



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING STRONGER ETHICS LEGISLATION

WHEREAS, the purpose of a responsible government should require that public officials and employees be independent, impartial, and responsible to the people; that public office not be used for personal gain; that officials and employees not be unduly or inappropriately influenced by those they regulate or by those who seek special benefits from the public; have confidence in the integrity and transparency of its government; and

WHEREAS, full disclosure of political spending has been consistently recognized as important and necessary for the growth of an educated and informed electorate by the Supreme Court—from *Buckley v. Valeo*, 424 U.S. 1 (1976) through *Citizens United v. FEC*, 558 U.S. 310 (2010); and

WHEREAS, Cook County adopted an Ethics Ordinance that ensures government decisions and policy be made in the best interests of the People of Cook County, with full disclosure and transparency; Cook County, IL Ord. No. 93-0-29, as amended; and

WHEREAS, among other things, Cook County's Ethics Ordinance prohibits Cook County employees from accepting employment when such positions may fall within the revolving door definition; *Brown v. District of Columbia Board of Zoning*, 423 A.2d 1276, 1282 (D.C. App. 1980); and

WHEREAS, Cook County has established a Cook County Board of Ethics which initiates, receives, and reviews complaints concerning possible violations of the Ethics Ordinance and financial disclosure; and

WHEREAS, elected officials are required to submit a campaign disclosure statement on a quarterly basis to the Illinois State Board of Elections; and

WHEREAS, the Cook County Board supports Represent US in the pursuit of strengthening the Federal Election Commission and the Illinois State Board of Elections to enforce the ethics rules that exist; and

WHEREAS, Cook County joins Represent US, with other communities in the United States, in seeking full transparency of campaign finances as necessary for the growth of an educated, engaged, and informed electorate.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Cook County Board of Commissioners support tough, ethics laws and encourage all higher government bodies to consider strengthening their campaign finance laws; increase transparency for campaign financing; and bar all elected officials and public employees from all lobbying activity for one year after leaving employment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Cook County Board of Commissioners continues to enforce its own ethics ordinances, and respectfully encourages state and federal governments to support strong ethics legislation, and so memorializes these representatives with copies of this resolution for their action.