chicago Chapter.

23 I must point out that my remarks  
24 reflect my thoughts and only those members that

1 support them.

2 We always are faced with the great  
3 question of what to do with people on pensions. We  
4 must remind ourselves that when we fought for  
5 pensions and Social Security, we made a promissory  
6 note to ordinary people that they would not have to  
7 spend the rest of their lives in poverty, in old  
8 folks' homes, in the kinds of things I used to see  
9 in South Carolina back in the thirties.

10 Pensions are the fundamental promise  
11 that we gave. It is not like we are throwing money  
12 away to build a new building, pay higher salaries,  
13 or to pay for some fancy artwork on the lake. Cook  
14 County is the center of the largest workforce of  
15 workers who staff our hospitals.

16 We had an emergency here a few minutes  
17 ago. Where do you think those guys and gals come  
18 from? They have contributed money to this pension  
19 fund, and it is only because of the dual -- I won't  
20 use that word "treachery", but certainly the dual  
21 lack of compassion on the part of our larger  
22 government, the State government on the one hand,  
23 the Federal Government on the other, that have no  
24 qualms in sending billions of dollars to places like

1 Kiev or Tel Aviv or some other place that have no  
2 urban program or urban-centered counties that will  
3 allow them not to be constantly fighting over a  
4 penny; being penny-wise and pound-foolish.

5 Our workforce deserves the best we  
6 can. We have struggled to get the Madigan crowd and  
7 the Rauner crowd to deal with this pension question.  
8 Of course, they stole that money for many and sundry  
9 reasons, but the point remains that it is now left  
10 to us. We are sort of like the Greek situation.  
11 The decision is cut back no more -- no, we cannot  
12 cut back from our services.

13 Raise the penny. It is an evil, but  
14 some evils are necessary until such time as we say  
15 in my faith, either Jesus comes back or there is a  
16 revolutionary change of how the economics of this  
17 country is run. But right now it is a penny. We  
18 need that penny -- again, not to put us on a rich  
19 person's path to one percent, but for the ninety-  
20 nine percent of those folks that work as union  
21 members and nonunion members, by the way, who earn  
22 and work in our County Government.

23 I say, "Support this proposal."

24 SECRETARY TURNER: The Reverend Marrice

1 Coverson and Emily Jons.

2 MS. COVERSON: Good morning to the  
3 President and everyone here. Thank you.

4 I have with me, standing with me,  
5 Emily Jons and Jolie Hahn. We are here in support  
6 of the tax, the one percent tax. Some may argue  
7 here today that this is a regressive tax. But we  
8 say it is not a regressive tax because it allows the  
9 County to be a partner, a stable partner.

10 In particular, it allows us to be able  
11 to continue all of the services. It allows us to be  
12 able to continue the services at our hospitals, to  
13 be able to give quality services.

14 I know some of you can remember when  
15 County Hospital was not able to do that. When they  
16 had to lay off employees. When we wasn't able to  
17 give those patients the quality of services that we  
18 needed to give. Some of you remember that. This  
19 tax will allow us to continue to provide those  
20 services.

21 Yes, it is a hard decision, but in  
22 life we all have to make hard decisions. We talk to  
23 our children and our families about decision-making.  
24 You look at the alternatives; yes. You look at the

1 pros and cons; yes. What are the cons of making  
2 this decision today? Is this an unstable County  
3 Government that we are looking at? Yes. Are we  
4 looking for Springfield to help us out and they are  
5 not there? Yes.

6 They are not there. What are we to  
7 do? What are you to do? Search your souls. What  
8 are you to do today? This is your decision. Do you  
9 want a stable government? Do you want a stable  
10 county? What do you want to do?

11 I am asking you. We are asking you to  
12 vote to make a decision. It may not be popular with  
13 some. Some may say that you sold out, but that is  
14 okay. Search your hearts. You know what you are  
15 doing is right for the County.

16 This tax will assist the County in  
17 addressing a long-term stability. We need a stable  
18 government.

19 In closing, I want to thank all of you  
20 for bringing this to making sure that you cut the  
21 fat out of government. You have wanted that. You  
22 have also streamlined government. You have done  
23 that. So I ask you to do this. We ask you.

24 Thank you.

1                   SECRETARY TURNER: Will you please state  
2 your name for the record again?

3                   MS. COVERSON: I am Reverend Marrice  
4 Coverson.

5                   CHAIRMAN DALEY: Thank you, Reverend.

6                                 Are there any other speakers?

7                                 That concludes the public speakers we  
8 have for today.

9                                 I would like to enter into the record  
10 a letter from the Chicago Federation of Labor, from  
11 Jorge Ramirez, the President, in support of the  
12 sales tax, as well as the report that we received  
13 from the Chief Financial Officer during our  
14 briefings.

15  
16                                 (Whereupon said documents are  
17 in words and figures as follows:)

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INSERT #3

Letter dated 14 July 2015  
from Jorge Ramirez, President  
Chicago Federation of Labor  
to The Honorable Toni Preckwinkle  
President, Cook County Board of Commissioners  
in support of the sales tax

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INSERT #4  
REPORT RECEIVED BY COMMISSIONERS  
FROM THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER  
DURING BRIEFINGS



1                                   \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

2

3                   CHAIRMAN DALEY:  Vice-Chair Sims.

4                   COMMISSIONER SIMS:  I move approval,  
5 Chairman Daley.

6                   COMMISSIONER GARCIA:  I second it.

7                   CHAIRMAN DALEY:  It has been moved by Vice-  
8 Chair and seconded by Commissioner Garcia to approve  
9 item number 15-4291.

10                                   Commissioner Boykin.

11                   COMMISSIONER BOYKIN:  Mr. Chairman, I have  
12 an amendment, amendment number one.

13                   CHAIRMAN DALEY:  This is an amendment to  
14 item number 15-4291.

15                                   Is there a second?

16                   COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN:  I second it.

17                   CHAIRMAN DALEY:  It is seconded by  
18 Commissioner Suffredin.

19                                   On the amendment, Commissioner  
20 Suffredin.

21                   COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN:  Mr. Chairman, I  
22 thought that you were going to request the  
23 Administration to explain what this is and the other  
24 two proposals before we got into it.

1           CHAIRMAN DALEY: I thought the President  
2 outlined it, but if that is the wish of the Body, I  
3 could have Mr. Samstein.

4           COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: I thought that  
5 Ivan Samstein was going to explain it.

6           CHAIRMAN DALEY: He is available, but I  
7 thought that he met with every Commissioner and has  
8 outlined it.

9           Ivan, if you want to outline what was  
10 presented to the Board again.

11          MR. SAMSTEIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
12 Ivan Samstein, Chief Financial Officer.

13          COMMISSIONER SIMS: A point of order.

14          CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Sims on a  
15 point of order.

16          COMMISSIONER SIMS: There was a motion on  
17 the floor.

18          CHAIRMAN DALEY: You are right. You made  
19 it and it was seconded by Commissioner Garcia.  
20 Commissioner Boykin then made an amendment that was  
21 seconded by Commissioner Suffredin.

22          COMMISSIONER SIMS: Do you want to go back?

23          CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Boykin, do  
24 you want to hold this amendment?

1 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Mr. Chairman, yes.

2 MR. SAMSTEIN: I am Ivan Samstein, the  
3 Chief Financial Officer.

4 I think the President this morning  
5 summarized the proposal fairly comprehensively.  
6 What I would just add -- as the Commissioners know,  
7 we started the budget process earlier than most this  
8 year. As it relates to our interactions with the  
9 Commissioners, we started with the memo back in  
10 April requesting expenditure reduction ideas from  
11 all members of the Board. We appreciate those that  
12 responded.

13 It continued as we continued to work  
14 on advancing the pension reform with the State  
15 Legislature. Then we regrouped, Commissioners, as  
16 you all know, in June to discuss the severity of the  
17 financial challenges before us.

18 We discussed explicitly both revenue  
19 and expenditure items. You may recall the memo that  
20 we provided that actually walked through all of the  
21 various and sundry revenue items that the President  
22 had an opportunity to discuss with the  
23 Commissioners.

24 Based on the outcome of those

1 conversations and the financial analysis associated  
2 with the preliminary forecast, that would be what  
3 the Chairman alluded to with introducing it into the  
4 record. You all are familiar with the preliminary  
5 forecast that speaks to both the operating deficit,  
6 but also the challenges associated with  
7 infrastructure funding and the pension fund  
8 obligations. The President spoke to that this  
9 morning.

10 So, in the aggregate, those elements  
11 result in a projected shortfall of a level of  
12 funding that we believe is the minimum necessary in  
13 the coming year of roughly \$479 million.

14 The proposal before you is the one  
15 percent increase in the sale tax. That proposal  
16 does reflect the analysis that we provided you in a  
17 plan to get on a stable long-term fiscal projector.

18 With that, I will answer any  
19 questions.

20 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Suffredin.

21 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: Thank you, Mr.  
22 Chairman, and ladies and gentlemen of the Committee.

23 The value of the one percent in a full  
24 year is \$479 million; is that what you just said?

1 MR. SAMSTEIN: Four hundred and seventy-  
2 four, Commissioner.

3 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: Four hundred and  
4 seventy-four million. In the coming budget year,  
5 because it begins on January 1, and because of the  
6 way the State reimburses us, the value is?

7 MR. SAMSTEIN: We estimate it -- of course  
8 this is an economic forecast, but we estimate it at  
9 \$308 million, Commissioner. As you know, that is  
10 why we proposed and showed all of the Commissioners  
11 a two-year plan at that presentation of what this  
12 would look like.

13 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: Mr. Msall from the  
14 Civic Federation mentioned that there is a legal  
15 dispute. During our last budget --

16 COMMISSIONER BUTLER: I have just as  
17 question.

18 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Butler.

19 COMMISSIONER BUTLER: Are we beginning the  
20 date now or is that going to be --

21 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Yes. Mr. Samstein is  
22 giving a presentation.

23 COMMISSIONER BUTLER: I heard what Samstein  
24 did. I am talking about now.

1           CHAIRMAN DALEY: He is asking questions.

2           COMMISSIONER BUTLER: He is so clever in  
3 asking his questions that he may be setting us up  
4 for a debate.

5           CHAIRMAN DALEY: Yes. After he is done  
6 with his presentation -- Commissioner Suffredin.

7           COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: My question is  
8 this: One of the witnesses said that there is a  
9 legal dispute. This money we are talking about, the  
10 President said earlier seventy percent of it would  
11 go in the first year to the pension. Then it would  
12 grow later. But during our last budget the State's  
13 Attorney said we had the ability to put money, in  
14 addition to what the property tax levy was for the  
15 pension.

16                   But you got a legal opinion from Laner  
17 Muchin, who is what one of the other witnesses was  
18 talking about, that said you couldn't do it. In the  
19 briefings you said this money would go into an  
20 escrow rather than go into the pension fund.

21                   What will happen with this money?  
22 That is my question.

23           CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner, I think we  
24 should go back to the motion. I know everyone will

1 speak on their individual --

2 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: I want to know if  
3 we can get this money as being suggested, as he has  
4 explained it. That is my only question.

5 MR. SAMSTEIN: I will defer to our legal  
6 counsel, but the only point that I would make is I  
7 think the resolution is pretty unambiguously clear.  
8 Our presentation is unambiguously clear of where the  
9 intent, where the funding would go. Obviously the  
10 Board of Commissioners, hopefully, will pass the  
11 budget, a bill that would appropriate the money.

12 The Administration has no ability to  
13 appropriate money. That is the function of the  
14 Board of Commissioners. That will hopefully be the  
15 manner in which it is appropriated through the  
16 budget process.

17 Our intent, as we have been pretty  
18 clear, Commissioner, and as the resolution states,  
19 and as was stated in the briefing just as it is  
20 allocated.

21 As a point of record to clarify, it is  
22 actually ninety percent, I believe, in the first  
23 year and then it drops to seventy-one percent to the  
24 pension fund in the ensuing year.

1           COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: You actually are  
2 saying that you now agree with the State's  
3 Attorney's opinion that we can give additional money  
4 beyond the property tax levy?

5           MR. SAMSTEIN: I am not going to speak to  
6 the underlying legal matters at hand, Commissioner.  
7 I will speak to the financial issues.

8           CHAIRMAN DALEY: That is all you can speak  
9 to.

10                  Now, on the legal point --

11           COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: I have made my  
12 point without debating.

13           CHAIRMAN DALEY: I wasn't trying to stop  
14 any debate, none whatsoever. I never do.

15                  Commissioner Gainer.

16           COMMISSIONER GAINER: Ivan, thank you for  
17 your presentation. What is the amount of the debt?  
18 What is bottom line of the debt service that we will  
19 be planning to pay in 2016?

20           MR. SAMSTEIN: In fiscal 2016 the amount I  
21 believe is \$251 million. As a matter of  
22 perspective, it was \$187 million for a number of  
23 years. It rose this year to \$226 or something to  
24 that effect. It is not an exact number, but roughly



1 \$25 million increase to \$251 in the coming year.

2 COMMISSIONER GAINER: Two fifty-one in  
3 2015?

4 MR. SAMSTEIN: That's correct.

5 COMMISSIONER GAINER: This back and forth  
6 -- can we put money aside for the pension? If the  
7 purpose of the sales tax increase is to pay for the  
8 pension, but there is a dispute as to whether or not  
9 we can -- A, pay to the pension with sales tax.  
10 Right now we are precluded by State law that it is  
11 only property tax. And, number two, that your legal  
12 opinion, which we discussed on this Board, we can't  
13 give more than \$192 million. If those two things  
14 are off to the side, is there anything about the  
15 debt service, the way we structured the debt, the  
16 instruments that we engage in, that you think might  
17 create an unexpected increase in that amount of debt  
18 service excess of \$251?

19 MR. SAMSTEIN: No.

20 COMMISSIONER GAINER: So we are not looking  
21 at any potential additional use of the debt service  
22 in the next coming year?

23 MR. SAMSTEIN: No.

24 COMMISSIONER GAINER: Just to back up, so

1 we understand what we are voting for. You feel  
2 confident that if this passes, and there is an  
3 additional increment of four hundred plus million  
4 that you have a legal way, without having to wait  
5 for Springfield, because this is part of the issue,  
6 to actually dedicate that money to the pension?

7 MR. SAMSTEIN: Again, I won't speak on  
8 matters that may be the subject of litigation. What  
9 I will reiterate though is the debt structure was  
10 part of the capital budget hearings. Many of the  
11 Commissioners participated in the capital budget  
12 hearing last year as part of the capital budget. I  
13 think we outlined pretty clearly, Commissioner, the  
14 entirety of our debt structure.

15 Again, debt service rises in the  
16 coming year. There is no spike in the debt service  
17 other than that which has been disclosed with the  
18 Commissioners and in briefings, in the capital  
19 budget hearing, and in the capital budget documents.

20 COMMISSIONER GAINER: So we are not worried  
21 about an increase in the debt service. We can  
22 guarantee that the seventy percent of the additional  
23 income of the sales tax will be guaranteed to go  
24 into the pension fund. That is what has been said

1 the entire time about why we are voting for the  
2 sales tax.

3 MR. SAMSTEIN: Again, the resolution is  
4 clear about what the Administration will put -- what  
5 the resolution before you clearly lays out where the  
6 funding is going. The Board will ultimately pass  
7 the appropriation bill. I think we have been pretty  
8 clear and unambiguous about the Administration's  
9 intent about how to appropriate the funds. I won't  
10 speak to other matters that ultimately will be the  
11 subject of litigation.

12 COMMISSIONER GAINER: We understand your  
13 intent, but we also want to have more clarity.

14 Your view is the actual legal  
15 requirements, how we are going to spend that money  
16 will be handled in the budget process that this  
17 Board will vote on?

18 MR. SAMSTEIN: That's correct.

19 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Mr. Chairman --

20 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Boykin.

21 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: I have a question.

22 Because this is a resolution, does that mean that  
23 this does not have the force of law? That it is  
24 merely a statement of the Administration's purpose

1 for the utilization --

2 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Laura Lechowicz.

3 MS. FELICIONE: Laura Lechowicz Felicione.

4 Commissioner Boykin, that is correct.

5 The purpose behind the resolution is to set the  
6 intent to how the money will be used. The President  
7 is seeking the support of the Board right now on  
8 where she wants to take her policy recommendations  
9 for the 2016 budget appropriation.

10 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Thank you very much.

11 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Schneider.

12 COMMISSIONER SCHNEIDER: Thank you, Mr.  
13 Chairman.

14 Ivan, in the many talks that we have  
15 had in my office regarding the pensions, you have  
16 stated to me that at this point the State statute  
17 limits the amount of money that the County can put  
18 into the pension fund. For every dollar it is  
19 \$1.54; am I correct?

20 MR. SAMSTEIN: That is article nine of the  
21 pension code that you are referring to.

22 COMMISSIONER SCHNEIDER: For every dollar  
23 \$1.54. You were going to Springfield with the  
24 President to try to pass the pension bill. That

1 required statute and legislative approval to  
2 increase that from a dollar to, I believe, \$2.21,  
3 with the other reforms that the employees were  
4 willing to put together to create that pension bill;  
5 is that right?

6 MR. SAMSTEIN: There were a number of  
7 changes in the pension bill, but one of them is the  
8 County paying more; that's right.

9 COMMISSIONER SCHNEIDER: The County paying  
10 more. That required State legislative approval.

11 My question is, and that is probably  
12 all you can answer, but maybe Ms. Lechowicz can  
13 answer to me. What authority do we have then,  
14 without statutory approval, to contribute more money  
15 to our pension system than what is allowed by State  
16 statute currently?

17 MS. FELICIONE: Commissioner, I will speak  
18 to that generally.

19 The issue of additional contributions  
20 to that pension fund remains a debatable issue. We  
21 are aware of the parties' different opinions on  
22 whether the County can make additional contributions  
23 to the property tax levy.

24 COMMISSIONER SCHNEIDER: A \$474 million tax

1 increase on a debatable issue on whether we can  
2 actually do it or not?

3 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner, the reality  
4 is that the only motion on the floor is Commissioner  
5 Boykin's.

6 MS. FELICIONE: If I may finish, Mr.  
7 Chairman.

8 What is before you today here is the  
9 intent to utilize the funds or the majority of those  
10 increases in the sales tax funds for the  
11 recommendation for it to be appropriated into the  
12 2016 budget.

13 CHAIRMAN DALEY: I would like to go back to  
14 the motion.

15 Commissioner Goslin, we will come back  
16 to you after we deal with Commissioner Boykin's  
17 amendment. That is the only item on the floor.

18 Commissioner Boykin.

19 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Thank you, Mr.  
20 Chairman.

21 CHAIRMAN DALEY: We are on amendment number  
22 one, 15-4291.

23 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Madam President, Mr.  
24 Chairman, distinguished colleagues, and citizens of

1 Cook County.

2 What I would like to do Mr. Chairman,  
3 with your indulgence, I have three amendments within  
4 this resolution that I would like to explain  
5 briefly.

6 CHAIRMAN DALEY: I think we should take  
7 item number one. You can put all of the amendments  
8 together.

9 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Yes, for the sake of  
10 time.

11 The amendment before us is an  
12 amendment to Madam President's proposed resolution.  
13 The resolution is a statement of intent of how we  
14 would utilize the additional resources gained from  
15 the sales tax increase.

16 Let me first of all say that sales tax  
17 is about social justice and it is about fairness. I  
18 think we have to have some other things added to  
19 this resolution. That is why I put forward this  
20 amendment.

21 First, if the sales tax increase is  
22 approved and takes effect, I am speaking an  
23 automatic rollback of that increase, in the event  
24 that pension reform legislation introduced by

1 Governor Rauner back on July 8, which is inclusive  
2 of President Preckwinkle's desired reforms, passes  
3 in Springfield and is upheld by the Supreme Court of  
4 Illinois as constitutional. President Preckwinkle  
5 indicates in this resolution that she will consider  
6 a rollback. I believe we owe it to the taxpayers of  
7 Cook County to make that rollback automatic.

8 The reason it ought to be automatic  
9 and not just left up to presidential discretion is  
10 that we are asking a lot of the taxpayers today. We  
11 owe them something in return. We ought to be able  
12 to promise them that in return for their hard-earned  
13 tax dollars we will give them a break if Springfield  
14 gives us a break.

15 Two weeks ago at the City Club,  
16 President Preckwinkle said the following, and I  
17 quote: "I will make this commitment. If  
18 Springfield can pass pension reform, our pension  
19 reform bill by the end of the summer, we will  
20 reevaluate our revenue needs and make the  
21 appropriate changes to our sales tax levy in our  
22 September Board meeting."

23 Therefore, in light of this commitment  
24 made by President Preckwinkle, I believe we ought to



1 be able to back up her words with our deeds and with  
2 our vote.

3           President Preckwinkle's remarks at the  
4 City Club do raise an interesting question. The  
5 question is: What is the rush? If we want this  
6 sales tax increase to take effect on January 1,  
7 2016, then we don't need to take a vote on it until  
8 October. The President herself has said there may  
9 be action in Springfield this summer that makes this  
10 sales tax increase unnecessary.

11           I would remind my colleagues that the  
12 President's Office has still not provided us with a  
13 countywide budget. So why on Earth would we make  
14 this decision in a vacuum on an expedited rushed  
15 basis without a State budget? And, most  
16 importantly, without a County budget. It makes no  
17 sense.

18           The second place in which I seek to  
19 amend this resolution involves the addition of  
20 language that sets aside \$5 million of proceeds from  
21 the sales tax increase to establish the Amari  
22 Darnell Brown Parenting Workshop Program. Some of  
23 you may ask, "Why would we put this amendment in a  
24 resolution about sales taxes?" To that question I

1 offer the following answer: We are asking the  
2 poorest residents of Cook County to give us more of  
3 their money. We need to give them something in  
4 return.

5 We all know that the poorest parts of Cook  
6 County, particularly the south and west sides of  
7 Chicago, suffer disproportionately from neighborhood  
8 violence. In fact, there have been more than 1300  
9 people shot since January 1. Eighty-three percent  
10 of the people who have been shot are African-  
11 Americans. There have been more than 240 people who  
12 have been killed since January 1. Eighty-plus  
13 percent of those killed are African-Americans.

14 Amari Darnell Brown was murdered over  
15 the Fourth of July weekend in a random act of gun  
16 violence at the age of seven years old. Five  
17 million dollars is a relatively modest sum of the  
18 hundreds of millions of dollars, nearly \$500  
19 million, that will be generated by the sales tax  
20 increase.

21 It would be something that we could  
22 set aside for the poorest, most vulnerable  
23 communities in the County that would function as at  
24 least a partial compensation for a sales tax

1 increase that will hit those communities harder than  
2 any other community.

3 That leads me to the third place in  
4 which I would seek to amend this resolution, by  
5 adding a program funded with proceeds from the sales  
6 tax increase designed to prepare and train residents  
7 of the communities with the highest level of  
8 unemployment and poverty to enter the job market.

9 If we are going to affirmatively take  
10 action that negatively impacts our poorest  
11 residents, then we need to take an opposite,  
12 positive action that positively impacts the lives of  
13 these residents, because Cook County exists  
14 primarily as a government of last resort for the  
15 poorest residents among us.

16 I put these amendments forward not  
17 without fault. These amendments actually deal with  
18 our poorest residents. I listened to all of the  
19 debate. I listened to the speakers. I must confess  
20 there were a number of them. I didn't talk about  
21 how this makes the County less competitive, but what  
22 I will say is this: This is a resolution. This is  
23 the sense of this Body on how we ought to spend the  
24 sales tax proceeds.

1                   Madam President suggested we put more  
2 money in pensions. I am for that; I support that.

3                   My distinguished colleague will  
4 introduce an amendment later on that talks about  
5 putting all of the money into pensions. I support  
6 that.

7                   I also support putting an investment  
8 in our roads, bridges, and infrastructure. I think  
9 that is important. But I also think that we must  
10 make sure that if we pass this that there is an  
11 automatic triggered rollback. That is what we do  
12 with these amendments.

13                  Mr. Chairman, with that I would urge  
14 approval of the three amendments.

15                  CHAIRMAN DALEY: There are three parts of  
16 one amendment.

17                  Vice-Chair Sims.

18                  COMMISSIONER SIMS: I truly understand what  
19 my learned colleague said this morning with regard  
20 to how the money should be allocated. One of the  
21 things that he mentioned was setting up a fund for  
22 the young seven-year-old that was killed, Amari  
23 Brown.

24                  I think if we were to do something

1 like that, and we were going to start naming them --  
2 I don't think the President wants to start  
3 earmarking different individuals who have been  
4 brutally killed, victims of violence, because I  
5 think we will be setting ourselves up for something  
6 that will get totally out of hand. If we did that,  
7 I would suggest we set up a foundation or something  
8 for Blair Holt, who lived in my District, and whose  
9 mother lives a couple of doors down from me.

10 I am quite sure that every  
11 Commissioner on this Board has someone in their  
12 community as well that was killed by gang violence.  
13 I don't think that is something that we should  
14 probably be doing.

15 I think what Commissioner Fritchey did  
16 was to put money aside for violence prevention.  
17 Apparently Commissioner Fritchey didn't put enough  
18 money away because you and I are constantly in  
19 debate that there is not enough money to go into  
20 different communities. But that is another issue  
21 that we should be talking about at the budget time  
22 and not here today.

23 Today we are here to talk about the  
24 pension and we are here to talk about our highway

1 projects. Highways and transportation. Because in  
2 the meetings that I had this is what I was told that  
3 the funding was going to be for. We talked about a  
4 lot of other things, but we were told it was going  
5 for pension reform and highway projects, which I  
6 have to say that I Chair Highways and  
7 Transportation. I am quite sure if Superintendent  
8 Yonan was here he would be jumping up and down  
9 seeing that all of this money would be going for  
10 highways and transportation. Because in all of our  
11 Districts we all have problems with highways and  
12 transportation, and bridge repair, waterway repair,  
13 and all of those things.

14 We have been kicking that can down the  
15 road and not putting those monies where they should  
16 be. Did we take money from the general fund and put  
17 monies to other places and took money from the fuel  
18 tax? I believe in NaCO, for those of you who did  
19 not go to NaCO, there is a resolution that is on the  
20 table -- maybe President Preckwinkle, you were at  
21 those meetings to talk about that the Federal  
22 Government, we are asking the Federal Government to  
23 increase the motor fuel taxes just for those things.  
24 Because I think all over this country, we know, and

1 I think President Preckwinkle has been going to  
2 NaCO, that is the reason why she is allocating those  
3 dollars.

4 We know that there is not enough money  
5 for our infrastructure for our county, for our  
6 state, and our country at large.

7 On that appoint, I think we should  
8 stick to this. I know my colleague also talked  
9 about a trigger. I said I wasn't going to go there  
10 this morning. Commissioner Collins was here this  
11 morning, and her and I talked about a trigger when  
12 we were down this road before. We talked about a  
13 sales tax.

14 I think, Madam President, we are going  
15 to do this. Let's do this because we don't know  
16 what the future is going to hold. I think to say  
17 that we are going to remove it again would probably  
18 maybe you and I will or will not be here, and at  
19 some point somebody else will be having this  
20 conversation.

21 If we do what is right here today, we  
22 won't have to have this conversation; that we will  
23 have done what is right and we will have set the  
24 tone for pension reform. You won't have the ladies

1 that were here this morning talking about being  
2 worried about what is going to happen with their  
3 pensions in the future.

4           People who have money don't worry  
5 about money. People that need money and work every  
6 day worry about their pension. Those same people  
7 that worry about those pensions -- I hate to say  
8 this -- those old, raggedy automobiles that they  
9 drive up and down the street, and the potholes are  
10 tearing them.

11           I think we need to do what is right  
12 here this morning. We had from my District, my  
13 minister and the mayors from my District can come  
14 out overwhelmingly supporting this.

15           You have to look at this. That is the  
16 reason why there is seventeen people that is sitting  
17 in this pit. All of us represent different areas of  
18 the City and different areas of the County. We are  
19 not going to all agree. I don't expect some of my  
20 colleagues to my right to agree with some of the  
21 colleagues to my left. Because we represent, and  
22 our communities are all basically different.

23           But what I am asking everybody here to  
24 do today is to do what is right. We represent all



1 of the people of Cook County. But we also have to  
2 do what is right and what we believe will be fair.  
3 It is a hard decision and we got elected to make  
4 those hard decisions.

5 To my colleague, I truly feel what you  
6 are saying, in regards to the earmarks, but I hope  
7 you will take that off the table because all of us  
8 would like those fundings to go in the name of  
9 somebody that we would know. If we are going to put  
10 some money, Madam President, let's put some more  
11 money in to the program that Commissioner Fritchey  
12 started a couple of budgets ago.

13 Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Fritchey on  
15 the amendment.

16 COMMISSIONER FRITCHEY: Very, very briefly.  
17 I want to talk to another portion of it. With  
18 respect to us waiting on Springfield and us pointing  
19 the finger at Springfield -- with all due respect to  
20 my former colleagues, who I served with for fourteen  
21 years, please don't hang this one on them. Recent  
22 history has shown us that the Legislature passing a  
23 pension bill doesn't mean that much if the Supreme  
24 Court doesn't agree with us.

1 I have an ordinance that will be  
2 introduced at the July 29 County Board meeting which  
3 will look to sunset this tax over two years in the  
4 event it should pass today, in the likely event it  
5 should pass. The reason for that would be it would  
6 take back fifty percent of it after the first year  
7 and another fifty percent after year two. After  
8 that first year, we will hopefully know not only  
9 what the Legislature does, but also what the Supreme  
10 Court will do.

11 We will have seen a 2016 budget. If  
12 we know that the funds are not going to be there in  
13 perpetuity -- as somebody said before, government  
14 intends to eat everything that you give it. If you  
15 know that the food is going to be taken away from  
16 you at some point, you go on a diet. If we know  
17 that this tax hike is only going to be there for so  
18 long, we are going to be forced to make the tough  
19 decisions that need to be made.

20 Voting for a tax is very difficult.  
21 Voting for real reform and restructuring is even  
22 harder. So I applaud and respect the gentleman for  
23 his intention. It is absolutely well-placed. But I  
24 think we need to look at a structural way to undo

1 whatever it is we do today. I will save my other  
2 comments for later.

3 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner, again, the  
5 only motion on the floor is Commissioner Boykin's.  
6 If we can deal with that motion only. We will come  
7 back to the main motion, depending on what happens.

8 Commissioner Suffredin.

9 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: Thank you, Mr.  
10 Chairman, and ladies and gentlemen of the Committee.

11 To the amendment, I encourage an "aye"  
12 vote on the amendment.

13 The key to this, as was said earlier,  
14 this is a nonbinding policy resolution. It is how  
15 to spend a \$474 million tax increase. To me, the  
16 essence is on page one, the second to the last  
17 "whereas". Throughout this, it talks about how this  
18 \$474 million is for promoting long-term financial  
19 health of the annuity fund, addressing increasing  
20 legacy debt service, in a financially prudent  
21 fashion, and funding the various road and  
22 infrastructure needs.

23 All that Commissioner Boykin is doing  
24 here is he is adding to that list of things that we

1 need to be talking about. What he said is to  
2 provide supportive governmental services to protect  
3 the public health, safety, and well-being of the  
4 poorest and most vulnerable residents of Cook  
5 County.

6                   Since we are not dealing with a budget  
7 -- this is the problem of passing revenue when you  
8 can't allocate it, and we can't, as the legislative  
9 body and the corporate authority of this County,  
10 lock in the spending of this revenue into specific  
11 programs. He is saying, "Let's not just be so  
12 limited. Let's make sure that all of these people  
13 we hurt from today, who are worried about the  
14 poorest and most vulnerable residents of Cook  
15 County, that, in fact, we have the ability to spend  
16 some of this money on them when we are in the  
17 budget."

18                   I encourage an "aye" vote on this  
19 amendment to the resolution.

20                   CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Murphy.

21                   COMMISSIONER MURPHY: What I saw here today  
22 were many of the poorest of the poor that were  
23 talking about this sales tax. They seemed to be for  
24 it. It is not just the Mayors that are here. There

1 were many letters sent from other Mayors from the  
2 south end of the County who are in favor of this  
3 sales tax. I don't know what is happening in the  
4 other parts of the County, but in my area the Mayors  
5 have been in favor of the one penny sales tax.

6 It seems that the poorest of the poor,  
7 when you think of what the sales tax actually is, if  
8 they spend \$10 their tax is ten cents -- I always  
9 forget how to figure that out. If someone is  
10 spending \$50,000, then their sales tax is \$50.  
11 Figure it out for yourself. It is a penny.

12 They are not the ones buying expensive  
13 things because they don't have the money. They are  
14 going to the grocery store. They are not going to  
15 be taxed for that. They have to have drugs and they  
16 have to have health. With the drugs that they are  
17 taking, the medicines that they are taking, and it  
18 is not taxed. They are not going out buying \$300  
19 dresses or coats or anything else. If they only  
20 have a spendable income of about \$28,000, then their  
21 tax is going to be \$28.

22 When you look at it, the dollars and  
23 cents, and the people that were here today were in  
24 favor of this one penny sales tax. They know what

1 the poorest of the poor are doing much better than  
2 we do.

3 COMMISSIONER SCHNEIDER: Just a math  
4 clerical error -- \$50,000 would be \$500 and \$28,000  
5 would be \$280. I just wanted to make that.

6 COMMISSIONER MURPHY: Thank you. My math  
7 isn't that great.

8 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Boykin, there  
9 was a point about Governor Rauner. I don't know if  
10 everything that is in the pension bill, the  
11 President's pension bill, was contained in Governor  
12 Rauner's pension bill. It is my understanding, with  
13 talking to the President, that it was not. There  
14 are major disagreements between her bill and what  
15 the Governor wanted.

16 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: I understand that,  
17 Mr. Chairman. What I would just simply say, and I  
18 want to appreciate the Chairman's indulgence, and I  
19 also appreciate my colleagues. Again, I reiterate  
20 that this is merely a resolution, a statement of  
21 intent. It is nonbinding. It basically said it is  
22 the will of this legislative body, that this is what  
23 we are going to make priorities for the sales tax.

24 Madam President made the priority the

1 pensions and she made it roads and infrastructure.  
2 I agree with those priorities. However, because we  
3 have a state of emergency and because we have a  
4 crisis on both the south side and west sides of  
5 Chicago, relative to violence and relative to people  
6 being gunned down, I think we ought to make a modest  
7 investment.

8 I didn't put a dollar amount to the  
9 job training and the jobs program that we called for  
10 in the third amendment. I didn't put a dollar  
11 amount relative to the rollback and the trigger and  
12 all of that that we called for. I put a modest \$5  
13 million to be set aside out of the four hundred and  
14 some million for a parenting workshop program.

15 A lot of this violence that is being  
16 committed is being committed by young people who  
17 feel that they aren't being loved, who are being  
18 raised by single mothers and single fathers, and  
19 grandparents raising grandkids. This violence is  
20 being perpetrated by them.

21 Look, ultimately the County Board has  
22 to deal with it. Either we deal with it at Stroger  
23 Hospital, when we get a gunshot victim who costs the  
24 County taxpayers \$55,000 every time when they go to

1 stabilize somebody at Cook County Hospital, or we  
2 deal with it through the Cook County jail when we  
3 arrest folks. Ultimately, we deal with it.

4 Look, I am asking if we can move to  
5 accept the amendment; then I would appreciate it.  
6 If not, I am going to ask for a roll call vote.

7 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Your amendment is on the  
8 floor. Anyone else?

9 Commissioner Silvestri, on the  
10 amendment.

11 COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: Just a question.  
12 I commend Commissioner Boykin for his sincerity in  
13 trying to put a designated destination for some of  
14 the money. The money is not there yet. It hasn't  
15 been approved. I think that that discussion is  
16 really more appropriate at budget time, regardless  
17 of what happens with the sales tax.

18 My question is -- first to the sponsor  
19 and then to an attorney, if I may. Is it possible  
20 for something to trigger an automatic action?  
21 Doesn't the Board, if the pension bill is found to  
22 be unconstitutional, don't we as a Board has to take  
23 action to rescind the sales tax, if approved?

24 Do you see my point? It's an



1 automatic trigger?

2 CHAIRMAN DALEY: I think the President has  
3 addressed that. She has said in her pension reform  
4 she has addressed the rate as well. If the pension  
5 reform is not passed, then we could go back and  
6 address the rate specifically.

7 COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: Regardless of  
8 whether she wants to go back.

9 CHAIRMAN DALEY: This is the rate that we  
10 want to --

11 COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: There is no such  
12 thing as an automatic trigger, is my point.

13 CHAIRMAN DALEY: The amount that we are  
14 contributing. It is in the current pension bill to  
15 modify that, in the pension bill that she has  
16 presented. If the pension bill did not pass, she  
17 would go back on that one rate alone.

18 COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: But the specific  
19 question that I am trying to get to is -- if this  
20 Board passes, if this Board eventually passes the  
21 sales tax and the pension bill is found to be  
22 unconstitutional, there is no such thing as an  
23 automatic trigger rate, even by resolution. Don't  
24 we have to take action, whether the President

1 initiates or the Board initiates it to cut back?

2 CHAIRMAN DALEY: You know, Commissioner,  
3 the last time, after the Board meeting, and at most  
4 of the Board meetings after we passed the sales tax,  
5 it was offered to rescind the sales tax.

6 COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: Right. So the  
7 Board has to take action.

8 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Yes.

9 COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: She is nodding her  
10 head, too. That is what I am asking.

11 MS. FELICIONE: Commissioner Silvestri, one  
12 of the differences I think you will find in  
13 Commissioner Boykin's amendment, the resolution is  
14 noting an automatic rollback, which obviously the  
15 Board would have to take action at some point to  
16 modify or amend the sales tax in the future, versus  
17 the President's resolution notes that she would be  
18 looking to come back to this Board to talk about  
19 further reducing the sales tax should the reform  
20 legislation pass.

21 COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: But in deference  
22 to the Board members, if the President considers it  
23 and doesn't want to do it, the majority of the Board  
24 can still do it; is that correct?

1 MS. FELICIONE: That is correct. But by  
2 resolution you cannot implement an automatic  
3 rollback.

4 COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Schneider.

6 COMMISSIONER SCHNEIDER: Mr. Chairman, I  
7 appreciate the intent of the sponsor of this  
8 amendment's desire to do what he is trying to  
9 approach here and do. However, in the one clause he  
10 is asking for a job training and workforce readiness  
11 program. We already have that. It was POET. It  
12 was Cook County Works. Now it is called the Chicago  
13 Cook Workforce Partnership.

14 How would these two work together? We  
15 already have a program that prepares people for job  
16 training.

17 I think, in my opinion, that these two  
18 programs should be considered at the time of the  
19 budget process, as we do in many cases when people  
20 have individual programs that they would like to  
21 bring up. That should be done at that time, not in  
22 a specific motion and amendment to the sales tax.

23 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Mr. Chairman, and to  
24 my distinguished colleague. Let me remind him that

1 this is a nonbinding resolution. It is a statement  
2 of intent -- a statement of intent.

3 Let me also remind him and invite him  
4 to come to my District where unemployment in Austin,  
5 and unemployment in East and West Garfield,  
6 unemployment in North Lawndale and in many places is  
7 upwards of thirty percent.

8 We are not getting it done with the  
9 current Cook County Workforce program. I am simply  
10 saying to the gentleman that we ought to set aside  
11 some of these funds from the sales tax for a job  
12 readiness work program. Because too many people are  
13 unemployed. We all know that violence is an actual  
14 -- violence is an outgrowth, if you will, of  
15 poverty. Poverty and unemployment breed violence.

16 I would say to the gentleman -- I  
17 invite him to come to my District. He doesn't have  
18 to go far. He can go to the south side of Chicago  
19 and see this unemployment and see guys hanging out  
20 on street corners. We are not getting it done  
21 through the current County workforce program. We  
22 didn't get it done through POET either. It is no  
23 criticism of those programs.

24 I am simply saying, as a statement to

1 this Board, a statement of intent that we all agree  
2 that we ought to put some of this money in workforce  
3 development. We ought to put some of this money in  
4 job training for individuals who are unemployed.

5 Let me tell you -- if we want to  
6 reduce violence and if we are serious about reducing  
7 violence, we got to make sure that people have jobs  
8 and opportunity. We got to make sure that we are  
9 going to ask the poorest people of Cook County to  
10 pay more. You may not think it is more. You may  
11 just say it is a penny. But a penny earned is a  
12 penny saved.

13 These pennies are important. Pennies  
14 add up to nickels; nickels add up to dimes; dimes  
15 add up to quarter; quarters to dollars. This is  
16 vitally important.

17 I agree with the gentleman that we  
18 ought to consider this during the budget season;  
19 however, I will say to the gentleman -- pensions are  
20 mentioned in here, in terms of funding the pensions.  
21 We also mentioned roads and bridges and  
22 infrastructure. Well, roads, bridges, and  
23 infrastructure are important, I agree with that. I  
24 agree with pensions. We ought to fund them. But we

1 have got to look at job training and we have got to  
2 look at these communities that have been devastated  
3 by unemployment and poverty, and we got to figure  
4 out how do we help these communities.

5 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Tobolski.

6 COMMISSIONER TOBOLSKI: Thank you, Mr.  
7 Chairman.

8 First, a couple of points of  
9 clarification. I have got three amendments here,  
10 15-4291, 15-4292, and 15-4294. All were by my  
11 esteemed colleague, Commissioner Boykin. All three  
12 of these have been moved.

13 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: No, just 15-4291.

14 CHAIRMAN DALEY: There are three changes in  
15 the amendment.

16 COMMISSIONER TOBOLSKI: Three changes. So  
17 the only item we are speaking on is the very first  
18 one here.

19 I have a couple of things. There are  
20 five million residents in Cook County. I want to  
21 make sure that we are clear. It is not the poorest  
22 of the poor. Yes, they will be burdened by this,  
23 but all five million residents potentially at some  
24 point will pay the penny. We talked about the

1 proportioning of that with Joan's fuzzy math, but  
2 the point was well taken.

3 I take exception to some of the  
4 arguments coming from my colleague. We all have  
5 needs in our Districts. I think we are getting away  
6 from what the original intent of today's meeting is  
7 if we are going to start a grab bag here as to where  
8 we think the money should be spent and how it should  
9 be spent. Those are issues that we can address in  
10 the budget process.

11 The underlying issue here is we have a  
12 deadline that has to be met. It has to be met in  
13 Springfield. The President has been beautifully  
14 redundant on just putting the facts out there as to  
15 why we are here today. That, really, in my opinion  
16 is what we are looking at here. Do we incur \$30  
17 million a day worth of additional debt by pushing  
18 this off?

19 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Excuse me, \$30  
20 million a day --

21 COMMISSIONER TOBOLSKI: I'm sorry. A  
22 month. I have the floor, sir. I have the floor.

23 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Are you addressing the  
24 amendment?

1 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Yes.

2 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Were you addressing the  
3 amendment?

4 COMMISSIONER TOBOLSKI: Yes. That is all I  
5 am saying. I don't want to beat this thing to death  
6 here today. At some point, we should move on these  
7 amendments as they have been added, and we should  
8 get back to the real issue here which is the sales  
9 tax.

10 Some of the other things that have  
11 been talked about here -- there was a mention of  
12 reform in Springfield. I think it was pointed out  
13 by several of the people in the media that for 4000  
14 days now they have been working on pension reform  
15 and it hasn't been done. Another one of the  
16 esteemed colleagues in the media said that in their  
17 discussions in Springfield this isn't even close to  
18 being on the radar at this point.

19 I was with a number of my esteemed  
20 colleagues from Springfield who said that they are  
21 at such a stalemate down there, just on the budget  
22 alone, they anticipate being through October, just  
23 on the budget, through October. They are talking  
24 lawyers, guns, and money at this point. Nobody



1 wants to do anything down there with just the  
2 budget.

3 I think to assume somehow that there  
4 is going to be a rabbit that we pull out of the hat  
5 here is misleading the taxpayers. The best thing to  
6 do is simply to say -- we have a decision here to  
7 make. The resolution is on the floor, and we should  
8 get back to that question as to yes or no. It is  
9 that simple. Some of us are going to vote "no" and  
10 some of us are going to vote "yes", and we move on  
11 with the rest of the process that we are kind of  
12 arguing here for.

13 Again, I would just like to remind my  
14 colleague that if we start looking in terms of our  
15 Districts, starting to earmark this money, you are  
16 going to have seventeen people here that are all  
17 going to have the same considerations. I would like  
18 to see if we could possibly forego that.

19 My other question is: If we don't  
20 have the authority to automatically roll this back,  
21 then is this resolution out of order? You are  
22 asking us to vote on something whereby we just  
23 received a legal opinion that we cannot do.

24 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Boykin.

1           COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: First of all, let me  
2 respond to my distinguished friend and gentleman.  
3 Let me simply say this: This is a resolution. It  
4 is a statement of intent. It is not binding.

5           What we are saying in the rollback  
6 provision is that if Springfield acts -- there is  
7 hope that Springfield will act -- in fact, we have  
8 got to have leadership. We ought to be down there  
9 in Springfield encouraging the legislators to act.  
10 We ought to be working with the Governor. We have  
11 got the Chairman of the Republican Party on this  
12 Board. We ought to be working with the Governor.

13           We ought to say, "Look. We don't want  
14 Cook County's finances in shambles. We don't want  
15 the City of Chicago's finances in shambles. We  
16 don't want the State's finances in shambles. We  
17 ought to work together and pass meaningful pension  
18 reform." Then, if it is upheld as constitutional by  
19 the Supreme Court of Illinois, then we will  
20 automatically come back to this Board and we will do  
21 the vote that we need to do to satisfy the taxpayers  
22 and say to them, "Look. We said we would do this."

23           This not my words. These are the  
24 President's words. She basically said at the City

1 Club that she would consider rolling it back if, in  
2 fact, Springfield acted and it was held  
3 constitutional.

4 I am simply saying we ought to say as  
5 a Board, because we are all fiduciaries of the  
6 Districts we represent. Before we ask people to pay  
7 more money, we ought to tell the people what they  
8 are going to get for what they are paying. That is  
9 a noble proposition.

10 That is all I am saying. So with  
11 that, Mr. Chairman, I move the question on the  
12 rollback vote, if you will. I would ask for a roll  
13 call, for "yeas" and "nays".

14 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Boykin has  
15 moved for approval on the amendment. It has been  
16 seconded and we ask for a roll call on 15-4291.

17 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Mr. Chairman, could  
18 we have a roll call just on all three?

19 CHAIRMAN DALEY: It is one item.

20 SECRETARY TURNER: Just to clarify, it is  
21 for the rollback on the funding for the workforce  
22 and parenting?

23 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner, you combined  
24 all of them. That is three into one; is that

1 correct?

2 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Yes.

3 CHAIRMAN DALEY: So it is all under 15-  
4 4291.

5 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Yes. That's good. I  
6 am asking for a roll call.

7 COMMISSIONER BUTLER: So we are voting --

8 CHAIRMAN DALEY: On the three items that  
9 the Commissioner has outlined in the amendment to  
10 the resolution 15-4291. On his amendment only.

11 Laura Lechowicz.

12 MS. FELICIONE: Commissioners, the motion  
13 that is before you today is to amend item number 15-  
14 4291 with the amendment that has been presented by  
15 Commissioner Boykin. This is specifically for 15-  
16 4291.

17 COMMISSIONER BUTLER: Does that end that?

18 CHAIRMAN DALEY: We are dealing with  
19 Commissioner Boykin's amendment only. Then we will  
20 come back to the main motion.

21 MS. FELICIONE: To the main motion, which  
22 is to approve the resolution.

23 COMMISSIONER BUTLER: We have been talking  
24 for an hour about nothing.

1 CHAIRMAN DALEY: We will begin the roll  
2 call.

3 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Arroyo.

4 COMMISSIONER ARROYO: No.

5 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Arroyo is a  
6 "no".

7 Commissioner Boykin.

8 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Yes.

9 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Boykin is  
10 "yes".

11 Commissioner Butler.

12 COMMISSIONER BUTLER: I will take my minute  
13 because I know somebody else will take it if I don't  
14 use it.

15 Clever has no choice of colors. To  
16 wrap this question into this amendment is good  
17 politics, but bad in terms of how we are going to  
18 work ourselves through this budget.

19 I vote "no".

20 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Butler is  
21 "no".

22 Commissioner Fritchey.

23 COMMISSIONER FRITCHEY: One of my reasons  
24 for opposing the underlying motion is that I think

1 it entails matters that should be dealt with during  
2 the budget process. I feel the same as to portions  
3 of the gentleman's motion; however, I sincerely  
4 respect his intentions and purposes for bringing it.

5 I am going to vote "present".

6 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Fritchey is  
7 "present".

8 Commissioner Gainer.

9 COMMISSIONER GAINER: Similarly so. I  
10 appreciate the idea of a rollback. I am a huge fan  
11 of the workforce. I think we obviously should  
12 invest in the parts of the County that need it the  
13 most. But as we discussed, creating just a bigger  
14 and bigger wish list -- the only hard vote we are  
15 taking is to collect more money. Everything else we  
16 stated is an intent. It is just that. It is an  
17 intent and there is nothing that makes it real.

18 I am going to stick with my desire to  
19 do this in an actual process that means something.  
20 I vote "no" on the amendment. I think they are  
21 well-thought-out, and I look forward to working with  
22 you in the budget process to make them all come  
23 true.

24 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Gainer is

1 "no".

2 Commissioner Garcia.

3 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: No.

4 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Gorman.

5 COMMISSIONER GORMAN: No.

6 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Goslin.

7 COMMISSIONER GOSLIN: No.

8 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Moore.

9 COMMISSIONER MOORE: No.

10 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Murphy.

11 COMMISSIONER MURPHY: No.

12 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Schneider.

13 COMMISSIONER SCHNEIDER: I just want to  
14 take thirty seconds.

15 It was somewhat inferred to me, and  
16 maybe nobody else felt this way, that I am not  
17 sympathetic to the needs of the people of the  
18 Commissioner whose amendment this came from's  
19 District.

20 I am thankful every day that my kids  
21 can go out in their yard and play without having to  
22 worry about getting shot or anything happening to  
23 them. I only wish that for every child in this  
24 County.

1                   I have been to the JTDC probably more  
2 times than most people on this Board. I have been  
3 to the jail. I know what is going on. I watch TV.  
4 I know how many kids are being killed every night.

5                   All I am saying is that these items,  
6 like in most years and in every year that I have  
7 been on this Board, which is nine, these items were  
8 discussed during the budget process.

9                   I vote "no".

10                  SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Schneider  
11 is "no".

12                  Commissioner Silvestri.

13                  COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: I hate to  
14 reiterate, but I think that the items that are  
15 subject to budget discussion need to be at budget  
16 discussion time. I think there is no such thing as  
17 an automatic rescission.

18                  As one who supported and introduced  
19 many efforts in the past to rescind the former sales  
20 tax increase, I think that -- although the  
21 resolution is well-intentioned -- it should not  
22 become law.

23                  I vote "no".

24                  SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Silvestri



1 is a "no".

2 Commissioner Sims.

3 COMMISSIONER SIMS: I will take a portion  
4 of my minute.

5 I, too, would like to work on bringing  
6 maybe the President's Office of Employment and  
7 Training back in budget time. But I think that is a  
8 discussion that should be held.

9 I totally agree with what you said, to  
10 my colleague, but I think to make this part of this  
11 resolution is not at the appropriate time; it is at  
12 budget time.

13 For that reason I am voting "no".

14 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Sims is  
15 "no".

16 Commissioner Steele.

17 COMMISSIONER STEELE: I support the intent  
18 of my colleague from the First District, and note  
19 that he has mentioned that in community hearings as  
20 part of my District as well. I think we do have  
21 some work to include communities during budget time.  
22 It takes us to get to that time, to program it, when  
23 we get the budget opportunities to work with those  
24 and to make sure that these funds are programmed.

1                   If we can get this passed on a general  
2 budget item that comes before us later on, then we  
3 will know that we will have some resources available  
4 at that time to being to program.

5                   I am going to vote "no" at this time.

6                   SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Steele is  
7 "no".

8                   Commissioner Suffredin.

9                   COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: Thank you.

10                  I thank all of the "no" votes for  
11 making our case. We shouldn't be voting for a \$474  
12 million tax increase without a budget. Everybody  
13 says this should be taken up later with the budget.

14                  We are not allocating the money now.  
15 This is advisory. This isn't the way to do  
16 budgeting. This isn't the way to do transparency in  
17 government. This isn't the way to impose \$474  
18 million.

19                  I vote "yes".

20                  SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Suffredin  
21 is "yes".

22                  Commissioner Tobolski.

23                  COMMISSIONER TOBOLSKI: No.

24                  SECRETARY TURNER: Chairman Daley.

1 CHAIRMAN DALEY: No.

2 SECRETARY TURNER: Mr. Chairman, you have  
3 two "yes", fourteen "no", and one "present". One  
4 more time -- one "present", fourteen "no", and two  
5 "yes".

6 CHAIRMAN DALEY: The amendment fails.

7 Let's go back to the main motion that  
8 is on the floor, 15-4291. It has already been moved  
9 and seconded. There was a request for a roll call  
10 on resolution 15-4291.

11 COMMISSIONER FRITCHEY: Just for a  
12 clarification; on which matter?

13 CHAIRMAN DALEY: It is 15-4291, the  
14 proposed resolution regarding the amendments to the  
15 Cook County Home Rule retailers occupation and  
16 service occupation taxes.

17 Roll call.

18 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Arroyo.

19 COMMISSIONER ARROYO: Yes.

20 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Boykin.

21 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: I will take my  
22 minute.

23 Let me say this: This is a nonbinding  
24 statement of intent that the President has put

1 forward.

2 I want all of the people at home to  
3 understand. What she is saying is we ought to put  
4 the sales tax money into pensions and we ought to  
5 put it into road and bridges and infrastructure.

6 So the noble concept of putting it  
7 into jobs and job training, the noble concept of  
8 putting it into parenting workshops was voted down.  
9 That is the way this Board thinks.

10 They say we ought to do it during  
11 budgeting. I agree. But we ought to be doing this  
12 during budgeting as well. And because we ought to  
13 be doing this during budgeting -- because we are  
14 asking taxpayers to give us a half a billion  
15 dollars, which we are not telling them how we are  
16 going to spend it other than putting forward two  
17 priorities of pensions and roads and infrastructure  
18 -- and we have had had numerous opportunities to  
19 actually pass real pension reform in Springfield,  
20 with a Democratic governor, with a Democratic-  
21 dominated legislature, which we failed to get down.  
22 It is leadership. It is a matter of leadership.

23 I vote "no".

24 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Boykin is

1 "no".

2 Commissioner Butler.

3 COMMISSIONER BUTLER: I am confused. I  
4 don't know what I am voting on anymore. We talked  
5 so long about nothing.

6 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner, we are  
7 voting on --

8 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Mr. Chairman, I would  
9 ask you strike the gentleman's words. This is the  
10 second time that he said we talked about nothing.  
11 Now I have been nothing but kind to the  
12 distinguished gentleman, and I would ask that you  
13 take his words down and strike them from the record.

14 COMMISSIONER BUTLER: You can leave my  
15 words there. I meant every word I said.

16 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: I understand you  
17 meant every word you said, but you don't have to be  
18 -- just because you don't agree.

19 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Butler --

20 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: -- on how we ought to  
21 spend. There is decorum. It is called "decorum".

22 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Butler.

23 COMMISSIONER BUTLER: I believe I said I  
24 vote "aye".

1 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Fritchey.

2 COMMISSIONER FRITCHEY: No.

3 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Gainer.

4 COMMISSIONER GAINER: I am going to vote  
5 "no", and explain why, which is -- I am more than  
6 anyone else committed to the solvency of the pension  
7 fund. As the Chairman of the Committee, we spent  
8 years coming to an agreement. It was just as  
9 difficult then coming to an agreement with the  
10 unions on how to reduce benefits and get to  
11 solvency.

12 But with Commissioner Murphy, the  
13 President's Office, Ivan, and all of the labor  
14 unions, we came to an agreement. Now we have a bill  
15 that is sustainable. What needs to happen is that  
16 it needs to be passed in Springfield. We can argue  
17 all day that we should be the masters of our own  
18 destiny, but this is the way the law works.

19 Once we raise this tax and extract  
20 another half a billion dollars out of the taxpayers  
21 of this County, we are going to release the pressure  
22 on Springfield and we are not going to remain on  
23 their priority list. The pension funds cannot  
24 survive, even with this tax, without reform, and

1 that is what needs to happen.

2 As much as I am more than committed to  
3 not leaving debt for the future, and for future  
4 generations, we have to also leave future  
5 generations a stable economy and a thriving one.

6 I vote "no", and I don't think this  
7 releases one iota of pressure for us, as we move  
8 into this budget, and still consider to consolidate  
9 the 1300 taxing bodies in Cook County, to look at  
10 structural reform. I look forward to working with  
11 many of my colleagues, regardless of how any of us  
12 voted today, to make this budget process as real as  
13 it could have been.

14 I vote "no".

15 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Gainer is  
16 "no".

17 Commissioner Garcia.

18 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Thank you, Mr.  
19 Chairman.

20 First I want to thank all of the  
21 witnesses who appeared here today and shared their  
22 perspective with us.

23 No doubt this is a challenging vote  
24 that we are about to take. I also want to thank

1 those who have argued forcefully against the  
2 proposed resolution and the ordinance amendments  
3 because this is what leads to healthy government,  
4 robust debate and good policy issues.

5 Having said that, I am going to save  
6 most of my remarks for the vote as we move to vote  
7 on the actual proposal before us. This is a vote on  
8 a resolution.

9 I will say that as we move forward  
10 approaching the main vote that is before us today,  
11 we are meeting the present challenge with respect to  
12 one of the greatest challenges facing Cook County  
13 Government, and that is the health and welfare of  
14 its pension fund that continues to affect everything  
15 that we do.

16 I think the debate gives us as a  
17 primer into how we think about the future of Cook  
18 County and what should be the most important issues  
19 as we craft the 2016 budget.

20 I look forward to working with all of  
21 my colleagues regardless of their vote on the matter  
22 before us on additional structural reforms in Cook  
23 County Government. The budget process will give us  
24 such an opportunity and a process to continue to



1 debate which way to move forward and the best  
2 approaches to modernizing Cook County Government.

3 We have taken some important steps  
4 over the past four and a half years and the progress  
5 must continue.

6 I vote "aye".

7 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Garcia is  
8 "yes".

9 Commissioner Gorman.

10 COMMISSIONER GORMAN: I will speak now even  
11 though the ordinance isn't before us, but to  
12 participate in this discussion, which I haven't had  
13 an opportunity.

14 This is a very difficult vote we are  
15 considering today. I respect both sides of the  
16 sales tax debate. I know the President and her  
17 Administration did not come to the sales tax  
18 proposal lightly. President Preckwinkle has  
19 proactively faced and tried to resolve the County's  
20 pension crisis when predecessors neglected to. She  
21 was left no favors.

22 Five years of substantive reform,  
23 under her leadership, has put Cook County on a  
24 strong path. But the reality of the unfunded

1 pension liabilities have put us into this position  
2 today, between a rock and a hard place. Much  
3 effort, energy, and resolve was put forth to rescind  
4 the previous Administration's sales tax. I know  
5 that as well as anyone on the Board. The reason for  
6 doing so, in repealing that tax, still exists today.

7           The blanket comparison of this  
8 proposal to the Stroger sales tax and the maligning  
9 of the President and her Administration, along with  
10 her fellow colleagues have been made by some people  
11 is nothing short of irresponsible. It is  
12 unfortunate that some people have chosen to overlook  
13 and completely ignore the accomplishments over the  
14 past five years of this President and this Board.

15           We have made significant strides in  
16 areas of reform, accountability, transparency,  
17 payroll headcount reduction, cutting bloat and  
18 wasteful spending, incorporating quantifiable  
19 measures, integrating new technology, streamlining  
20 County Government from top to bottom. Contrary to a  
21 few reports in the media, we continue to do these  
22 reforms each and every month.

23           Others have said -- let's wait for  
24 Springfield. We have been waiting on Springfield

1 for well over a year as our pension reform bill  
2 languishes down there. Waiting for pension reform  
3 in Springfield comes with a price tag of \$30 million  
4 a month -- wait and see -- can we afford that?

5 After having led the repeal of the  
6 previous sales tax, I am very aware of the loss on  
7 our border tax revenues and the impact tax increases  
8 can have on local businesses and residents. I have  
9 been steadfast in my opposition during my time in  
10 office.

11 As we weigh this important decision on  
12 long-term financial health and solvency in Cook  
13 County Government, and regardless of today's  
14 outcome, I am confident that this Administration and  
15 this Board will continue to move Cook County  
16 Government forward in an efficient and effective  
17 manner.

18 Having wrestled with this as to what  
19 the best vote is for the District and for Cook  
20 County Government, it has been a very conflicting  
21 decision to make. This is a difficult vote no  
22 matter which side of the issue that you are in, and  
23 no Commissioner should be criticized about their  
24 vote.

1                   With that said, I will vote "present".

2                   SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Gorman is  
3 "present".

4                   Commissioner Goslin.

5                   COMMISSIONER GOSLIN: No.

6                   SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Moore.

7                   COMMISSIONER MOORE: Yes.

8                   SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Murphy.

9                   COMMISSIONER MURPHY: Yes.

10                  SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Schneider.

11                  COMMISSIONER SCHNEIDER: No.

12                  SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Silvestri.

13                  COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: No.

14                  SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Sims.

15                  COMMISSIONER SIMS: Some of what

16 Commissioner Gorman said is correct. We can  
17 continue to wait on Springfield and nothing can  
18 happen.

19                  I would like to applaud the President  
20 for stepping up and doing what she thought would be  
21 the right thing for Cook County and for our  
22 employees and for all of the people of Cook County.

23                  Springfield hasn't gotten a pension  
24 bill signed for themselves. What makes us think

1 they are going to put us first and foremost?

2 For that reason, I will be voting  
3 "yes".

4 Again, to you, Madam President, you  
5 took a bold move. You took one. I know that was  
6 hard for you and I know that you wrestled with it.  
7 But you are doing the right thing for the people of  
8 Cook County. I hope at the end people recognize  
9 that you went against what you really believe to do  
10 what is right.

11 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Sims is  
12 "yes".

13 Commissioner Steele.

14 COMMISSIONER STEELE: Yes.

15 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Suffredin.

16 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: No.

17 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Tobolski.

18 COMMISSIONER TOBOLSKI: Yes.

19 SECRETARY TURNER: Chairman Daley.

20 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Aye.

21 SECRETARY TURNER: We have nine "yes",  
22 seven "nay", and one "present".

23 CHAIRMAN DALEY: The proposed resolution  
24 15-4291 passes.

1 Commissioner Garcia.

2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Having voted on the  
3 prevailing side in the last matter, I move to  
4 reconsider the vote.

5 COMMISSIONER MURPHY: I second it.

6 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Garcia has  
7 moved to reconsider and it has been seconded by  
8 Commissioner Murphy.

9 Leave to reverse the roll call.

10 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Leave.

11 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Leave granted. The motion  
12 fails.

13 Item number 15-4292, which is the  
14 proposed ordinance amendment regarding the Cook  
15 County service occupation tax.

16 COMMISSIONER SIMS: I so move.

17 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I second it.

18 CHAIRMAN DALEY: It has been moved by  
19 Commissioner Sims and seconded by Commissioner  
20 Garcia.

21 On the item, Commissioner Suffredin.

22 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: I think there are  
23 some amendments. I have two amendments that I  
24 presented. I would like to withdraw them at this

1 point. These amendments dealt with putting the  
2 entire amount of this tax into the pension fund,  
3 since this is supposed to be a pension-driven tax.  
4 But based upon the last vote, I can count. I will  
5 withdraw those two amendments so that we can debate  
6 the actual tax.

7 I think Commissioner Boykin also has a  
8 point.

9 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Boykin.

10 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Mr. Chairman, I have  
11 an amendment.

12 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Boykin, it  
13 has been distributed. Are you moving it?

14 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: What I am going to  
15 do, the amendment actually --

16 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Are you moving the  
17 amendment?

18 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: I am going to  
19 withdraw it, but I would at least like to talk about  
20 it. I am not going to ask for a vote on it.

21 CHAIRMAN DALEY: You withdrew it, so it is  
22 not on the floor.

23 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: I won't withdraw it  
24 then. How about that? I won't withdraw it.

1           CHAIRMAN DALEY: You can move and have it  
2 seconded. Then you can withdraw it.

3           COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: That is what I would  
4 like to do.

5           CHAIRMAN DALEY: It was moved by  
6 Commissioner Boykin and seconded by Commissioner  
7 Fritchey.

8           COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: I have been on this  
9 Board for seven months. What baffles me the most is  
10 that we are willing to go to the taxpayers and ask  
11 them for \$500 million. We want to do it in a New  
12 York second, if you will. We are not willing to  
13 tell them what they are going to get in exchange for  
14 it. We are telling them in broad strokes --  
15 pensions, roads, bridges, and infrastructures;  
16 that's it.

17                   I think this amendment would actually  
18 require a supermajority in order to raise the sales  
19 tax. After discussing this with my distinguished  
20 colleagues, who will be supportive of this, we are  
21 going to introduce this at the next Board meeting.  
22 But it will require twelve votes to raise the sales  
23 tax just like it requires twelve votes to raise the  
24 property tax.



1                   The reality is that property tax  
2 affects fewer people than the sales tax does. It is  
3 just as important to have a supermajority when we  
4 are talking about raising the sales taxes. It  
5 impacts everybody.

6                   I will withdraw the amendments and  
7 move to the sales tax bill.

8                   I thank the gentleman for his second.

9                   CHAIRMAN DALEY: It has been withdrawn and  
10 the seconder has withdrawn his second.

11                   Commissioners, we are now on the main  
12 item, the item 15-4292. It has been moved and  
13 seconded.

14                   There has been a request for a roll  
15 call.

16                   Before we do go to this, I would like  
17 to thank everyone who participated today. Today is  
18 about honoring the commitments made to our employees  
19 by this Board. In the last two years, this Board  
20 alone has approved over seventy-five union-  
21 negotiated collective bargaining agreements. These  
22 agreements accounted for over 21,000 Cook County  
23 workers. It does not include the agreements for  
24 AFSCME or the nurses, which will be coming very soon

1 to this Board.

2                   These agreements were approved  
3 unanimously with the exception recently with a few  
4 Board members starting to vote "no". We have known  
5 since the first downgrade from Moody's in 2013  
6 considering the growing unfunded pension liability  
7 and the gridlock over pension reform in Springfield  
8 that we can no longer afford to wait to try and  
9 improve the long-term viability of this County.

10                   I commend the President for going to  
11 Springfield a year ago. She and her Chief Financial  
12 Officer outlined the bill that went to Springfield.  
13 Part of that bill talked about a property tax  
14 increase. It was very clear from this Board, and  
15 talking to every single member of this Board, even  
16 though individuals on that team said the Republicans  
17 would be supporting the property tax, I knew they  
18 would not. Other members would not be supporting  
19 it. As we approach this, there was no support  
20 whatsoever for a property tax increase.

21                   We need to act now to reduce the long-  
22 term burden that the pension deficit will have on  
23 Cook County taxpayers. We can no longer wait for  
24 others to solve our pension deficit or long-term

1 problem. It is our problem.

2 I am proud to say that under the  
3 leadership of President Preckwinkle and this Board  
4 we have implemented reforms to Cook County  
5 Government. Under her leadership, we have seen the  
6 STAR report. We have seen the taxpayers -- she  
7 brought the three taxing bodies into her office and  
8 said, "I want these tax bills out on time." Now a  
9 lot of people didn't like that they were earlier,  
10 but the reality was that she brought them together  
11 and brought other elected officials together.

12 She is now working on working with the  
13 people in law enforcement trying to get them  
14 together, to work together to improve justice in  
15 this County.

16 Under her leadership, she has reduced  
17 the Cook County workforce by eight percent, reduced  
18 the health and hospital allocation by fifty-eight  
19 percent, decreased outstanding debt by five percent  
20 -- nearly \$250 million -- and, finally, returned  
21 over -- and we forget this -- over \$1.5 billion to  
22 our residents.

23 We have done this all while making our  
24 government more efficient and more responsive to the

1 people that it serves.

2 No one can sit here today and argue  
3 with a straight face that this government hasn't  
4 reformed under Toni Preckwinkle.

5 This is a very hard request from her,  
6 knowing what she campaigned on. But the sales tax  
7 had to be reduced, to bring under her leadership  
8 reform and credibility back to Cook County  
9 Government.

10 Now, as outlined in the preliminary  
11 budget, we are faced with rising pension costs and a  
12 \$198 million projected shortfall. The shortfalls  
13 for the pension funds are currently over \$6 billion.  
14 As the President has outlined this morning, she  
15 outlined where the sales tax might be going.

16 Apart from the City of Chicago, Cook  
17 County has had the worst funded pension system in  
18 the country. However, we have never taken a pension  
19 holiday. That is to our credit, unlike the City and  
20 other government agencies.

21 We will continue to experience bond  
22 rating downgrades, drastic pension demands, and  
23 increased costs in our personnel through negotiated  
24 labor contracts that this Board has nearly

1 unanimously voted for, as I said.

2 In the last two years alone, this  
3 Board, as I have stated, has approved seventy-five  
4 union contracts. The impact of these approved  
5 agreements to the pension fund is approximately \$100  
6 million alone over the next two years.

7 We have an obligation, and I know the  
8 Board. Every single member of this Board takes it  
9 seriously, to the Cook County employees and  
10 pensioners to make sure that this fund is funded at  
11 a responsible level.

12 We cannot afford, in my estimation, to  
13 kick the can down the road and saddle our children  
14 and grandchildren with broken promises.

15 As we all know, there is no will from  
16 this Board to increase property taxes. I would be  
17 shocked. In talking to most members on this Board,  
18 it is impossible to get any support for that.

19 President Preckwinkle has committed to  
20 combining the revenue from the sales tax with a \$100  
21 million reduction in expenditures, through the  
22 implementation of a countywide automated time and  
23 attendance system, demolishing buildings at Oak  
24 Forest, the health campus, and reducing the County's

1 vehicle fleet.

2 It is the responsible thing to do. We  
3 will have many debates in the future during the  
4 upcoming budget.

5 Many members of this Board, who I  
6 respect, who refuse to vote for a sales tax, said  
7 they are open to new revenue, and I look forward to  
8 those as I look forward to the cuts that come to  
9 this Board.

10 I urge you to participate in the  
11 budget process. She has presented her budget in the  
12 past six years, but if you want cuts in that budget,  
13 present them as an amendment. When we had the  
14 Recorder combining with the Clerk's office, it was  
15 very clear that the reduction was not going to  
16 affect the employees whatsoever.

17 Members of this Board who are opposed  
18 to a sales tax increase have benefitted many times  
19 from the transportation funding in their Districts.  
20 They have shown up many times for the pictures. It  
21 is not right.

22 Municipalities in the border suburbs  
23 complain that the sales tax increase will hurt local  
24 businesses. When we reduced our sales tax, I have

1 yet to see any of them reduce their sales tax.

2 We have honored our commitment over  
3 the last five years by making many difficult  
4 choices, but we have collectively voted to increase  
5 our own obligations. Now it is time to make good on  
6 our promises to our employees, pensioners, and  
7 constituents.

8 I would urge an "aye" vote.

9 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Suffredin.

10 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: Thank you, Mr.  
11 Chairman, and thank you for your remarks.

12 I would like to speak to this  
13 ordinance and speak against it.

14 Good intentions and good purposes  
15 don't improve bad tax policy. The sales tax is bad  
16 tax policy.

17 We heard earlier about people  
18 concerned about their real estate taxes in a number  
19 of the areas of the County, but one of the things  
20 that drives down real estate taxes is bad sales tax  
21 policy. Because many of the buildings that are  
22 vacant in many of the communities that are starving  
23 for real estate dollars for their schools are retail  
24 facilities that we drove out of business in 2008 or

1 were driven out earlier by the tax policies of our  
2 sales tax.

3 I represent Lake-Cook Road. I share  
4 it with Commissioner Goslin and Commissioner  
5 Schneider. There are some legacy shopping centers  
6 that are on the Cook side of Lake-Cook Road, but  
7 they have many more vacancies than the many, many  
8 shopping centers that are across the street on the  
9 Lake County side.

10 These are jobs. These are important  
11 parts of the economies of our communities. We need  
12 to protect our jobs. We need to have a regional  
13 approach. Economic development on a regional basis  
14 isn't just raising our tax so high that we benefit  
15 the collar counties. It is looking at things in a  
16 regional way.

17 Even the sales tax for the RTA is not  
18 regional either. We have a one cent sales tax. Our  
19 collar counties have a lesser amount on that sales  
20 tax.

21 We heard today from people who are the  
22 employers of our citizens, who are the generators of  
23 revenues that are necessary to keep our communities  
24 going. We need to do something about the pensions.



1 That was my whole premise during the last budget.  
2 That is when I got the opinion that we could  
3 increase the funding. I find it very strange today  
4 that we are not getting a guarantee that any money  
5 is going to the pension fund; we are getting a  
6 question with a legal discussion as to where this  
7 money will go.

8 By the way, if you put this money into  
9 an escrow as was suggested in one of the briefings I  
10 was in, that takes away from the pension fund the  
11 geometric growth of that money through the  
12 investments, which is at 7.75% right now, which is  
13 the actuarial standard.

14 I think that what we need to  
15 understand is that we have done this once before --  
16 as Scott Price, from Toms Price Furniture indicated,  
17 he saw the decline in his sales. He saw it reverse  
18 when we changed the law. We know what is going to  
19 happen. We are hurting Cook County by this vote.

20 I ask for a "no" vote on this, and the  
21 subsequent ordinance that will be the use tax.

22 Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Fritchey.

24 COMMISSIONER FRITCHEY: Thank you, Mr.

1 Chairman. I have written my comments. I believe it  
2 will be briefer than if I meander.

3 I want to first say that I appreciate  
4 that there is a significant difference of opinion  
5 between myself and many of our colleagues. But we  
6 manage to disagree respectfully. I think that is a  
7 sign of government at its best.

8 I want to start by giving credit where  
9 credit is due as well. Madam President, with you at  
10 the helm, in just over four years we have worked  
11 together to turn around the ship that is Cook County  
12 Government.

13 As you have pointed out, we have  
14 reduced the budget by hundreds of millions of  
15 dollars. We have reduced the subsidy to the Health  
16 System. We have reduced headcount. We have saved  
17 tens of millions of dollars through collaboration  
18 with the City of Chicago and we have put over \$1  
19 billion back in taxpayers' pockets through tax  
20 reductions. In other words, we have put our ship  
21 back on the right course.

22 And we did it all while keeping the  
23 promise that almost every one of us in this room  
24 made -- a promise to roll back the sales tax

1 increase spearheaded by the previous Administration.  
2 A sales tax increase that burdened millions of  
3 people with the highest sales tax rate in the  
4 country and hit our most vulnerable residents the  
5 hardest.

6 I understand that sometimes unforeseen  
7 obstacles can require a change in the course of a  
8 ship, a need to chart a new path. And, having spent  
9 as much time in public service as I have, I realize  
10 that sometimes tough times call for tough decisions.  
11 But the obstacles before us were not unforeseen; the  
12 pension iceberg has been visible in front of us for  
13 quite some time.

14 When a ship enters treacherous waters,  
15 those responsible for it should exercise more  
16 caution than ever. Yet, here we are in a special  
17 Board meeting, in the captain's quarters, as it  
18 were, being told that we will sink unless we take  
19 action and take action now. I am simply unmoved  
20 that it is time to jump ship or to go back on our  
21 promise to the taxpayers.

22 We are being asked to authorize  
23 hundreds of millions of dollars in new taxes, to  
24 raise the Cook County sales tax by 130% -- without

1 seeing a proposed budget. Asked to return Chicago  
2 to the dubious distinction of having the highest  
3 sales tax in the country -- without knowing the  
4 future of pending pension legislation. To go back  
5 on our promise -- without knowing if we could have  
6 done more in order to avoid doing so.

7           And I would be remiss if I didn't  
8 point out that those residents who live in the area  
9 bordered by Diversey, Ashland, the Stevenson  
10 Expressway, and the Lake, many of whom are my  
11 constituents, and the countless tourists who dine in  
12 the heart of the City in that area already pay an  
13 additional one percent restaurant sales tax by  
14 virtue of the McPier tax surcharge.

15           Should this tax pass today, they will  
16 be paying a staggering 11.25% sales tax. That is  
17 simply unconscionable.

18           In the President's own words, she made  
19 a vow, "to working families who saw the price of  
20 toothpaste, milk, and baby formula rise". She  
21 promised to remove at least one burden of the many  
22 that they face on a daily basis. We have heard a  
23 lot of talk today about how the sales tax impacts  
24 rich people. They are making big purchases. Their

1 pennies don't really add up. They do add up.

2           The President was right to point out  
3 the impact on working families. The proposed sales  
4 tax increase is inherently regressive. It hits the  
5 poorest the hardest and in Cook County the majority  
6 of those poor are people of color.

7           In other words, the dollars raised may  
8 be green, but the people hardest hit will be  
9 disproportionately black and brown.

10           This sales tax increase will also have  
11 an adverse impact on businesses, especially those  
12 businesses near the County's borders. And when  
13 businesses suffer, some of the first ones to feel  
14 the pain are the employees, often low-wage workers  
15 who may now find themselves with fewer hours on the  
16 clock, making less money, and having to pay more for  
17 necessities. In other words, those who can least  
18 afford it will be the first ones to have to walk the  
19 plank.

20           As kids, we learned that we should  
21 keep our promises. As elected representatives of  
22 the people, that lesson is even more important. As  
23 we meet here today, you must be mindful that nine of  
24 you, just nine of you, are poised to raise the sales

1 tax on millions of people by hundreds of millions of  
2 dollars year after year into perpetuity.

3 And knowing you all as I do, I know  
4 that not one of you is going to make that vote  
5 lightly or without realizing the impact that it will  
6 have on your constituents, your neighbors, your  
7 businesses, and potentially your career. But can  
8 you really tell yourself that there was nothing else  
9 that we could do? No other fundamental changes that  
10 we have in our power to implement?

11 The alternative to a tax hike always  
12 doesn't have to be another tax hike. Voting for a  
13 tax increase is never easy. And neither is voting  
14 to change the status quo. Are you sure that this is  
15 the direction you want to lead our ship into?

16 Something else to keep in mind is that  
17 while this ordinance is a tax increase, it's also a  
18 rollback of sorts. If you vote for this measure,  
19 you're not only increasing the County sales tax  
20 130%, you're rolling back promises that many of you  
21 made, and, more importantly, you're rolling back the  
22 faith and trust that people were once again having  
23 in County Government.

24 People will spend their money

1 elsewhere. Businesses and the jobs they create may  
2 just pack up and move. At a time when our residents  
3 believe that we were once again rowing in the right  
4 direction, this one vote will cause many of them to  
5 jump ship.

6 This one vote will put County  
7 Government into the Wayback Machine, back to a time  
8 when our County Government was seen as a bureaucracy  
9 that never met a tax it didn't like. And now one  
10 that doesn't keep its word to residents.

11 I respectfully request a "no" vote.

12 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Schneider.

13 COMMISSIONER SCHNEIDER: Thank you very  
14 much, Mr. Chairman.

15 Over the past few years Cook County  
16 has made great strides into improving transparency,  
17 accountability, and fiscal responsibility. I  
18 applaud the President for her efforts to transform  
19 Cook County from the laughingstock of the nation to  
20 a respected unit of government.

21 However, today we take a potentially  
22 huge step backwards. Today we make Cook County  
23 disastrously less competitive than its neighboring  
24 counties. Cook County should work to initiate pro-

1 growth and pro-business policies. Government cannot  
2 tax itself to prosperity. It doesn't and has never  
3 worked.

4 Just look at the states that have  
5 instituted lower taxes and pro-growth policies. For  
6 example, forty percent of all of the new jobs  
7 created in the United States in 2009 were created in  
8 Texas due to pro-growth, pro-business policies.

9 The sales tax will raise \$460 million  
10 plus. But I fear tens, and potentially hundreds of  
11 millions of dollars will be lost if this sales tax  
12 will be imposed.

13 I have received letters from the  
14 majority of all of the Mayors in my District. I  
15 have received countless emails, letters, and phone  
16 calls from businesses in my District that say --  
17 please don't increase the sales tax in Cook County.

18 This will result in citizens crossing  
19 county lines to purchase goods elsewhere. It will  
20 close hundreds of retail businesses and nearly  
21 eliminate retail business growth in locations  
22 neighboring collar counties.

23 I will give you an example. In 2003  
24 we received \$123 million in cigarette tax. At the



1 end of 2003, we doubled the tax on cigarettes to two  
2 dollars a pack. The next we received over \$200  
3 million in tax revenue from cigarettes. However,  
4 three years later, we actually were receiving less  
5 than what we did when it was only a dollar a pack.  
6 People have choices and people will find other  
7 places to buy their goods and services.

8           With this tax, we will see lower  
9 property tax revenues, people will lose their jobs,  
10 and we will eliminate a great many potential retail  
11 new jobs. These folks would have had jobs and would  
12 have bought homes and paid taxes. They would have  
13 bought goods and paid taxes, and they would have  
14 bought services and paid taxes.

15           This tax is a bad idea. Let's be  
16 different. Let's be the government that doesn't tax  
17 itself out of its problems.

18           This measure and all revenue should be  
19 discussed as we take up the budget this fall. Just  
20 as my resolution to rule out a property tax increase  
21 was deemed out of order because of -- and I quote --  
22 the contentious nature of this resolution and our  
23 inability to adequately analyze the need for it, in  
24 lieu of having a budget presented for the fiscal

1 year 2016. Revenue items are a component of the  
2 budget process, and we should not be considering a  
3 tax hike without giving the public a chance to see  
4 how their money will be spent in the next fiscal  
5 year.

6 We cannot even be sure that the money  
7 that we are imposing on the citizens of Cook Count  
8 is actually going to go to our pensions without  
9 legislative approval.

10 I do not look forward to the outcome  
11 of this vote today. But if a sales tax can be  
12 imposed twice, I look forward to championing the  
13 effort to repeal it twice.

14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Vice-Chair Sims.

16 COMMISSIONER SIMS: Thank you, Chairman  
17 Daley.

18 One thing you said in your speech is  
19 that if we do this tax increase that a lot of the  
20 colleagues who voted "no" here will go to the  
21 ribbon-cutting. They will smile and have their  
22 constituents talk about what a great job they did.  
23 None of them are going to say, "Don't put the money  
24 in my District. Put it in a District where the

1 Commissioners voted 'yes' and made this hard vote."  
2 Because after this vote is taken, whatever it is,  
3 the people will forget who voted "no". They will  
4 look for the benefits of what voting "yes" will do.

5 We had some businesspeople come here  
6 and state it is going to hurt their businesses.  
7 There is nobody that monitors when businesses have a  
8 fifty percent markup on the things that they bring  
9 into their stores, and they turn around and say it  
10 is a tax. Nobody is scrutinizing that.

11 The Chamber doesn't talk about it.  
12 They don't look at the businesses -- I am going to  
13 use this as a store that just recently opened and  
14 everybody is shopping there. I have shopped outside  
15 of Cook County in this particular store -- I am  
16 going to use "ribs" because this is what I purchase.  
17 In my community, outside of my community that is  
18 near where I live, I bought those ribs in my store  
19 and they are ten dollars. I mean in my community  
20 they are twelve dollars. In another community, they  
21 are ten. Tell me why there is a difference.

22 So when businesses say that it is the  
23 tax, nobody is looking at their markup. When  
24 businesses leave in my District -- my ministers are

1 here -- they will tell you there are no businesses  
2 and we are not near any border. So why are the  
3 businesses leaving?

4 The businesses want to know, if  
5 businesses will come to communities like Lawndale,  
6 where Commissioner Steele and Commissioner Boykin  
7 and Commissioner Moore and I represent, maybe we  
8 would have the same argument that some of my other  
9 colleagues have. But we don't have that argument.

10 If the people who are going to suffer  
11 this the hardest are willing to make this sacrifice  
12 -- that is usually how the world is and that is  
13 usually how things are; the people with the least  
14 will suffer the most, and they will accept that  
15 things will probably get better. Until that changes  
16 and everybody realizes that we are all in this ship  
17 with the captain of this ship, then we are going to  
18 have this division.

19 I would like to see everybody support  
20 this. The President has done a great job in trying  
21 to right this ship -- because I have been here and I  
22 am not going to say we did anything bad in the past.  
23 Economics did this to us. For those of us that have  
24 been here, we have all tried to do what was right.

1                   For the businesses in this room -- if  
2 you have got a problem, come to my District. Some  
3 of my ministers are here and they will tell you.  
4 Apostle White has a building that he owns. Put your  
5 business over there in the building that he has.  
6 Reverend Krider (??) has a newspaper. Take out ads  
7 in his newspaper. If we had those things, then they  
8 wouldn't be sitting here today saying that we would  
9 probably need the sales tax because this ship would  
10 be right. Everybody would be benefiting.

11                   The people that work for Cook County  
12 wouldn't be sitting in this room talking about --  
13 raise the sales tax so I don't lose my pension.

14                   We have to do what is right. Don't  
15 come to the ribbon-cutting if you can't support this  
16 tax. Tell your people that you didn't support it,  
17 because if we don't do their roads, you will know  
18 why.

19                   CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Boykin.

20                   COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Mr. Chairman, and  
21 Madam President, and distinguished colleagues, and  
22 citizens of Cook County.

23                   I just heard my distinguished  
24 colleagues, the Vice-Chair of this Committee,

1 talking. Let me say this: Again, I have been on  
2 this Board for seven months. In the seven months  
3 that I have been on the Board, we have done an audit  
4 of the District. The District has been woefully  
5 funded -- underfunded, if you will. There have been  
6 grant opportunities for violence prevention and  
7 reduction.

8 At just the last Board meeting, this  
9 Body approved \$800,000 in violence reduction grants.  
10 Not one penny to Austin, which leads all  
11 neighborhoods in terms of violence, in terms of  
12 homicides in the City of Chicago. Not one dime to  
13 East and West Garfield, which ranks three and four  
14 in terms of violence, overall violence in the City.  
15 No money to North Lawndale.

16 This vote that I have today, Mr.  
17 Chairman, I will just put it like this: It  
18 illustrates the basic problem that we have. It is a  
19 problem of individuals being taxed out and being  
20 squeezed by debt obligations as well and fees. You  
21 see one guy on one side, he is basically drowning in  
22 debt. The other guy is somebody who is wealthy, of  
23 means. He might be able to afford this penny tax  
24 increase. It is okay for him, but it is not okay

1 for the majority of the folks who live in the  
2 poorest communities in Cook County.

3 At the end of the day, this is not  
4 just about economics. It is about social justice  
5 and it is about fairness. No one, whatever their  
6 opinions about this issue, can argue with the fact  
7 that sales tax hits poor people harder than anybody  
8 else. That is because poor people have to spend a  
9 larger percentage of their income -- let me  
10 underscore that -- income -- just to get by.

11 Every Commissioner on this Board  
12 should think about what it means for a person on a  
13 fixed income or a person with a low income or even a  
14 moderate income to go to the store, purchase a  
15 gallon of milk, a dozen eggs, a pair of socks, a  
16 tube of toothpaste, and what kind of additional  
17 expense this tax increase will add to that person's  
18 shopping bill.

19 In fact, Mr. Chairman, in poorer  
20 communities people pay more for everything. Go buy  
21 gas in a poor community. You are going to pay more  
22 for gas in a poor community. You are going to pay  
23 even more under this proposal. Go buy toothpaste in  
24 a poor community and you are going to pay more. Go

1 to the local store in a poor community. You are  
2 going to get lesser quality products, but you are  
3 going to pay more for them. That is unconscionable.

4 We are putting the onus, the burden of  
5 this sales tax on the poorest of the poor. It is  
6 wrong.

7 Now somebody said earlier, you know,  
8 they evoke God in this process. Let me invoke God  
9 and say what you are doing to the least of these you  
10 also do unto God. Remember that.

11 Let me also say that we have an  
12 obligation as Commissioners to be fiduciaries over  
13 this money. Every Commissioner on this Board should  
14 ask himself or herself whether he or she wants to be  
15 responsible for adding a tax of 10.25% to that  
16 person's shopping bill; 10.25% without question.

17 In areas around McPier, as my  
18 colleague has pointed out, it will be 11.25%.

19 This tax increase will earn Cook  
20 County the distinction of having the most regressive  
21 tax structure in the nation. We don't want to lead  
22 with a regressive tax structure in the nation. I  
23 want to lead with economic development and business  
24 expansion and growing jobs in our neighborhood that



1 desperately need them.

2                   The question we must ask ourselves is:  
3 Do we want this to happen on our watch? I say,  
4 "No." I say, "Not on our watch." Illinois already  
5 ranks second -- second -- in taxes in the poor and  
6 working class, according to the report released by  
7 the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.  
8 Illinois taxes its poor at a rate of 13.8% and its  
9 wealthiest one percent at a rate of 4.9%. Yu tell  
10 me what is wrong with that -- right?

11                   We ought to work with the Legislature  
12 to get that turned around and get a progressive  
13 income tax passed. But we shouldn't burden those  
14 who are poor in the County of Cook with this  
15 additional sales tax. This is shameful. In Cook  
16 County, we should be working to close this wealth  
17 gap. Yet today President Preckwinkle is asking us  
18 to blast that gap wide open. The President of Cook  
19 County is actually asking us to exacerbate the  
20 wealth inequity by increasing the sales tax on the  
21 poorest of the poor. It is the wrong thing to do.

22                   Five years ago, President Preckwinkle  
23 told us that she would help us save our hard-earned  
24 pennies. Now she is asking us to give our hard-

1 earned pennies to her Administration before she even  
2 provides us with a budget so that we know what she  
3 plans to do with those pennies.

4           Now much has been made about a crisis  
5 relative to pensions. Well, this crisis didn't just  
6 start overnight. This crisis was building up years  
7 in the making. We should have dealt with this years  
8 ago. We should have dealt with it a year ago. But  
9 we shouldn't go to the taxpayers right now and ask  
10 them for half a billion dollars unless we know for a  
11 certainty that we have exhausted every ounce of  
12 efficiency and cutting costs and consolidation in  
13 this government. It is the wrong thing to do to ask  
14 the taxpayers to pay additional resources, and we  
15 haven't done our job in terms of cost-cutting.

16           I know people have applauded the  
17 President. I applaud her for her leadership. But  
18 let me tell you this: Seven months on the Board I  
19 have seen a lot of waste myself. I have seen a  
20 whole lot of documents that are printed up that we  
21 can get rid of these documents and move to the  
22 technology. Use technology. I have seen contracts  
23 that have started at a million dollars, go up to \$10  
24 million in terms of redoing the contract.

1                   What I am saying is that there are a  
2 lot of efficiencies that could be had. We shouldn't  
3 go to the taxpayers before we have done our work  
4 here. She wants us to charge a fee. She won't even  
5 tell us what services she intends to provide in  
6 exchange for that fee. Because she has yet to show  
7 us a budget -- without a budget, we have no idea if  
8 this increase is really necessary, other than, of  
9 course, the stated crisis on these pensions which is  
10 costing us a million dollars a day.

11                   I will remind the citizens of Cook  
12 County this did not begin overnight. We built this  
13 up. This happened over years. We haven't been good  
14 stewards of that which the people entrusted us with.

15                   We don't know what the potential  
16 efficiencies are. We don't have a full accounting  
17 of other potential sources of revenue. We have no  
18 final product before us. But it seems clear that  
19 whatever the final product turns out to look like,  
20 President Preckwinkle has already decided who she  
21 wants to pay. She wants the poorest residents of  
22 the County of Cook to pay the most.

23                   I want to be clear, and it says it. I  
24 want to be clear on this. In the year 2000,

1 nineteen percent of Chicagoans lived in poverty.  
2 Today, twenty-two percent of Chicagoans live in  
3 poverty. That comes to 500,000 people living below  
4 the poverty line at \$23,834 for a family of four.  
5 The City of Chicago's increasing poverty and  
6 declining middle class directly impacts our County  
7 finances and it impacts our neighborhoods. Poverty  
8 is a root cause of violence on the south and west  
9 sides of Chicago, and we have had a violent summer  
10 in Cook County.

11 We should be working to alleviate the  
12 conditions that cause violence, not trying to  
13 actively worsen those conditions. To quote a wise  
14 colleague of mine in this Body: "How much can you  
15 squeeze the poor and the working people before there  
16 is nothing left to squeeze?" A vote for this tax  
17 increase is a vote to keep squeezing. That is  
18 wrong. It is hasty and it is ill-advised.

19 I will also add that it punishes  
20 businesses located on the far edge of the County  
21 whose customers could easily flee to purchase their  
22 goods in collar counties with lower tax rates.  
23 DuPage County, which is ten minutes from my  
24 District, in Oak Brook, actually has a sales tax

1 rate of 7.25%. Who wouldn't go to DuPage County?  
2 Number one, you don't have to run the risk of  
3 getting shot. Number two, you know it is going to  
4 be -- you know you are going to get a pretty good  
5 product there. Three, you are going to get a lower  
6 sales tax. Who wouldn't go to DuPage County?

7 As a Commissioner who represents the  
8 western suburbs, I have profiled concerns on how  
9 this would impact the local businesses in my  
10 District. Ross Wasserstrom is the owner of Avenue  
11 Computer in Oak Park. He basically stated to me at  
12 a forum that was held by the Oak Park/River Forest  
13 Chamber, who is actively opposed to this as is  
14 Menard's and a lot of the businesses in my District.  
15 He stated that this sales tax proposal could put him  
16 out of business. He stated the people won't  
17 purchase computers from him, but they will go to  
18 DuPage County to purchase their computers.

19 We shouldn't make Cook County less  
20 competitive. We ought to be about expanding the  
21 competitiveness of Cook County. We ought to be  
22 about growing our County's worker base - employment  
23 base. That way we bring in more revenue. That way  
24 we won't have to go to taxpayers and ask them for

1 additional resources by way of a sales tax.

2 We should all be deeply concerned  
3 about how this will affect the poorest, the most  
4 economically distressed residents of our County.  
5 Those who don't own property. Those who live from  
6 month to month. Those who live from hand to mouth.  
7 Those people who benefit, the County Government  
8 exists. We should be lifting them up and not  
9 burdening them with additional taxes, debt, fees.  
10 They are taxed out and they are drowning in debt and  
11 in taxes.

12 I urge a "no" vote on this sales tax  
13 increase.

14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Tobolski.

16 COMMISSIONER TOBOLSKI: Thank you, Mr.  
17 Chairman, and Madam President.

18 I just got some things that I have  
19 written down. First of all, again I would like to  
20 thank everyone who came out today to voice their  
21 opinion, public opinion, and the opinion here of the  
22 Board to date. Those are the things that make our  
23 country great. Hopefully it will guide us down the  
24 path in getting to the right decision.

1                   I am going on about two hours worth of  
2 sleep here today. I didn't take this lightly. I  
3 went to bed at 9:30. I woke up at midnight. I just  
4 spent a lot of time thinking about this decision. I  
5 concur there probably isn't a Commissioner here who  
6 takes this lightly.

7                   At the end of the day, we stepped up  
8 and we ran for public office. You are correct,  
9 those of you who say yes, the public puts their  
10 trust in us, not to scare them or put fear in their  
11 hearts, but to lead them. To make the tough  
12 decisions that need to be made so that there isn't a  
13 deception down the road.

14                   I think you need to be on the Board a  
15 little more than seven months before you have a  
16 clear understanding of what is happening here. I  
17 have been here for five years now. My dad told me  
18 many years ago -- I quote this quite often -- to  
19 keep my mouth shut and my eyes and ears wide open  
20 and you might learn a few things.

21                   All of these wonderful solutions that  
22 have been proposed have been tried. They have been  
23 shot down one after another. The President asked  
24 for a six percent reduction departmentally wide when

1 she got here. There were Supreme Court cases filed  
2 against us by every independently elected official  
3 telling us that they didn't have to do that. We are  
4 currently spending taxpayers' dollars in a lawsuit  
5 over a "freakin'" ethics ordinance. That is the  
6 extent that these departments go to.

7 In some instances, I can understand  
8 their right to do that. But to sit here and tell  
9 your constituents that somehow it is going to be  
10 sunshine and rainbows, and we are going to  
11 consolidate these departments, and they are going to  
12 concur with layoffs is ridiculous. Because we have  
13 been there, as you have said, and we have done that,  
14 and it is not happening. To me that is one point  
15 that I wanted to dwell on.

16 Number two -- I took about ten emails  
17 total. I was in the Sun-Times on the editorial  
18 page. I just put my little behind right out there.  
19 A total of about ten calls. All I did was talk to  
20 the people. I shared with them the truth. The  
21 truth will always get you to where you need to be.

22 There are many hidden agendas out here  
23 today and that is part of the political process,  
24 too. We represent varied districts. We represent



1 along political geographies, different interests.  
2 But at the end of the day we have to come here to  
3 try to do the right thing for everyone. That is why  
4 we are in the state that we are in.

5 I want to get to something that  
6 Commissioner Daley said, without getting into too  
7 much detail. We have one district here where we  
8 have \$100 million worth of taxpayers' money that has  
9 been spent. We have one where \$78 million of the  
10 taxpayers' money has been spent. There has been no  
11 support for a single revenue source. That is just  
12 hypocritical, and that is absolutely wrong.

13 To sit here now and wave the flag and  
14 be the champion of the taxpayers, when your hand has  
15 been in the cookie jar for the last four years is  
16 absolutely sinful. I am tired of it. I am  
17 absolutely tired of it.

18 If you can't stand up and you can't  
19 make the right decisions, then maybe you should step  
20 down and bring somebody in here who can.

21 Businesses -- how many business  
22 incentives do we pass here? I am in the Village of  
23 McCook as a Mayor. Fifty percent of these  
24 businesses' taxes are rebated by this County,

1 without question. I don't think in four years I  
2 have ever seen a "no". Fifty percent -- of that the  
3 seventeen measly "freakin'" percent that I get as  
4 Mayor is cut by fifty percent. Then they hire the  
5 sharp lawyers who go in and appeal those taxes even  
6 more.

7 I would not listen to one businessman  
8 who came up here and told me that they were hurting  
9 because they are not.

10 I talk to a lot of people who work in  
11 these businesses -- not the business owners, but the  
12 people who work there. Women, young waitresses, who  
13 often work more than forty hours a week who are not  
14 paid for that. Who don't get insurance for that.  
15 Who are not compensated for that. Then when I try  
16 to talk to the owners on their boats parked over in  
17 Lake Michigan about what they intend to do about it,  
18 they tell me -- Commissioner, I am shocked that  
19 Obamacare is going to mandate that I insure these  
20 people now. I am shocked because I am actually  
21 going to have to pay them for the forty hours that  
22 they work. Those are the people that we need to  
23 step up and we make sure that we protect.

24 Yes, I am not an anti-business person.

1 Go look at the Village of McCook. There are three  
2 more companies that are moving in there -- probably  
3 a total now of 5000 people a day that go to work  
4 there because we do work hard with tax incentives.  
5 Because the President does cooperate. Those are the  
6 breaks that they have gotten. But they are back  
7 here now with their hands out wanting even more.

8 This is all about shared sacrifice. I  
9 dare anyone here to tell me that either themselves  
10 or a member of their family has not at one time  
11 benefited from the services that Cook County  
12 provides them. A hospital system, a court system, a  
13 morgue, a department of public health. All of these  
14 services at one time back in the sixties and  
15 seventies were handled locally. These  
16 municipalities and mayors could not afford them. So  
17 who got stuck with them? Not the folks in  
18 Springfield. Us right here, Cook County Government.  
19 To ask you to pay one penny for a \$50,000 or \$60,000  
20 hospital bill is not a lot to ask.

21 We have had two budget cycles when I  
22 first got here where we targeted special interests,  
23 where we went to small sections of the population.  
24 We said, look, we are going to have to increase this

1 fee or we are going to have to raise this a little  
2 bit, but we are going to be able to balance our  
3 budget. Things are going to get better for us.  
4 Being truthful and open with them, we worked through  
5 those processes into the last two budget cycles  
6 where they didn't have to give anything. Unlike  
7 everyone else who taxed them in the world, they  
8 didn't have to give anything to Cook County.

9 That leads me to another point. I  
10 talk about the Cook County tax bill and I often say  
11 -- this should really say the "State of Illinois tax  
12 bill" because that is who gets the money. Once  
13 again, they were sharp enough to put it on our  
14 letterhead so we get beat up over it. We are not  
15 increasing anything by ten percent. We are not  
16 increasing anything by 10.5%. We are asking for a  
17 simple penny. So if you are aggravated with the  
18 total amount of tax you have to pay, start finding  
19 your Illinois State Representatives and start asking  
20 them what they are doing down there.

21 Do you realize that their unpaid bills  
22 -- \$6.75 billion is our pension debt. That is the  
23 smallest of their problems. Yet they take 6.75% of  
24 the sales tax and beat us up when we ask for a penny

1 to keep our government solvent and moving in the  
2 right direction. It doesn't make any sense to me.  
3 That was another thing that I had written down while  
4 I was here.

5 I can't go back to the seniors in  
6 unincorporated Cook County and ask them now to pay a  
7 dollar - \$1.50 -- \$5.50, \$7.50, \$10.00 more on their  
8 car sticker because we don't all want to share in  
9 the sacrifice that is required at this point to keep  
10 this County moving forward. This County is not  
11 moving backwards. This County is moving in the  
12 right direction. It is more solvent than some of  
13 the villages.

14 The people forget that in 2016 the  
15 pension reform hits. The State statute changes. It  
16 says that that tax money that you have been counting  
17 on to balance your budget, if you are not making  
18 your pension payment, it goes directly to your  
19 Pension Board. I reminded my Mayors when they  
20 called me to complain about the penny sales tax.  
21 They are going to have their own unique set of  
22 problems in a short period of time, and it is going  
23 to cost them more than a penny to get themselves out  
24 of it.

1                   There is no escape. I have heard  
2 theories about the Pension Board writing letters to  
3 Mayors giving them forgiveness -- deals between the  
4 Pension Board and the local municipal officials.  
5 That is not what the law says. The law says if your  
6 auditors tell the State that you are not making your  
7 pension payments the State will make it for you. So  
8 that deficit is going to exist.

9                   I don't want to deceive people like  
10 that. I want to keep the County moving in the right  
11 direction. I want to make sure they understand why  
12 we are doing this, what they get from it, and how it  
13 benefits them.

14                   I told that same group of Mayors --  
15 let's just say, for example, we decide -- again, for  
16 example, and this is hypothetically; I don't want  
17 anybody to run into my office -- we decide to close  
18 the court system and give it back to the local  
19 municipalities. The savings there would be  
20 extravagant; they would.

21                   We would just take all of the people  
22 and we would say, "Look, either Governor Rauner, you  
23 figure it out. You figure out how you are going to  
24 run the court system in Illinois, or the local

1 municipal mayors. Reopen our courthouses. Rebuild  
2 your jails. Hire the Sheriff's police, the State's  
3 Attorneys, the Public Defenders, all of these  
4 wonderful things that Federal authorities tell us we  
5 have to have. That is why we operate the court  
6 system, because they couldn't afford to do it then  
7 and they certainly can't afford to do it now.

8           There wasn't a single comment from a  
9 Mayor in the room.

10           I will say it again: We are not  
11 asking you to like it. We are simply asking you to  
12 help explain and help people understand how valuable  
13 this penny becomes for us.

14           I think we have done a great job under  
15 the President's Administration in looking out for  
16 and helping those people in Cook County who are in  
17 need of those safety net services, who need our  
18 help. I am sure that we will continue to do that.

19           But the issue here, where we have the  
20 hole in the ship and where we are leaking water, is  
21 to plug that hole until, as it was said earlier --  
22 until we address the pension issue the impact on  
23 overall County Government is significant. It is  
24 like, as the President said, having a credit card

1 that you only pay the interest on. The bill will  
2 never be paid in full.

3 Springfield pension reform. Even if  
4 pension reform -- if Jesus appeared down there, they  
5 passed the bill and it got through, because that is  
6 what it is going to take, gets us halfway there.  
7 The problem still exists, along with all of the  
8 other issues that we have.

9 The collar counties -- all of us in  
10 this room have family that live in the collar  
11 counties. Believe it or not -- this may be shocking  
12 to some of you -- it costs just about as much to  
13 live in the Plainfield-Joliet-Mokena area now as it  
14 does to live in McCook, Illinois. Because you know  
15 what? Roads have to be built. Schools have to be  
16 put in. Infrastructure has to be taken care of.  
17 They are not that far from getting to where we are.

18 I have friends that serve in the  
19 DuPage County Government. They are looking at some  
20 serious issues there. They are going to get to  
21 where we are.

22 The other thing I say is it is real  
23 easy to have those great numbers when you have a  
24 sheet of paper that you hand to every indigent or



1 poor person in your community that directs them to  
2 our hospital; yet you fail to pay your share for  
3 those services. Now, again, we have never turned  
4 any of those people away. I think at one time at  
5 the Board we decided, all of us, that we would never  
6 want to do that; that is a bullet we are going to  
7 have to bite. But guess what? That still needs to  
8 be paid for.

9 In the end, when I look at this, I am  
10 not going to go back on my commitment to public  
11 safety, to public health. And I certainly will not  
12 deny anyone the right to a retirement. That is  
13 really the heart of what all of this is about when  
14 it started. It is funding our obligation to our  
15 retirees.

16 All of us in this room, we look  
17 forward to that day; we dream about it. Many of us  
18 may never get there, but there is just that day when  
19 we think we are going to be off in the sunshine on  
20 that nice beach somewhere in a chair enjoying our  
21 retirement. That is not a reality, though. Most of  
22 us are happy just to stay in our homes, to be able  
23 to play with our grandchildren, and know that that  
24 pension check is coming.

1                   My mother is a widow. She depends on  
2 my father's pension. She is struggling to make it  
3 with that. But she is damn glad that the Village of  
4 McCook fully funded their pension, and her check is  
5 coming, and that we have taken the steps necessary  
6 to make sure that that commitment will be there.

7                   So I will not, and I dare anyone in  
8 this room to look at the pensioners and deny them  
9 what they have so rightfully worked for.

10                  I will close with two things here.  
11 Number one, it is unfortunately a time when we come  
12 to the cash register, we look down, and we see the  
13 cup that says, "If you need the penny." We do. We  
14 really do. We know that we are asking our taxpayers  
15 to share that burden with us. But I hope -- and I  
16 concur with my colleagues who say -- there may come  
17 a time when we won't need that penny, and we can  
18 give it back. I hope that that time comes.

19                  As we conclude, I obviously ask for  
20 your support. It is a very difficult decision. I  
21 feel if we are forthright and we leave our political  
22 agendas behind, and we ask our people and explain to  
23 them why we need their support, they will be  
24 understanding. I have been in meetings here where

1 we had far less pressing issues and were just  
2 inundated with emails and phone calls.

3 I get the impression that people  
4 understand that they believe in County Government,  
5 and they certainly, as I do, believe in our  
6 President, and this is, at this juncture, what we  
7 need to do.

8 You are right. We will take a look at  
9 tomorrow when we get there. But I do not want to  
10 kick this billion dollar problem down the road. I  
11 don't want to become the next Springfield where it  
12 is insurmountable. Where right now we are looking  
13 at a property tax and sales increase to get  
14 ourselves out of a hole that we could avoid today by  
15 making the right decision.

16 I thank you for your indulgence, and I  
17 ask you for your support and a "yes" vote on this  
18 penny.

19 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Moore.

20 COMMISSIONER MOORE: Thank you, Mr.  
21 Chairman.

22 All over my District, as I talk to my  
23 residents, I hear it over and over again. We need  
24 jobs. We need employment.

1                   And from my villages I hear we are  
2 suffering from antiquated infrastructure, pothole-  
3 filled streets, crumbling viaducts, water sewers  
4 caving in, and flooding basements because of  
5 crumbling sewage systems.

6                   Our villages look to us for help with  
7 their transportation and infrastructure needs. We  
8 have to tell them that we cannot help them because  
9 we are diverting motor fuel tax money from our  
10 transportation and highways to other areas in the  
11 County to fill budget deficits elsewhere.

12                   The County is, and always has been, a  
13 body of government that serves to help those who are  
14 in need, and those who cannot help themselves.

15                   We provide medical services, mental  
16 health services. We provide burials for families  
17 that cannot afford to bury their own. We provide  
18 legal representation for those who cannot afford  
19 legal representation. We provide support to people  
20 who are flooded out of their homes during major  
21 storms.

22                   If we as a county cannot pay our own  
23 bills, we cannot take care of our residents like we  
24 are charged to do.

1 I believe the residents of communities  
2 that are hardest hit and devastated by tornados and  
3 floods that not only lose their homes, but lose  
4 their lives, are extremely happy and proud when they  
5 see Cook County Homeland Security pulling into their  
6 community to help save lives.

7 We have worked hard to streamline  
8 county government. We have worked hard to be good  
9 stewards, reducing wasteful spending everywhere we  
10 can and without compromising essential services.

11 The media writes that a "yes" vote is  
12 a career-ending vote, without giving us the benefit  
13 of the doubt. It is the same media who applauded us  
14 for cutting the fat and streamlining our  
15 governmental body.

16 This President has shown time and time  
17 again that she is here to do what is right and not  
18 just what is popular. Our back is against the wall,  
19 and we would be less than responsible to not address  
20 our pension issues by waiting on Springfield to  
21 solve our problems for us.

22 Ladies and gentlemen, this is an  
23 opportunity to protect our employees and their  
24 pensions. Anyone who wants us to sit back and just

1 do nothing, or ask them to not accept their pension,  
2 we ask them to not accept their pension so that when  
3 they retire that money will help us to meet our  
4 obligation.

5 I agree with my colleagues -- you need  
6 to please come with me and drive through my  
7 community, and to some of my other colleagues'  
8 communities. From the east of my District to the  
9 west of my District, you cannot even find a place to  
10 stop and sit with your family to have dinner.

11 This penny is not closing restaurants  
12 and stores in my District; they are already closed.  
13 The ones that are there for the most part are not  
14 owned by people who live in my District.

15 We need services. We need  
16 infrastructure. We need development. We need  
17 safety. We need more services, not less services.

18 I urge Springfield to act immediately  
19 so with that we do not have to take measures like we  
20 are about to take today. But until then we must  
21 take care of our own house like we are used to  
22 doing.

23 I urge a "yes" vote.

24 Thank you.

1           CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Arroyo.

2           COMMISSIONER ARROYO: Madam President and  
3 Commissioners of the Board, as Commissioner of the  
4 Eighth District, I see my constituents experience  
5 one of the most economic downturns in American  
6 history. I will say that being the youngest  
7 Commissioner seated on this Board, I have witnessed  
8 the County streamline, consolidate, and become more  
9 efficient, effective, accountable, and transparent.

10                       That was in the last five years  
11 because of operational reforms. Our County Board  
12 has returned nearly \$1.5 million (billion??) back  
13 into the hands of taxpayers, while still developing  
14 a comprehensive plan targeting yet another \$100  
15 million in expenditure reductions. For the last two  
16 years, Springfield has failed to address our County  
17 pension legislation and pass comprehensive reform,  
18 and we continue to see that daily.

19                       We have to stop the \$30 million  
20 monthly finance charge that it is costing us to pay  
21 the pension bill. It is like paying the minimum  
22 monthly service charge on your credit card while the  
23 finance charge continues to compound and increase.  
24 We must not continue to kick the can down the road

1 for the next generation to fix.

2 As I said earlier, being the youngest  
3 Commissioner on this Board, we cannot with a clear  
4 conscience burden my generation with this fiscal  
5 responsibility. We still have legacy indebtedness,  
6 and we must keep up with the plan to build our  
7 decaying infrastructure. I will work hard to bring  
8 fair share taxes and those tax dollars back to my  
9 District and work closely with my Alderman and other  
10 elected officials. We must reinvest in our  
11 community and that is what I plan to do.

12 As I was elected by the people of the  
13 Eighth County District, most of them are  
14 hardworking, blue collar workers, many of whom are  
15 proud union members, like myself, a card-carrying  
16 member of the Teamsters union.

17 Our work here is not done. We can no  
18 longer wait for Springfield to act. Action must be  
19 taken now, and I urge an "aye" vote.

20 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Silvestri.

21 COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: I want to first of  
22 all say that I believe today's discussion has been  
23 very, very interesting. As someone who has heard  
24 every discussion and every debate since the first



1 sales tax was proposed and ultimately unimplemented,  
2 I think we have reached new ground today on some of  
3 the discussions that we reached.

4 First of all, during some of the  
5 debate, I was actually getting seasick with all of  
6 the references to the Titanic and the boat. Then I  
7 felt perhaps I was in church because we were citing  
8 the Lord's work repeatedly.

9 I would just venture a guess that the  
10 Lord is very, very busy. He probably has more to do  
11 than to debate the Cook County sales tax. We thank  
12 Him for that or we can thank Her for that; either  
13 way.

14 My concern with increasing the sales  
15 tax at this point is exactly supported by some of  
16 the debates by my colleagues who are in favor of it.  
17 We are not going to encourage business to come to  
18 the communities of Cook County as we continue to  
19 make it harder for them to be here. We are not  
20 going to see new storefronts in city neighborhoods  
21 until some of those areas become more attractive for  
22 business. But also when they become more affordable  
23 for business.

24 My District is not on any county line,

1 but it is pretty close. At one point it is on the  
2 county line; at another point it is four blocks away  
3 from the county line. We have a thriving business  
4 community that has to compete with signs up and down  
5 many of the roads that divide us, that say, "No  
6 county tax." As I go further east in my District,  
7 there are signs up and down Harlem Avenue or  
8 Cumberland Avenue that say, "No city tax."  
9 Obviously this has an impact on where businesses  
10 move or where businesses move out.

11 I recently went to a meeting in the  
12 southwest suburbs with a local municipality. This  
13 municipality is in two counties. In the village  
14 where I was at the meeting, they were proposing to  
15 build a development project in the community. The  
16 first thing out of his mouth was, "It has to be on  
17 the Will County side of the line." He looked at me  
18 and said, "Please don't be offended by that." I  
19 said, "Well, I am not going to debate you on this  
20 issue, but it didn't sound good to me."

21 Yes, there has been many good things  
22 done here and I have been supportive of many of  
23 these good things, if not all, and I think they will  
24 continue. But after being here and for the time I

1 have been here, and hearing every doomsday argument  
2 for the sales tax repeatedly, I still think it is as  
3 bad idea at this time.

4 I encourage a "no" vote.

5 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Garcia.

6 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Thank you, Mr.  
7 Chairman, and ladies and gentlemen of the Board. I  
8 just put in a call to the Vatican's office for  
9 intergovernmental affairs and learned that they are  
10 neutral on the matter before us. So if anyone felt  
11 any pressure, relax.

12 Perhaps no one in this room  
13 understands more the implications of a tax vote than  
14 I do. I took a tax vote twenty-nine years ago and I  
15 had it come up time and time again -- thousands and  
16 thousands of times and times again just a few months  
17 ago, on television, radio, and direct mail.

18 It was the right thing to do. I have  
19 no regrets about it, and it was the responsible  
20 thing to do.

21 The easy thing for us to do today with  
22 respect to the matter before us -- the penny sales  
23 tax increase -- is to vote "no" and to continue to  
24 wait for Springfield to act on an issue that they

1 have not addressed in almost a decade.

2           When I ran for the County Board five  
3 years ago, I didn't campaign on repealing the one  
4 percent sales tax because I understood that no  
5 matter how much cutting we did, and in spite of  
6 numerous reforms we could achieve -- and the list is  
7 quite impressive -- the need for additional revenue  
8 would be before us again. It is here now. It is  
9 here today. The pension issue is that great  
10 urgency.

11           The worsening of the fiscal health of  
12 our State is attributable to our State's unfair  
13 system of taxation, which is flat and regressive,  
14 and not reflective of the modern economy, and has  
15 exacerbated Cook County's financial woes. Thus, we  
16 are now faced with a challenge to act responsibly to  
17 address our deteriorating pension fund, as well as  
18 transportation and our debt service obligations to  
19 be prudent fiscal managers of the finances of Cook  
20 County.

21           We have begun to bring in structural  
22 reforms and innovation into Cook County, but we  
23 still have much work to do. Over the past five  
24 years, we have reduced spending at the Health and

1 Hospitals System by \$225 million and we stabilized  
2 the Health and Hospitals System, producing the first  
3 surplus in a long, long time. We reduced the  
4 pretrial detainee population at Cook County jail and  
5 we are on the right track to continuing to do that.

6 We also made difficult cuts to our  
7 staff. One of the first and most difficult votes  
8 that we took was to lay off employees at Cook  
9 County.

10 As a County, we embarked on creating  
11 the first long-range transportation plan since 1940.  
12 This is good. The vote today will allow us to  
13 invest in roads and infrastructure across the  
14 County. It will also serve to aid in supporting  
15 economic development, yes, business development.  
16 Commissioner Tobolski underscored the types of  
17 things that we are doing. We are very business-  
18 friendly in Cook County, while at the same time we  
19 are arresting the growth rate in unfunded pension  
20 liabilities. This is also fiscally prudent. This  
21 will provide the conditions and certainty around our  
22 fiscal structure that will facilitate entrepreneurs  
23 making investments in business in Cook County for  
24 the long term.

1                   Despite the reforms and efficiencies  
2 this Board has achieved, the preliminary forecast  
3 for fiscal year 2016 shows a huge deficit. This  
4 figure includes an operating shortfall of \$198  
5 million. Whether you believe all of those numbers  
6 at this juncture or not, they are likely to be in  
7 the ballpark.

8                   I challenge the President as well as  
9 each and every one of us on this Board, to continue  
10 to look at structural reforms, including some of the  
11 ones this Board has considered. I see all kinds of  
12 energy around these things, and that is why I am  
13 optimistic.

14                   In 2012, we attempted, for example, to  
15 ask voters whether the Office of the Recorders of  
16 Deeds should be merged with the County Clerk. That  
17 reform failed, but we should revisit it and look  
18 further.

19                   We should look at other potential  
20 mergers or consolidation and collaboration between  
21 the City and the County, in the areas of tax  
22 collection, transportation, homeland security,  
23 public health, planning and development, and  
24 elections. This is part of that regionalist agenda

1 that we need to move in.

2 We should further explore the  
3 Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, as the  
4 Better Government Association recently noted.  
5 During my last campaign, I raised the issue of how  
6 downtown commercial properties are assessed and  
7 asked if we are getting a fair share. Because big  
8 business downtown isn't paying a fair share; it is  
9 being made up by neighborhood residents and the  
10 suburban areas.

11 We have tried to pass comprehensive  
12 pension reform for the last two years in  
13 Springfield, but the pension fund's liabilities grow  
14 at the rate of about \$1 million a day.

15 So I ask: Why wait any longer? The  
16 shortfalls at the pension fund are currently over \$6  
17 billion and growing. No one else is going to do it.  
18 We have committed to over \$100 million in  
19 expenditure reductions. These reductions, combined  
20 with the proposed sales tax, will address the long-  
21 term fiscal stability of Cook County, and do the  
22 right thing for County taxpayers.

23 The Chicago Federation of Labor, which  
24 is a collection of our working men and women, those

1 who are organized and other labor unions support  
2 this proposal. The responsible decision is to  
3 address these challenges today. The hard vote here  
4 is a "yes" vote. I refuse to kick the can further  
5 down the road. Once we restore the health of the  
6 pension fund, we should revisit our decision. But  
7 we should continue to move our County forward.

8 Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Murphy.

10 COMMISSIONER MURPHY: Thank you, Mr.  
11 Chairman.

12 I will be very brief. I just want to  
13 make the statement that the last time we had the  
14 sales tax before us, I was a sponsor and in the lead  
15 on having the sales tax because we needed it. We  
16 needed it then. It was repealed. Now we find that  
17 we are in the same boat. We need a sales tax  
18 increase again.

19 Anyone who is afraid that they may not  
20 get reelected -- Deb Sims and I are living proof  
21 that you can be reelected if you vote "yes" on the  
22 sales tax. Don't be afraid. President Preckwinkle  
23 has done a phenomenal job. She is faced with  
24 something that cannot be resolved without an



1 increase, without money coming into the County. The  
2 only way we can get the money into the County right  
3 now is with this one penny sales tax.

4 I imagine -- I won't say it, but I  
5 will say it -- she almost threw up when she found  
6 out that this is the only way that she could get  
7 money into the County right now is the one penny  
8 sales tax. I am sure that it was the last thing she  
9 wanted to do, but it is something that she had to  
10 do.

11 We need to provide the services to all  
12 of our people. They depend on us. They depend on  
13 us at the County Hospital. We help the folks that  
14 are in jail, some of them not even guilty of crimes,  
15 but they are stuck in jail, and she is trying to do  
16 something about that. She has been the most  
17 impressive President that I have worked under and I  
18 have worked under two.

19 If you don't think we work hard here,  
20 we work hard here, and I want everyone to know the  
21 Commissioners have not had a raise in salary since  
22 2002. We are not doing this for the money. We are  
23 not looking for a raise, but we are looking for one  
24 penny, one penny sales tax, to help the people of

1 Cook County and to help resolve our problems with  
2 our debt service, with our pensions, and with our  
3 infrastructure.

4 I would urge a "yes" vote.

5 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Steele.

6 COMMISSIONER STEELE: I am going to be very  
7 brief as well.

8 The President has done a wonderful job  
9 with her leadership in making sure that we have had  
10 reductions. We reduced spending across the board in  
11 mostly every department. We have not lost employees  
12 because of our budgets. She has been very  
13 supportive of our various departments.

14 I want to share with you this.  
15 Yesterday, getting back to Chicago from our national  
16 conference with one of my colleagues, that we just  
17 paid the highest sales tax of a county. We paid  
18 three percent. We were getting ourselves to another  
19 airport just to get back here. Cook County is not  
20 the highest sales tax of a county in the country.  
21 If I was to pay the Cook County sales tax on my  
22 vehicle, on our vehicle to get from North Carolina  
23 to South Carolina, my tax would have been \$1.65.  
24 But I wound up paying \$7.65 for that three percent

1 tax.

2                   So notice this: It is a choice tax.  
3 I chose to purchase that rental vehicle to get  
4 myself back here. That is the same thing we all  
5 have as citizens. I don't think a sales tax is all  
6 that regressive. But I think if you make good  
7 choices, you can still save money. But I don't put  
8 that on the folks who are paying into that pension  
9 program because they have paid their dues. We have  
10 got to protect them, and this will be protecting  
11 those individuals.

12                   I am going to vote "yes" on this, and  
13 I advise all of my colleagues to vote "yes" on this.

14                   CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Butler.

15                   COMMISSIONER BUTLER: Let me apologize, Mr.  
16 Chairman, for a showing of anger. It is not the  
17 Iceman's forte. But every now and again I guess  
18 levity helps us get through this.

19                   I have been here since George Dunne.  
20 That tells you how long I have been around. Every  
21 tax time we go through changes like this about the  
22 tax. "Not in my backyard" used to be the phrase.  
23 "Tax anyplace but where I live."

24                   We operate one of the largest medical

1 facilities in the country, the largest one-time jail  
2 in the country. Every President has tried to figure  
3 out a new way to get the bills paid without taxing  
4 anybody. That's how we got started dipping into the  
5 pensions.

6                   When George Dunne was here, I think we  
7 were eighty-seven percent funded; which was unheard-  
8 of anywhere else in the country. I saw in the  
9 country, as the young Mr. Steele just alluded to,  
10 that we are not the highest taxed sales tax, if you  
11 add in all of the other taxes. Some folks have an  
12 occupancy tax in the hotel rooms. You check into a  
13 hotel, you pay a little extra for just being there.  
14 Nobody talks about that.

15                   I come to work this morning. I have  
16 got to go around all of the barriers and  
17 difficulties that they have relative to the taste of  
18 Chicago. I haven't heard that mentioned. Parades  
19 of one million people for a hockey team. No  
20 mention. The Cubs and the White Sox play ball every  
21 day; no mention. Then when we start talking about  
22 schools, education -- it costs too much. There is  
23 something wrong with that.

24                   I am going to support your proposition

1 even though when it first came up it came up because  
2 of Todd Stroger, and I was quoted as a person that  
3 didn't find a tax he didn't like. I know that we  
4 can't run this thing on water. There has got to be  
5 some taxes, and somebody has got to pay them.

6 All that I ask is that it be fair,  
7 that it be spread around, and that one organization  
8 doesn't have to bear the burden.

9 As to what the State does and the City  
10 does, we are caught between two megalopolises.  
11 These are some big neighbors that we have. Most of  
12 them impact what we do. Our jails are overcrowded,  
13 not because the County Board went down and locked  
14 these people up. It was the Chicago Police  
15 Department.

16 There was even a situation once that  
17 they wanted to rename Botanic Gardens because it  
18 wasn't in Chicago. Yet it attracted millions of  
19 people.

20 All of these people traveling through  
21 our town are going to purchase and buy and sell. I  
22 think we should benefit from that.

23 I vote "aye".

24 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Gainer.

1           COMMISSIONER GAINER: Regardless of how the  
2 vote ends up today, I think what we heard on the  
3 floor of the Board today has actually been really  
4 instructive. That what we need to do isn't over.  
5 There are things that we can think about. One is  
6 the pension. One of the things about which I am  
7 proudest is the Administration, the Board, the  
8 unions, and the workforce came together, and  
9 everybody gave up something. But regardless, if  
10 this tax passes today, the pension fund is not  
11 sustainable without reform. Pressure needs to be  
12 kept on to do that.

13           The second is the structure of the  
14 County. I think we have heard more support, as  
15 Commissioner Garcia mentioned, for some of those  
16 reforms. I am just as concerned about consolidation  
17 as I am about the move to contract over employees.  
18 I think we have a lot of opportunities. Now in some  
19 ways this has made us focus as we move into the  
20 budget. The County in its structure now is not  
21 sustainable, regardless of the tax.

22           Lastly, it is the future. There has  
23 been a lot of talk about not leaving things for the  
24 next generation or kicking the can down the road. I

1 think we need to leave the County, or leave the next  
2 generation with a government that they can afford,  
3 but also with an economy that affords them a life  
4 worth living.

5 All of those things I think are at our  
6 door, regardless of what happens today. I think, as  
7 I said before, this process isn't over. This is  
8 just the beginning.

9 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Thank you.

10 Before the vote, I would like to make  
11 it clear that under the leadership, no one in this  
12 County or this City since we entered government has  
13 worked for the poor more than Toni Preckwinkle. In  
14 her years in the City Council and on this Board, she  
15 has worked for those issues, worked for the minimum  
16 wage, worked with the people to raise the minimum  
17 wage.

18 With minority participation, she has  
19 led the way. Affordable housing, she has led the  
20 way. Judicial reform -- this woman herself went to  
21 the Illinois Supreme Court and said, "We have major  
22 problems in Cook County." Those reforms now are  
23 starting to occur because of her leadership.

24 Most recently a bill was passed in

1 Springfield, the Automatic Transfer; that was  
2 through her leadership. But to say that she doesn't  
3 care or doesn't have an understanding of the poor, I  
4 totally disagree. No one has a better understanding  
5 of the poor in this County than President Toni  
6 Preckwinkle.

7 There has been a request for a roll  
8 call.

9 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Arroyo.

10 COMMISSIONER ARROYO: Aye.

11 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Arroyo is  
12 an "aye".

13 Commissioner Boykin.

14 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: I will take my  
15 minute.

16 We have heard a lot today.

17 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Excuse me, Commissioner,  
18 but I have to announce this before we start.

19 This is 15-4292, proposed ordinance  
20 amendment as amended in the errata.

21 SECRETARY TURNER: Again, Commissioner  
22 Arroyo.

23 COMMISSIONER ARROYO: Aye.

24 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Arroyo is



1 an "aye".

2 Commissioner Boykin.

3 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Mr. Chairman, I will  
4 take my minute.

5 Mr. Chairman, we have had a lot said  
6 today. A lot of people talk about shared sacrifice.  
7 I am all for shared sacrifice, but the reality of it  
8 is that the poor pay almost fourteen percent of  
9 their income in taxes. The wealthiest one percent  
10 pay at a rate of 4.9%.

11 That is not shared sacrifice. That is  
12 sacrificed slanted towards the poor.

13 I am all for applauding leadership. I  
14 haven't been here long, but you don't have to be  
15 here long to see where there is waste, fraud, and  
16 abuse. You don't have to be in County Government  
17 long to see that. You don't have to be here long to  
18 know that we have not done everything that we could  
19 do in the last seven months to tackle this issue of  
20 pensions or to tackle the issue of the sales tax  
21 increase, the proposed sales tax increase.

22 We haven't done enough of the  
23 consolidation work. We haven't done enough of  
24 streamlining of government.

1 I applaud the President for the work  
2 that she has done years before; but this is now.  
3 What the taxpayers demand is they demand efficiency  
4 right now. We ought to give them that.

5 This is a big vote. It is an  
6 important vote, and it is a vote for the citizens of  
7 Cook County. I am going to stand with the folks who  
8 are poor. I am going to stand with businesses. I  
9 am going to stand with growing the business base of  
10 Cook County and economic development.

11 I vote "no".

12 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Boykin is  
13 "no".

14 Commissioner Butler.

15 COMMISSIONER BUTLER: Aye.

16 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Butler is  
17 "aye".

18 Commissioner Fritchey.

19 COMMISSIONER FRITCHEY: You don't get to  
20 cast many votes where you can side with the least  
21 fortunate among us as well as some of the largest  
22 businesses in the County. This is one of them.

23 I vote "no".

24 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Fritchey is

1 "no".

2 Commissioner Gainer.

3 COMMISSIONER GAINER: No.

4 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Gainer is

5 "no".

6 Commissioner Garcia.

7 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Aye.

8 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Garcia is

9 "aye".

10 Commissioner Gorman.

11 COMMISSIONER GORMAN: Present.

12 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Gorman is

13 "present".

14 Commissioner Goslin.

15 COMMISSIONER GOSLIN: No.

16 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Goslin is

17 "no".

18 Commissioner Moore.

19 COMMISSIONER MOORE: Aye.

20 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Moore is

21 "aye".

22 Commissioner Murphy.

23 COMMISSIONER MURPHY: Aye.

24 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Murphy is

1 "aye".

2 Commissioner Schneider.

3 COMMISSIONER SCHNEIDER: No.

4 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Schneider  
5 is "no".

6 Commissioner Silvestri.

7 COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: No.

8 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Silvestri  
9 is "no".

10 Commissioner Sims.

11 COMMISSIONER SIMS: Aye.

12 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Sims is  
13 "aye".

14 Commissioner Steele.

15 COMMISSIONER STEELE: Yea.

16 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Steele is  
17 "yea".

18 Commissioner Suffredin.

19 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: No.

20 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Suffredin  
21 is "no".

22 Commissioner Tobolski.

23 COMMISSIONER TOBOLSKI: Aye.

24 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Tobolski is

1 "aye".

2 Chairman Daley.

3 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Aye.

4 SECRETARY TURNER: Chairman Daley is "aye".

5 You have nine "yeas", seven "nays",  
6 and one "present".

7 CHAIRMAN DALEY: The proposed ordinance as  
8 amended in the errata, 15-4292, passes.

9 Commissioner Garcia.

10 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Having voted on the  
11 prevailing side, I move to reconsider the vote.

12 COMMISSIONER MURPHY: I second it.

13 CHAIRMAN DALEY: It has been moved by  
14 Commissioner Garcia and seconded by Commissioner  
15 Murphy to move to reconsider. Leave to reverse the  
16 roll call --

17 COMMISSIONER SIMS: Leave.

18 CHAIRMAN DALEY: The motion fails.

19 15-4294.

20 COMMISSIONER SIMS: I so move.

21 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I second it.

22 CHAIRMAN DALEY: It has been moved by Vice-  
23 Chair Sims and seconded by Commissioner Garcia. On  
24 the ordinance, is there any discussion?

1                   There has been a request for a roll  
2 call.

3                   SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Arroyo.

4                   COMMISSIONER ARROYO: Aye.

5                   SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Arroyo is  
6 "aye".

7                   Commissioner Boykin.

8                   COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: No.

9                   SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Boykin is  
10 "no".

11                  Commissioner Butler.

12                  COMMISSIONER BUTLER: Aye.

13                  SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Butler is  
14 "aye".

15                  Commissioner Fritchey.

16                  COMMISSIONER FRITCHEY: No.

17                  SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Fritchey is  
18 "no".

19                  Commissioner Gainer.

20                  COMMISSIONER GAINER: No.

21                  SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Gainer is  
22 "no".

23                  Commissioner Garcia.

24                  COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Aye.

1 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Garcia is  
2 "aye".

3 Commissioner Gorman.

4 COMMISSIONER GORMAN: Present.

5 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Gorman is  
6 "present".

7 Commissioner Goslin.

8 COMMISSIONER GOSLIN: No.

9 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Goslin is  
10 "no".

11 Commissioner Moore.

12 COMMISSIONER MOORE: Aye.

13 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Moore is  
14 "aye".

15 Commissioner Murphy.

16 COMMISSIONER MURPHY: Aye.

17 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Murphy is  
18 "aye".

19 Commissioner Schneider.

20 COMMISSIONER SCHNEIDER: No.

21 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Schneider  
22 is "no".

23 Commissioner Silvestri.

24 COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: No.

1 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Silvestri  
2 is "no".

3 Commissioner Sims.

4 COMMISSIONER SIMS: Aye.

5 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Sims is  
6 "aye".

7 Commissioner Steele.

8 COMMISSIONER STEELE: Aye.

9 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Steele is  
10 "aye".

11 Commissioner Suffredin.

12 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: No.

13 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Suffredin  
14 is "no".

15 Commissioner Tobolski.

16 COMMISSIONER TOBOLSKI: Aye.

17 SECRETARY TURNER: Commissioner Tobolski is  
18 "aye".

19 Chairman Daley.

20 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Aye.

21 SECRETARY TURNER: Chairman Daley is "aye".

22 Mr. Chairman, you have nine "yeas",  
23 seven "nays", and one "present".

24 CHAIRMAN DALEY: The proposed amendment,



1 15-4294, passes.

2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Mr. Chairman, having  
3 voted on the prevailing side, I move to reverse the  
4 roll.

5 COMMISSIONER STEELE: I second it.

6 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Garcia has  
7 voted to reverse the roll and it has been seconded  
8 by Commissioner Steele. Having voted on the  
9 prevailing side, Commissioner Garcia moves to  
10 reverse the roll call.

11 The motion has failed.

12 COMMISSIONER STEELE: Move to adjourn.

13 COMMISSIONER SIMS: I second it.

14 CHAIRMAN DALEY: It has been moved by  
15 Commissioner Steele to adjourn and it has been  
16 seconded by Commissioner Sims.

17 All those in favor signify by saying  
18 "aye" -- opposed "nay".

19 We are adjourned.

20 Thank you.

I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript of the original shorthand notes of proceedings in the above-entitled matter.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Anthony W. Lisanti  
Court Reporter

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date