

Q1

Please provide some basic information

- Witness Name: Brian C. Johnson, CEO
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- Organization (if any): Equality Illinois
- City/Town: Chicago
- State: IL
- ZIP: 60603

Q2

Tell us which meeting you wish to be recorded as a witness. If you don't know the meeting or date, we can help at 312.603.6398 or cookcounty.board@cookcountylil.gov. You can also look up using the County Calendar or the Forest Preserve Calendar. Please fill out a separate form for each meeting at which you wish to speak.

- County Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting 4/23/2020 10a

Q3

Tell us the File ID number (example 17-0000) of the item on which you are registering your position. If you don't know the number, we can help at 312.603.6398 or cookcounty.board@cookcountylil.gov. You can also look it up using the County Calendar or the Forest Preserve Calendar

Resolution 20-2378

Q4

What do you want to do?

- PROVIDE WRITTEN COMMENT IN OPPOSITION to a specific item

Q5

Written Statement? You can type or copy/paste any written statement you want included in the meeting record here. If this is not enough space, or you have other attachments for distribution, please email them to cookcounty.board@cookcountylil.gov

Equality Illinois, the state's civil rights organization for LGBTQ people, opposes the proposed ordinance that would disclose home addresses of SARS-CoV-2 positive patients to first responders in Cook County. If it were to move forward, the ordinance could place our first responders and our community at large at greater health risk in two ways. First, it would give our first responders a false sense of assurance when entering homes where no positive test is disclosed. Current research suggests that 50% of those infected with SARS-CoV-2 won't begin showing symptoms for the first five days. The CDC also acknowledges reports on asymptomatic infections. Furthermore, preliminary research suggests that current tests for SARS-CoV-2 could return a false negative 30% of the time. We fear that first responders being told that a household is not a top-tier household for COVID-19 infection could result in them taking action which would expose them to unknown infections. Second, the fear that the government would share information about a registry of COVID-19 infections beyond the Departments of Public Health would lead to reduced testing. We have learned from other epidemics that individuals are less likely to be tested when they are uncertain how governments will disseminate or use that data. This skepticism is more acute among historically marginalized communities (e.g. the LGBTQ community, communities of color) who have had tense relationships with the mainstream health care industry and with police and fire departments. By reducing testing, we expose our first responders – and the vulnerable people they come into contact with – to greater risk of contracting SARS-CoV-2. Finally, we also want to acknowledge the civil liberties and privacy concerns that such disclosure creates. Our community functions best when we can trust our government not to disclose our private information to others. Our first responders are doing hero's work. They are saving lives and strengthening our community. But we think this ordinance increases the potential risk to our first responders.