



**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF COOK COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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

New Items Agenda

Thursday, February 21, 2019, 10:00 AM

[19-1907](#)

Sponsored by: JEFFREY R. TOBOLSKI, Cook County Board of Commissioners

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

REQUESTING A HEARING OF THE TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS THE FEASIBILITY AND EFFICACY OF VOLUNTARY REMOTE COURT APPEARANCES

WHEREAS, audio and video appearances in courtrooms offer an enormous potential for savings, revenue generation, environmental benefits, improved safety and remote access to justice which promotes the administration of justice and equity in the courtroom; and

WHEREAS, remote court appearances allow attorneys and the public to appear in court for routine matters involving Civil, Criminal, Family, Probate, Mental Health, Traffic, Juvenile, Bankruptcy and other proceedings without leaving their homes or offices; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, In its *Call to Action: Achieving Civil Justice for All*, the Conference of Chief Justices' Civil Justice Improvement Committee set forth a convincing series of findings and recommendations, which among them was the promotion of remote audio and video services for court hearings and management; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Legal and Court Technology, a non-profit research organization that improves the administration of Justice through the use of technology, progressively encourages the utilization of remote and video court appearances throughout the United States to enhance the efficiency of judicial administration and court proceedings for both attorney's and the public; and

WHEREAS, in 1992, the Supreme Court of Illinois adopted rule 185 to allow for telephonic appearances in certain civil proceedings; and in 2017, the Supreme Court of Illinois amended its rules to also allow for remote video conferences; and

WHEREAS, in Los Angeles Superior Court a system with approximately 494 judicial officers and comparable to the Cook County Circuit Court, over 200 of those judicial officers allow for remote court appearances with a volume of over 83,000 appearances in 2018; moreover, approximately \$4.6 million in revenue over a three-year period attributable to remote court appearances in Los Angeles was generated; and

WHEREAS, in Illinois, approximately 20 counties spread over 12 Judicial Circuits utilize some form of audio and video remote appearances with approximately 4,516 remote appearance being completed in 2018; more particularly, the following "Collar" county courts use remote court appearance technology: the 16th Judicial Circuit - Kane County 3,305 appearances since 11/2011, the 18th Judicial Circuit Court - DuPage County 1,379 since 9/2014, the 19th Judicial Circuit - Lake County 1,456 since 6/2016 and the

22nd Judicial Circuit - McHenry County 2,280 since 4/2014; and

WHEREAS, Cook County has been and continues to be a leader in technology through strategic Countywide initiatives and collaboration with elected offices; thus, our existing applications and resources will allow for a seamless integration of our existing technology platforms with audio and video remote appearances; and

WHEREAS, the use of video and audio remote court appearances has the potential to offer key benefits to the public, such as cost savings on attorney fees for lower-income citizens, increasing pro bono assistance, availability of court interpreters, travel costs and work absences associated with attending a court hearing can deter self-represented litigants from effectively pursuing or defending their legal rights, thereby further promoting access to justice in courts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners does hereby request a hearing of the Technology and Innovation Committee be convened to review and discuss the potential feasibility, application, and access to justice that remote court appearances may have in Cook County courtrooms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a representative from the Chief Judge's Office, Court of Clerk's Office, and Cook County Bureau of Technology appear before the Committee and be prepared to update the committee on the feasibility and efficacy of remote court appearances.

[19-1909](#)

Sponsored by: DONNA MILLER, LUIS ARROYO JR, SCOTT R. BRITTON and KEVIN B. MORRISON, Cook County Board of Commissioners

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

URGING THE ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO SUPPORT ASSESSMENT REFORM

WHEREAS, analyses revealed that Cook County's unique property tax system created an inaccurate system that lacks transparency; and

WHEREAS, analyses have revealed that the hardest hit by said system were people of color and owners of lower-priced properties such as those located in the South Suburbs; and

WHEREAS, property tax reform, including as it relates to accurate assessment of property is vital to creating a fair and transparent system as well as fostering economic development throughout Cook County; and

WHEREAS, using improved data will help eliminate uncertainty and hidden costs in the current system, which deter institutional investment and hurt our economy; and

WHEREAS, utilizing transparent assessment methodology and better data will make it easier for

institutions to invest in less familiar asset classes and neighborhoods, giving a stimulus to places that need it most; and

WHEREAS, international assessment standards recommend assessors employ the traditional three approaches to value, which are cost, market/sales comparison and income, and while each approach has its own unique characteristics, their goal is to utilize the most appropriate approach for the specific property to arrive at its most accurate true cash value or usual selling price on an annual basis; and

WHEREAS, by collecting income and expense data up front on an anonymized and bulk basis the Cook County Assessor's modeling and valuations teams will be able to take current market rents, vacancy rates, and trends into account, to deliver fair, accurate and transparent assessments; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois General Assembly is currently considering legislation (HB2217) sponsored by Representative William Davis and (SB1379) sponsored by Senator Toi Hutchinson to enable Assessors including the Cook County Assessor to collect relevant data to properly determine said values; and

WHEREAS, in Cook County, HB2217/SB1379 provides that taxpayers of income producing property shall submit income and expense data related to the property annually to the chief county assessment officer, further it provides that when determining the value of property for assessment purposes, the assessor may consider all relevant information pertaining to the fair cash value of the property, including, but not limited to, income and expense data, sales data, property characteristics data, construction cost data, appraisals, and other valuation information; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative to have the proper tools in place to achieve assessment accuracy, fairness and transparency; and

WHEREAS, the income and expense data contemplated in HB2217/SB1379 are consistent with information the Cook County Board of Review requires via Rule 21, which is already in place; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of this Honorable Body to support efforts to create a fair and transparent property tax assessment system; and

WHEREAS, HB 2217/SB1379, is an important first step in the process of reforming our assessment system, by requiring the submittal of income and expense data to enable the Assessor to more accurately assess income producing properties and be in alignment with the standards of the International Association of Assessing Officers; and

WHEREAS, this is a best practice, used in peer metro areas like New York, Boston, Washington D.C. area, and Seattle, as well as in states like Florida and Virginia;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners does hereby urge the Illinois General Assembly to pass HB 2217/SB1379 to give the Cook County Assessor the data needed to more accurately assess properties in Cook County thereby creating a more accurate, fair

and transparent assessment system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this Resolution be tendered to the Speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives, the President of the Illinois Senate and the Governor of Illinois.