

EXCERPT

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF COOK COUNTY FINANCE COMMITTEE

Taken Friday, November 13, 2015
at 1:00 p.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
MR. GREGG GOSLIN
MR. STANLEY MOORE
MR. SEAN M. MORRISON
MS. JOAN PATRICIA MURPHY
MR. TIMOTHY O. SCHNEIDER
MR. PETER N. SILVESTRI
MR. ROBERT STEELE
MR. LARRY SUFFREDIN
MR. JEFFREY R. TOBOLSKI

ALSO PRESENT:

MR. MATTHEW DeLEON, Secretary
MR. ANTHONY W. LISANTI, Court Reporter

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3 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Vice-Chair Sims.

4 COMMISSIONER SIMS: Thank you, Mr.

5 Chairman.

6 I move to suspend the rules to take up
7 item number 15-6469.

8 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: I second it.

9 CHAIRMAN DALEY: It has been moved by Vice-
10 Chair Sims and seconded by Commissioner Boykin to
11 take up consideration of item number 15-6469.

12 COMMISSIONER SIMS: This is 15-6469.

13 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Yes. That is correct --
14 15-6469. This is the ammunition tax. This is a
15 motion by Vice-Chair Sims to take it out of order.
16 It has been moved and seconded. All those in favor
17 signify by saying "aye" -- opposed "nay"; the motion
18 has carried.

19 Vice-Chair Sims.

20 COMMISSIONER SIMS: Mr. Chairman, I move
21 approval of item 15-6469.

22 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: I second it.

23 CHAIRMAN DALEY: It has been moved by Vice-
24 Chair Sims and seconded by Commissioner Boykin to

1 approve item number 15-6469. The motion is on the
2 floor.

3 Commissioner Boykin.

4 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: I have an amendment,
5 Mr. Chairman. I move to waive the twenty-four-hour
6 posting time for amendment substitutes.

7 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: I second it.

8 CHAIRMAN DALEY: It has been moved by
9 Commissioner Boykin and seconded by Commissioner
10 Suffredin to waive the twenty-four-hour posting
11 requirement for amendments.

12 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: It is for the
13 purpose, Mr. Chairman, of offering a clarifying
14 amendment to where the revenue from the ammunition
15 tax is actually going -- to fund public safety
16 programs. We passed this amendment out earlier.

17 CHAIRMAN DALEY: All those in favor of
18 waiving the rule, signify by saying "aye" -- opposed
19 "nay".

20 The waiving of the rule is approved.

21 Commissioner Boykin.

22 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Mr. Chairman, I move
23 to amend item 15-6469.

24 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: I second it.

1 CHAIRMAN DALEY: It has been moved by
2 Commissioner Boykin and seconded by Commissioner
3 Suffredin to amend 15-6469.

4 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: To clarify that the
5 revenue from the ammunition tax will fund public
6 safety operations.

7 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Are there any questions on
8 the amendment?

9 On the amendment, all those in favor
10 signify by saying "aye" -- opposed "nay". The
11 amendment is approved.

12 Commissioner Boykin.

13 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Mr. Chairman, I move
14 approval of amendment number 15-6469, as amended.

15 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: I second it.

16 CHAIRMAN DALEY: It has been moved by
17 Commissioner Boykin and seconded by Commissioner
18 Suffredin to approve the amendment to item number
19 15-6469, as amended. It is on the floor.

20 Commissioner Boykin.

21 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Mr. Chairman,
22 distinguished colleagues, and citizens of Cook
23 County, I urge approval of item number 15-6469, as
24 amended; an ordinance which provides for gun

1 violence tax on firearm ammunition.

2 This is a tax that is aimed at curbing
3 the cost of the widespread and senseless gun
4 violence that has gripped Chicago and Cook County in
5 the year 2015. Right now, the enormous cost of gun
6 violence to our Health and Hospitals System, to our
7 courts, to our jails, and most importantly to our
8 families and our neighborhoods is being shared by
9 all of us, all residents across Cook County. We all
10 pay for this senseless violence.

11 This tax will require those who purvey
12 these instruments of death to bear a slightly larger
13 share of the costs than the rest of us. The extra
14 money collected in the form of a five-cent tax on
15 center fire ammunition, and a one-cent tax on rim
16 fire ammunition, will be dedicated to County law
17 enforcement efforts to reduce incidents of gun
18 violence, and also address the root causes of this
19 public health crisis.

20 In considering this tax, we should all
21 be cognizant of the interrelatedness of all
22 communities. We cannot sit idly by in the Board
23 Room while children are being targeted by street
24 gangs in Chicago. We cannot sit idly by while

1 certain communities are being terrorized and brought
2 to the brink of annihilation by the flow of illegal
3 guns and drugs.

4 The blood of Tyshawn Lee, a nine-year-
5 old who was recently buried, Amari Brown, an eight-
6 year-old who was another innocent child and casualty
7 of war, is playing out in the streets of Chicago and
8 Cook County. It cries out for us to act, to serve
9 as instruments of justice for these fallen
10 innocents.

11 In this instance, we have an
12 opportunity to serve as instruments of justice by
13 adding to the costs of the instruments of death that
14 have been used to extinguish, currently, 428 lives
15 in Chicago in 2015 so far.

16 Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr., said
17 it best: "We are caught in an inescapable network
18 of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny.
19 What affects one directly affects all of us
20 indirectly."

21 I was struck by the story that
22 Comcast, just a few days ago, refused to send its
23 technicians to a south side church because police
24 had reported enhanced gang activity in that

1 neighborhood. The only thing more disturbing than
2 businesses refusing to provide services in a
3 particular community is when residents of the same
4 community report that they don't feel safe in their
5 own backyard.

6 This tax will not restore these
7 terrorized communities to safety overnight, but it
8 will add to the costs of the weapons that have been
9 used to terrorize those communities; and it is will
10 create a stream of revenue to fund our policy
11 efforts to rid Chicago and Cook County of this
12 terrible scourge of gun violence.

13 With these objectives in mind, I urge
14 an "aye" vote.

15 I want to thank President Preckwinkle
16 for her leadership, and this Board for its
17 leadership several years ago in taxing firearms. I
18 want to thank her for her work and her efforts on
19 this ordinance.

20 I also want to thank my friend,
21 Commissioner Suffredin and Chairman Daley, who has
22 given us wise advice as we have gone down this path.
23 I want to also thank the Sheriff's Office. I want
24 to thank the State's Attorney, that gave us a memo

1 that says that this is legal and that we can do it.

2 I want to thank them for that.

3 Let me also thank all of my colleagues
4 who want to see this violence reduced in Cook County
5 and in Chicago.

6 Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield
7 back, and urge an "aye" vote.

8 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Suffredin.

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

11 I would like to be added as a co-
12 sponsor, and I would like to urge the Board to all
13 become co-sponsors on this tax.

14 CHAIRMAN DALEY: No. The individuals who
15 want to be added on will so signify -- Vice-Chair
16 Sims, Commissioner Murphy, Commissioner Garcia,
17 Commissioner Moore, myself, Commissioner Daley, and
18 Commissioner Butler, and Commissioner Arroyo.

19 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: It was worth a
20 try.

21 Earlier today, one of the witnesses
22 said that this will be merely symbolic. I don't
23 think it is merely symbolic because I think what is
24 happening is that this gives strength to a movement

1 of people who are concerned about locations of gun
2 shops. They are concerned about the experience that
3 we are all having in our communities with guns that
4 are floating around.

5 At one of our budget hearings, the
6 Fire Chief of Riverdale told us that the graffiti
7 program was making his community safe. I told him
8 until Riverdale put some restrictions on Chuck's Gun
9 Shop, all of our communities are not going to be
10 safe.

11 We had the Mayor of Lyons come to our
12 budget hearings. I commended him for the work that
13 he did with Midwest Guns in working out an ordinance
14 that will protect all of our communities.

15 This is not symbolic; this is our
16 stand to say that we will keep our neighborhoods
17 safe.

18 I ask for an "aye" vote.

19 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Fritchey.

20 COMMISSIONER FRITCHEY: Thank you,
21 Chairman.

22 Let me start with two prefatory
23 comments.

24 Commissioner Boykin knows the utmost

1 respect I have for him, not just as a colleague but
2 as a person. Some people will talk about the gun
3 violence issue for political gain. He means it from
4 his heart. He has been steadfast in his commitment
5 to this issue, and for his compassion for the
6 affected communities and the affected families.

7 I also want to say that I won't
8 hesitate to put my record of almost twenty years in
9 public service -- when it comes to gun safety
10 legislation and being a proponent of that, I will
11 put that up against anyone. I actually received
12 awards based on my work on gun safety issues.

13 With reluctance, because of my respect
14 for the sponsor, I cannot support this.

15 There was a comment made that this
16 will put a tax on those who use instruments of
17 death. Folks, in order to buy ammunition in this
18 county, you need a FOID card. If you think that any
19 criminals or gangbangers are going to, first of all,
20 have a FOID card; let alone go and buy ammunition
21 using their FOID card and having it recorded, that
22 is just not how it works.

23 You are going to be taxing the lawful
24 gun owners who we have been trying to distinguish

1 and not punish as a matter of policy. That is the
2 first problem I have with this.

3 Secondly, when you are buying
4 ammunition, it is not like you are going to
5 Starbuck's. You don't buy ammunition on a daily
6 basis. You will get it maybe monthly, every couple
7 of months, whenever you may need it, if you are
8 shooting at the range, whatever that case may be.
9 But when these people are making these occasional
10 purchases, they are not going to hesitate to go into
11 Indiana or Lake County or DuPage County to make
12 those purchases.

13 So, not only are we trying to tax the
14 wrong people; those people aren't even going to buy
15 the ammunition in Cook County.

16 To the extent that the criminals were
17 somehow purchasing ammunition, does anybody think
18 that somebody is going to hesitate from firing ten
19 bullets into a playground because of the extra fifty
20 cents of cost? That is not how it works.

21 As I said, I don't want to be
22 redundant. I know Commissioner Boykin means this
23 from his heart. I don't think he can be more well-
24 intentioned than he is on this.

1 My concern is not that it doesn't
2 solve anything. My concern is that it actually
3 weakens other more effective legislation to try to
4 crack down on gun violence, and with the respect to
5 the issue of cracking down on gun violence.

6 I remember hearing testimony before
7 about this money going to violence prevention; money
8 can be used for the cost of treating gunshot
9 victims. With the amendment this Board just
10 adopted, the money goes into the public safety fund
11 generally. It doesn't go into the violence
12 prevention fund. It is not targeted for targeting
13 gunshot victims. It is not targeted for trying to
14 change the characteristics of our society that lead
15 to gun violence.

16 If you look at the \$100,000 in the
17 first year, that is barely enough to treat two
18 gunshot victim at Stroger Hospital. Last year, the
19 City of Chicago alone over 2600 people were shot --
20 2600. This money, even if it was targeted to go to
21 the Hospital for treatment of victims, would treat
22 two of them the first year. It would treat six of
23 them in the out years.

24 We spent \$40,000, not that long ago,

1 from the violence prevention fund to fund a mural.
2 Yet we are trying to implement this tax for
3 \$100,000. That money is just going to be absorbed.
4 The public safety fund, as you know, is a big chunk
5 of our budget. This money is just going to go
6 somewhere into that morass.

7 I do not believe -- regrettably and
8 reluctantly, I do not believe that this tax will
9 prevent one shooting. I don't believe it will
10 change any behavior. I don't believe it will do the
11 things that we need to do to address gun violence.

12 I feel comfortable in saying that and
13 voting against this.

14 Other than Commissioner Boykin -- I
15 don't want to talk about the people in this room.
16 When I look at our peers at the City, County, and
17 State level, I am probably one of the most vocal
18 people on the items that we need to do --
19 Commissioner Boykin is right. We are one city; we
20 are one community; we are one county, when it comes
21 to these issues.

22 Whether people want to address the gun
23 violence issue for the moral grounds that they
24 should -- whether they want to address the gun

1 violence issue because of the economic toll that it
2 takes on us; people do want to address that issue.
3 We have a responsibility. We need to treat a
4 shooting in Englewood the same as we would treat a
5 shooting in Ravenswood or in Galewood.

6 You have one community that says it
7 doesn't affect them. We have another community that
8 accepts this as a way of life. We need to take some
9 substantive steps. People have talked about what
10 the items are that we can do. Most of them really
11 don't fall on this Body. But whether it is
12 afterschool programs, whether it is parental
13 counseling, whether it is job training, whether it
14 is breaking the code of silence -- these are things
15 that will save lives. These are things that will
16 change the culture that we find ourselves in now.

17 I can't think of the last time that I
18 read the paper on a Monday morning when one of the
19 lead stories isn't how many people got killed and
20 how many people got shot during the previous
21 weekend. That doesn't change.

22 With all due respect to all of the
23 sponsors on this, and primarily to my friend,
24 Commissioner Boykin, this bill is not going to

1 change that either.

2 I request a "no" vote.

3 Thank you, Chairman.

4 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Commissioner Schneider.

5 COMMISSIONER SCHNEIDER: Thank you, Mr.

6 Chairman.

7 Do we really want to pass another tax
8 that is going to actually cost more to litigate than
9 what we are likely going to collect on the tax?

10 We already have a gun tax, a twenty-
11 five dollar gun tax that we passed several years
12 ago. That was supposed to raise money to provide
13 programs and services to reduce the violence in the
14 County.

15 How is that working? Do we have less
16 violence than we had three years ago - four years
17 ago - in the County? I don't think so.

18 I have got Cabela's in my District.
19 Cabela's is a reputable firearms dealer. The
20 families go there every day to see the museum
21 inside. They love going there. There is a gun shop
22 right across the county line in Kane County about
23 two miles from Cabela's that has just tripled in
24 size in the last three years because he is getting

1 all of the business from Cabela's because they can
2 save on sales tax and they can save on the twenty-
3 five dollar gun fee.

4 The guy just bought a huge house on
5 twenty acres west of Elgin, off of these ill-advised
6 taxes that we have in Cook County. You are only
7 going to cause people to leave the County and buy
8 their ammunition out of Cook County with this tax,
9 where there is no ammunition tax and the sales tax
10 is lower.

11 While I agree that this tax will have
12 a short-term pop in revenue for the County, the
13 long-term effect will be less ammunition tax
14 collected over time, and huge amounts of sales tax
15 lost that could have gone to support public safety
16 and antiviolence programs in Cook County.

17 I urge a "no" vote.

18 CHAIRMAN DALEY: The motion on the floor is
19 to approve item number 15-6469, as amended.

20 There has been a request for a roll
21 call.

22 SECRETARY DeLEON: Mr. Chairman, this is a
23 roll call on the motion to approve item 15-6469, as
24 amended.

1 Commissioner Arroyo.

2 COMMISSIONER ARROYO: Aye.

3 SECRETARY DeLEON: Commissioner Arroyo is
4 "aye".

5 Commissioner Boykin.

6 COMMISSIONER BOYKIN: Aye.

7 SECRETARY DeLEON: Commissioner Boykin is
8 "aye".

9 Commissioner Butler.

10 COMMISSIONER BUTLER: I vote "aye". I am
11 going to take my minute.

12 The people have sent us to the store
13 and didn't give us enough money to buy all that is
14 needed. So now we have got to be clever enough to
15 take the money that we have and use it to the best
16 of our ability. That is why I am voting the way I
17 am voting. I wasn't going to say too much, because
18 this is redundant - redundant - redundant.

19 I vote "aye".

20 SECRETARY DeLEON: Commissioner Butler is
21 "aye".

22 Commissioner Fritchey.

23 COMMISSIONER FRITCHEY: I just want to take
24 less than a minute to add one issue.

1 Folks, you all remember that recently,
2 not that long ago, this bullet tax was proposed
3 before by the President. We recognized -- and I
4 think the Administration recognized -- that it was a
5 bad idea then. It was actually withdrawn by the
6 President. Nothing has changed about the idea. The
7 Administration recognized before that it was a bad
8 idea.

9 I don't want to speculate right now
10 why they have had a change of heart, but the same
11 idea, same outcome.

12 I vote "no".

13 SECRETARY DeLEON: Commissioner Fritchey is
14 "no".

15 Commissioner Gainer -- Commissioner
16 Gainer is absent.

17 Commissioner Garcia.

18 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Aye.

19 SECRETARY DeLEON: Commissioner Garcia is
20 "aye".

21 Commissioner Goslin.

22 COMMISSIONER GOSLIN: No.

23 SECRETARY DeLEON: Commissioner Goslin is
24 "no".

1 Commissioner Moore.

2 COMMISSIONER MOORE: Aye.

3 SECRETARY DeLEON: Commissioner Moore is
4 "aye".

5 Commissioner Morrison.

6 COMMISSIONER MORRISON: This is a very
7 compelling argument, which separates a very
8 emotional issue and combines it with a tax issue.
9 If for one second I personally thought that imposing
10 a sales tax on ammunition would save one life, I
11 would be jumping up on this desk right now yelling,
12 "Yea."

13 The fact of the matter is that the
14 gangbangers that commit the crimes, the criminals
15 that commit the crimes, the vast majority -- eighty
16 - ninety percentile, probably even more -- don't
17 even possess a FOID card.

18 This is a very limited amount of funds
19 that we are going to be bringing in to this. The
20 litigation on the back end -- although we use our
21 State's Attorneys to do that, I will capitulate to
22 that -- however, we pay their salaries and we are
23 pulling them off of more important business to fight
24 a civil case off of this.

1 There is a far bigger problem that
2 goes along with gun violence. If you really want to
3 solve it, one of the key areas that the community
4 must understand and realize -- that the real culprit
5 is silence, the code of silence. When you murder
6 nine-year-old children and the community stays
7 silent, that is the culprit. The gun had nothing to
8 do with it. The silence in our communities is what
9 is killing our kids, because the serial people that
10 committed that crime have committed previous crimes,
11 and because of the silence they are still out there
12 to commit more crimes.

13 For that, I will be voting "no".

14 SECRETARY DeLEON: Commissioner Morrison is
15 "no".

16 Commissioner Murphy.

17 COMMISSIONER MURPHY: Aye.

18 SECRETARY DeLEON: Commissioner Murphy is
19 "aye".

20 Commissioner Schneider.

21 COMMISSIONER SCHNEIDER: No.

22 SECRETARY DeLEON: Commissioner Schneider
23 is "no".

24 Commissioner Silvestri.

1 COMMISSIONER SILVESTRI: No.

2 SECRETARY DeLEON: Commissioner Silvestri
3 is "no".

4 Vice-Chair Sims.

5 COMMISSIONER SIMS: Aye.

6 SECRETARY DeLEON: Vice-Chair Sims is
7 "aye".

8 Commissioner Steele -- Commissioner
9 Steele is absent.

10 Commissioner Suffredin.

11 COMMISSIONER SUFFREDIN: Aye.

12 SECRETARY DeLEON: Commissioner Suffredin
13 is "aye".

14 Commissioner Tobolski.

15 COMMISSIONER TOBOLSKI: No.

16 SECRETARY DeLEON: Commissioner Tobolski is
17 "no".

18 Chairman Daley.

19 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Aye.

20 SECRETARY DeLEON: Chairman Daley is "aye".

21 Mr. Chairman, you have nine "yeas",
22 six "nays", and two absent.

23 CHAIRMAN DALEY: Item number 15-6469 is
24 approved, as amended.

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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