

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO ITEM 16-5932
(Finance Public Hearing and Committee 11/10/2016)**

Sponsored by: TONI PRECKWINKLE, President, and JOHN P. DALEY, STANLEY MOORE, and LARRY SUFFREDIN, Cook County Board of Commissioners

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

FISCAL YEAR 2017 REVENUE INITIATIVE AND MODIFICATION OF FUTURE COOK COUNTY HOME RULE AND PROPERTY TAXES

WHEREAS, since FY 2011, the overall full time employee positions (“FTE”) have decreased by over 2,000 FTE’s, with the General, Health and Grant Funds realizing a 10% reduction since FY 2011; and

WHEREAS, through the passage of the FY 2016 Annual Appropriation Bill, Cook County Board President, Toni Preckwinkle ("President") and the Cook County Board of Commissioners took significant steps to promote the long-term sustainability of County government; and

WHEREAS, given the fiscal challenges facing the County in FY 2016, additional expenditure reductions and new sources of revenue were implemented in order to begin to address the County’s long-term needs in a responsible manner so as not to unduly burden the children and grandchildren of current taxpayers with extensive debt and unfunded pension liabilities at the County Employees’ and Officers’ Annuity and Benefit Fund of Cook County; and

WHEREAS, despite efforts to continue to stream line services and hold the line on revenue increases in FY 2017, the County’s Preliminary Budget forecast released in June projected a budget shortfall of \$174.3 million for FY 2017; and

WHEREAS, the fact remains that 87% of the County’s operating budget goes to Public Health and Public Safety; revenues fail to keep pace with the rate of inflation; and technology, pharmaceutical and other costs have historically exceeded the rate of inflation; and

WHEREAS, in order to continue to build a fiscally sound foundation with long term financial sustainability, efforts have been undertaken in the proposed FY 2017 budget recommendation to further streamline County services; reduce vacant and filled positions; prioritize the delivery of critical public safety and health services; and address the County’s revenue needs; and

WHEREAS, the FY 2017 budget recommendation includes an additional one percent reduction in positions; includes the layoff of 300 employees; implements non-personnel reductions and proposes various management initiatives as cost saving measures; and

WHEREAS, the FY 2017 budget recommendation includes over \$78 million in expenditure reductions; however, to seek additional expenditure reductions would result in a significant impairment of our public health and public safety operations; and

WHEREAS, in order to prevent devastating cuts to the County’s public safety and public health operations, a one cent per ounce sweetened beverage tax is being sought to generate the funds needed to cover the remaining \$74.6 million deficit for FY 2017; and

WHEREAS, implementing a sweetened beverage tax on both sugar sweetened and artificially sweetened beverages will not only allow the County to address various public safety and health funding needs but it is an important public health initiative to discourage sweetened beverage consumption among youth and adults which over time should assist in lowering obesity rates, preventing type 2 diabetes, ~~reducing~~ reduce cardiovascular disease, ~~reducing~~ reduce kidney decline in women and ~~reducing~~ reduce other serious health problems; and

WHEREAS, implementing a sweetened beverage tax on largely consumed sweetened beverages could result in healthier beverage and food choices by both youth and adults and a healthier Cook County community long term; and

WHEREAS, proposing a new revenue initiative, streamlining services, reducing vacant positions and implementing layoffs are not easy choices; however, Cook County and its leadership must continue to act responsibly to address the long-term needs of the County's residents and taxpayers and balance the proposed sweetened beverage tax with cuts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the President and the Cook County Board of Commissioners do hereby support passing a one cent per ounce sweetened beverage tax in an effort to improve public health as well as cover the remaining \$74 million deficit for the FY 2017 budget and avoid devastating cuts to the County's public health and public safety budgets; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that following a three year fiscal forecast and planning exercise undertaken by the Bureau of Finance, the sweetened beverage tax revenue estimates for FY 2018 and FY 2019 would allow the County to maintain the proposed streamlined services levels recommended in the FY 2017 budget in FY 2018 and 2019; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President and the Cook County Board of Commissioners do hereby resolve upon passage, implementation and enforcement of the proposed sweetened beverage tax, that the President and the Cook County Board of Commissioners will not further increase any of the tax rates provided in the County's home rule tax ordinances in FY 2017, FY 2018 or FY 2019 or deviate from the property tax restrictions provided in the County's Cook County Property Tax Relief Ordinance as provided in Chapter 74, Article II, Section 74-38 of the County's Code of Ordinances for at least the next two ensuing fiscal years.