

**MADISON COUNTY BOARD
Special Board Meeting**

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
) SS
COUNTY OF MADISON)

Proceedings of the County Board of Madison County, Illinois, was held telephonically due to COVID-19 restrictions on August 10, 2020.

**MONDAY, AUGUST 10, 2020
6:00 PM
SPECIAL SESSION**

The Board met pursuant to recess taken July 15, 2020.

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The meeting was called to order by Kurt Prenzler, Chairman of the Board.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said by all members of the Board.

The Roll Call was called by Debra Ming-Mendoza, County Clerk, showing the following members present:

PRESENT: Messers. Chapman, Ms. Dalton, Ms. Dutton, Foster, Ms. Glasper, Gray, Guy, Hankins, Ms. Harriss, Holliday, King, Madison, Malone, McRae, Michael, Minner, Moore, Ms. Mueller-Jones, Ms. Novacich-Koberna, Parkinson, Petrillo, Pollard, Trucano and Wesley

ABSENT: Dodd, Goggin, Ms. Kuhn, Valentine and Walters

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The following public comments were submitted:

Good afternoon. I would like to encourage you NOT to put PTELL on the ballot in November. It would have a huge negative impact on the school system as well as many other parts of the community. It may have worked well for Chicago but it will most certainly not have the same effect here. Please do not put this extra burden on the schools during this already trying time. Please do not vote for PTELL to be on the ballot. Thank you for your consideration of this extremely important matter.

Jessica Roethe
EAWR
Special Education

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DONT VOTE FOR IT.

It's not like we don't have enough financial pressures on our budget this year (and in the future, with the COVID-19 recession guaranteed to last another couple of years), now we are going to be required to do more with even less than we already estimated. We will lose some state aid this year and about \$250K in reduced Corporate Personal Property Replacement Taxes (about 25% loss due to the state siphoning off our revenues to meet its own budget).

Mad Co Teacher

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I am writing to ask you to not allow PTELL to get on the ballot in November. As the former Athletic Director in a district under PTELL, I can tell you that this will negatively impact school activities and sports. The district I was in before had to completely cut paid assistant coaches and in many cases, paid head coaches due to this. Additionally, the district had to cut transportation to all athletic programs forcing the individual teams to find raise just to pay for the cost of bus transportation to away games. In many cases, teams took cars to away games to save money which impacted team chemistry by teams not traveling together as well as creating a dangerous situation for kids and families traveling separately to away games.

Please, please fight the PTELL proposal and do not allow it to get on the ballot this November in Madison County.

Sincerely,

Mark Beatty
Athletic Director
Dean of Students
East Alton-Wood River H.S.

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County Board Chairman Prenzler & Board Members,

WHAT ABOUT THE CHILDREN??

I pray this email finds you and your families healthy. I appreciate the opportunity to share my observation on PTELL.

By including PTELL on the November Ballot if passed, would be detrimental to our School District. As a retired educator of 39 years, I'm asking you to think about the Children. This pandemic over the past several months have been devastating enough! Think about the children, your children, your great grandchildren. Please VOTE NO on the PTELL being on the November ballot. I thank you and ALL of the kids thank you! IT'S ALL ABOUT THE CHILDREN!

Debra J. Pitts
ECUSD7 Board, Secretary
Retired Educator

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Madison County Board Members
157 North Main Street, Suite 165
Edwardsville, IL 62025

Dear Board Members:

We, the undersigned Regional Superintendent of Schools and school district superintendents, are writing to express our concern regarding the recently called special board meeting at which Board Chairman Kurt Prenzler will request that you vote to place the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL) on the November ballot. Of all the times to do this, now is clearly not the time. School districts throughout the county are faced with how to safely educate our students and provide a safe environment for students and staff. We are currently in the middle of a global pandemic that has cost the lives of over 150,000 Americans across the country and over 70 residents within our own county. PTELL is complicated legislation that needs to be studied and thoroughly reviewed before being placed on that ballot.

In June 2018 the County Board Tax Cycle Committee determined a PTELL referendum issue should not be pursued due to the potential impact it could have in raising the taxes of local residents by a significant amount. School districts and taxing bodies have the ability to raise taxes and increase their debt service extension base prior to PTELL being implemented. Both result in an unnecessary increase in taxes!

In closing and simply put, this isn't the time to rush something as significant as the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law to the ballot. Please pause to consider the long-term ramifications of a rushed decision like PTELL on our county, communities, and region and why it is vital not to rush such a matter onto the November ballot.

Sincerely,

Rob Werden – Regional Superintendent
Stephanie Cann – Granite City CUSD #9
Deb Kreuztrager – Roxana CUSD #1
Brad Skertich – Collinsville CUSD #10
Leigh Lewis – Triad CUSD #2
Kristie Baumgartner – Alton CUSD #1
Ronald Ferrell – Venice CUSD #3

Andrew Reinking – CUSD #12
Mike Sutton – Highland CUSD #5
Emily Warnecke – SD #13
Jason Henderson – Edwardsville CUSD #7
John Pearson – HSD #14
Jill Griffin – Bethalto CUSD #8
Patrick Anderson – ESD #15

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The following resolution was submitted:

**RESOLUTION TO SUBMIT A BINDING REFERENDUM TO THE VOTERS OF
MADISON COUNTY FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE MATTER OF THE
PROPERTY TAX EXTENSION LIMITATION LAW**

WHEREAS, the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL) was adopted by the General Assembly of Illinois in 1991 and signed into law by the Governor; and,

WHEREAS, Illinois State Statute 35 ILCS 200/18-213 provides that county boards may submit to the voters of the county the question of whether to make all non-home rule taxing districts that have all or a portion of the equalized assessed valuation subject to PTELL; and,

WHEREAS, the legal authority to place a referendum before the voters of Madison County rests with the County Board of Madison County.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Board of Madison County that the County Clerk is hereby authorized to place on the November 3, 2020 General Election Ballot in Madison County the following public question:

“Shall the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (35 ILCS 200/18-185 through 18-245), which limits annual property tax extension increases, apply to non-home rule taxing districts with all or a portion of their equalized assessed valuation located in Madison County?”

YES/NO

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Walters

s/ Don Moore
Don Moore

David Michael

Ray Wesley

s/ Tom McRae
Tom McRae

Gussie Glasper

s/ Erica Harriss
Erica Harriss

Chris Guy

Philip Chapman

s/ Mick Madison
Mick Madison

Michael Holliday, Sr.

John Eric Foster

Jamie Goggin
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
August 10, 2020

Chris Guy

s/ Don Moore
Don Moore

Jim Dodd

Nick Petrillo

Judy Kuhn

Michael Holliday, Sr.

Dalton Gray

s/ Erica Harriss
Erica Harriss
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE
August 10, 2020

Mr. Moore moved, seconded by Mr. Madison to place the Resolution to Submit a Binding Referendum to the Voters of Madison County for Consideration in the Matter of PTELL on the November 3, 2020 ballot.

On the question:

Mr. Prenzler: I'd like to make a statement and my plan for the evening is that every county board member would be able to have up to three minutes to make comments, but I'd like to make a statement first. First of all, I want to thank everyone for attending this evening. We're here to discuss whether Madison County voters will have the opportunity to vote on whether PTELL will be on the ballot this November. I first want to congratulate the county board for its success and lowering the property tax levy these past three years. In 2016, before my administration, the county board voted for a levy in the amount of 32.6 million. At our first opportunity, during my administration, we reduced the levy by \$1.8 million to 30.8 million and it's remained flat there for two years. Five years ago, the total county government tax levy rate was 73 cents per \$100 of assessed evaluation. Now, it's 57. That's a savings of 16 cents. When taxpayers look at their tax bills this year, they are paying less property taxes to county government than they were five years ago. That's an accomplishment and you deserve applause for that. County government consumes less than 8% of property taxes in Madison County. So what about the rest of people's property taxes? What about the 92%? That's where PTELL comes in. The only thing this county board can do about the rest of people's property tax bill is to put PTELL on the ballot. Do we have a property tax problem in Madison County? I think we do. This weekend I emailed every county board member a study that showed that from 2000 to 2018, over 18 years, Madison County went from 29th worst to 21st worst in property taxes in Illinois, that's going in the wrong direction. We all know that with this year with people losing jobs because of Covid, we should be especially mindful of people's property tax burden. PTELL is enforced in 39 counties that represent about 80% of the population of Illinois. No county has rescinded it. Today we are not here to debate the merits of PTELL, we're here simply to decide whether voters will see it on the November, 2020 ballot. In my opinion, the people who pay the taxes, not the politicians, should decide this issue. You may think PTELL is a bad idea, but you might still vote to put it on the ballot for the people to decide. I suggest that if you have suggestions for improving the act or questions regarding PTELL, you summarize those for your state legislator, but that discussion is not appropriate this evening. So I would first like to go down the list and give every county board member an opportunity to speak. Please keep your discussion on whether PTELL should be on the ballot, that's the question before us this evening.

Mr. Moore: We're talking about this legislation may not be perfect. There's never any perfect legislation that may not even be close, but I do believe that is better than nothing by limiting the amount of tax increases from taxing authorities within our county. So overall, in the long run, I do believe it will benefit the taxpayer. In the short run, through our taxing entities, that want to raise the tax because they feel that PTELL makes it to the ballot and possibly could get passed, then I think there's a misuse of power there if they raise their taxes just to top off their cash coffers, because they know they won't be able to raise taxes as much in the future. So I think it'd be shame on them, those taxing bodies, if they did something like that. That money belongs to the taxpayer, that's like stealing the taxpayer if you overtax the people you represent just because you think you may not get as much down the road. I guess there's two groups of people that whenever I receive information to make a decision on this, one is certainly, it was about 50/50, one is certainly the tax payers themselves, the individuals telling me that they would like to have it on the ballot so they can vote yes or no themselves. The other group was basically the school board. It was retired teachers, school board, active school board members, a lawyer and one individual who had ties to the school board. So I represent the people, not the school board. So to keep it short, I would say that I am representing the people that put me here and I'm going to give them the opportunity to vote for that themselves. Thank you.

Mr. Chapman: The purpose of PTELL's state it's not so much about PTELL, it is giving taxpayers a chance to vote on it. Let's look at that. History shows that if PTELL passes, special taxing districts rates

will immediately rise in every county that's happened. PTELL does not cap your property taxes, they still rise. PTELL will not stop non special taxing districts from rising, therefore, PTELL only limits the growth of property taxes under certain circumstances based upon an equation of property appreciation and inflation which we do not even know if in the future that will apply to Madison County. Lastly, PTELL does not stop backdoor referendums, school districts can relet bonds. It is about giving a chance for taxpayer to vote on it, really? One wonders if this is a cleverly disguised misdirection play. Why? I observed most of those asking me to place it on the ballot are not even impacted by PTELL because they live in home ruled areas. Please consider an estimated 35,000 voters from Home Ruled districts not impacted by PTELL could vote. Should they decide unincorporated area taxes? Founding Fathers started the American Revolution with the cry, no taxation without representation. If 35,000 people from unimpacted areas vote, it's more of like representation without taxation. PTELL could raise your taxes significantly. This is according to facts prepared by Madison County Treasurer Chris Slusser in 2018, particularly in district three, which I represent. Municipalities could be increased by the following percentages Grantfork 35%, Hamel 99%, New Douglas 12%, Pierron 34.66%, Worden 8.09%. Ambulances could go up, Hamel Ambulance 42.38, Highland - Pierron Ambulance 48.35. At this time of the pandemic where people are collecting unemployment, had to shutter their businesses or have been let go. We found every county that chose PTELL immediately saw their taxes go up. The current economic hardship for many is unbearable. I do not feel comfortable placing it on the ballot at this time. Thank you.

Mr. Michael: I just want to hit on the point that I think more than anything, proponents of this are saying, we should just throw it to the ballot and whether we understand it doesn't matter. Because I've asked if anybody heard the Executive Committee, I had basic questions of fact and I either didn't get an answer, or there's major discrepancies between what different board members said. For example, whether or not it eliminates backdoor referendums; one group thinks it does, another group thinks it doesn't. So if we don't have a basic understanding of what it does, how can we responsibly tell people to go vote on it when they see you at the supermarket the next day and they say, hey, tell me about PTELL. Are you supposed to say oh you know, I don't really know, go do your own research? Because if so, that doesn't sound like a responsible public servant to me. It doesn't sound like you're making a responsible decision. Another discrepancy was, which city does it affect? And which one doesn't it? I'm under the understanding that it does not affect cities such as Madison and Fairmont city, which are part of Madison County, and those weren't brought up. So again, we don't even understand the basic facts of who's affected. I am totally under the impression...

Mr. Prenzler: Mr. Michael, can I jump in on that issue? The City of...

Mr. Michael: I'm still speaking, you can comment on it when I'm done, if that's ok, is that alright? Thank you. Mr. Chapman says it doesn't affect 35,000 people, if I understand correctly, I don't think it affects close to 100,000 people. Because Granite, Edwardsville, Collinsville, Madison, Fairmont, it doesn't affect any of them. So if you live in Collinsville, for example, I don't think like 80% of your tax bill is even affected by this, maybe higher. We're telling people in Collinsville, hey, vote for this, it's going to lower your tax bill. They have this exact same vote as somebody in Alhambra, St. Jacob, Marine, in which it actually does affect the majority of their tax bill. So as Mr. Chapman actually said, it is kind of like there's representation without taxation, because not every vote is equal. And the fact that I'm bringing that up, a lot of people don't even know that. So how are we being asked to vote on that? We're basically saying vote on it and then we'll understand it later. The last time I heard somebody say that was Nancy Pelosi referring to Obama Care when she said, just vote on it now, and we'll understand it later. I'm sorry, it was despicable then and it's wrong now. Once we understand it, then we should vote on the issue, which is why Mr. Wesley, I think in good faith said, hey, why don't we form a question and study it for 60 days, which is very funny for somebody who's asked basic questions of fact, but haven't got an answer. You've got to keep in mind, it might be the greatest thing in the world, and then I'll vote for it, but how can I vote for something if we don't understand what it actually does? That's my comment.

Mr. Prenzler: I just want to get back to the City of Madison. So if you live in the City of Madison, the city municipality would be exempt, SWIC would be exempt, MESD would be exempt but the other taxing districts would be limited by PTELL. I just want to clarify that.

Mr. Madison: As I said at the previous meeting, until earlier today, I was against putting this on the ballot. I know that this is going to raise taxes for at least a few years, probably around five years. It'll spike the first year then it'll go up a little each year after that before we finally catch up and start seeing our tax hikes slow down. It's not going to go down more than likely unless we have another housing crash again, something like that, obviously that's possible. But I've learned information today I'm inclined to vote to put this on the ballot or to allow it to go on the ballot. Mr. Michael is completely right. I know more today than I knew yesterday. I still don't know the answers to all of it like most of the board members don't, I would not mind seeing this happened again a week from now, so we can find out the answers that we need to have answered. But the voters need to be aware that their taxes are going to go up before it gets better. We absolutely have property taxes that are way too high, absolutely. If I thought this would lower taxes, I'd be the first one in line. It's not that. It may help in the in the future. We're probably going to pay for this one way or the other, whether we pay it now or we pay it later, we're probably still going to pay the same. But this could affect some people and large companies in a major way, a major way. Don't want that escape you. Somebody like Conoco Phillips, it could affect them in a big way with their taxes because of this. Let's see. What really needs to happen, honestly, is that this needs to be fixed at the legislature in the Illinois legislature. Right now, our representatives aren't doing a thing. They're sitting on this and this has been the number one issue in Madison County for as long as I've been on the board, eight years. I think I'd like to let the voters decide if they want to do this, I'm afraid that like what happened with property in Edwardsville, that they'll be misled into voting for something that may raise their taxes and not realize it. So we have to try to get the word out that this will raise your taxes for a few years, and then the people should be able to make their own decision. Thanks.

Mr. Wesley: First of all, I'd like to point out that the Illinois Department of Revenue did a study between 1990 and 2017 that showed the Southern Illinois PTELL counties experienced a 260% markup in their tax bills, 260% in those years. That tells me the taxes are going to go up. There's no question about that. If PTELL can raise taxes that significantly, the Godfrey taxpayer will be placed in an undue burden, an undue hardship. There's some of my constituents that can't afford additional property taxes, they can't afford to stay in the homes they're in if their taxes go up, and the home may be paid for. It's our responsibility to make sure that we look after the taxpayer first and not the politician first. And if that's what this is, this is a ploy just to get voters to the polls for a political reason. That is absolutely asinine. You need to look after the county taxpayer first. In 2018, this was brought up, your administration has had two years, two years to raise this issue again and study it so we can make an educated decision on what to do with PTELL. PTELL may be the best thing in the world, I don't know yet, because I've got unanswered questions. But evidently, in the two years that we've had to work on this, your administration has elected not to even worry about it until the last nine days. And that includes your County Administrator. What was he doing during these last two years if he wasn't working on stuff like this? So I am going to make a motion to postpone this for 60 days, pending study. If it's important enough to go on the ballot in November, it's important enough to go on the ballot this spring, there's another election coming if that's what the study shows.

Mr. Parkinson: Second that.

Mr. Prenzler: Mr. Wesley, I'm going to rule that motion out of order and the new the county board that's elected in November will be able to put it on the ballot in the spring, but this this county board cannot do that.

Mr. Madison: Mr. Chairman, point of order, you cannot overrule that motion.

Mr. Prenzler: Ok, I'm overruling that motion and we're going on to the next.

Mr. Madison: Mr. Chairman, point of order, you cannot overrule that motion.

Mr. Prenzler: I am.

Mr. Chapman: I would like to hear from the State's Attorney who really functions as our parliamentarian tell us if in fact...

Mr. Prenzler: Mr. Chapman, you're out of order.

Mr. Chapman: No, I'm not.

Mr. Prenzler: Yes, you are. If this County Board wants to put PTELL on the ballot, they have to vote in December, not now and so it's out of order.

Mr. Parkinson: Motion to appeal the ruling of the Chair.

Mr. Wesley: I made that motion, we need a second.

Mr. Parkinson: Second.

Mr. Wesley: Now it goes to a vote, up or down.

Mr. Prenzler: Mr. Wesley, just to clarify your motion to postpone.

Mr. Parkinson: There's no discussion on this.

Mr. Prenzler: Ok, I believe this motion to postpone, since there's no postponement date, I believe it's a kin to a motion to table.

Mr. Madison: It is not.

Mr. Prenzler: This has been on the table for over, well it's not the same motion.

Mr. Parkinson: There's no discussion on this. Motion to appeal the ruling.

Mr. Wesley: My motion is *inaudible*, that's what I said.

Mr. Prenzler: I rule that out of order.

Mr. Parkinson: You can't.

Mr. Wesley: I have a motion to appeal the decision of the Chairman.

Mr. Chapman: I would like to hear from the State's Attorney to see what the parliamentary procedure is *inaudible*.

Mr. Prenzler: Postpone until when?

Mr. Wesley: For 60 days.

Mr. Prenzler: That's beyond the election so you might as well just vote no, you don't want it on the ballot.

Mr. Wesley: There's an election in the spring, there's an election every 2 years.

Mr. Prenzler: This board, let me just explain it, this board cannot vote...

Mr. Parkinson: Mr. Prenzler, we have motions on the floor that need to be taken into consideration. We are asking for the State's Attorney, we're asking for the parliamentarian to rule, not you.

Mr. Prenzler: Mr. Parkinson, shouting won't solve this.

Mr. Parkinson: Ok, I'll talk normal if you'd listen to us.

Mr. Prenzler: This board cannot put something into the next year, that's another county board so the motion is out of order for that reason also and I believe that Robert's Rules say that...

Mr. Gibbons: This motion only postpones for 60 days for consideration of this particular issue and therefore does not move beyond this sitting board. The ruling by the Chair that this motion is out of order is incorrect. This is not a motion he may rule out of order. The motion to appeal the ruling of the Chair is proper, orderly and has already been seconded and therefore the Chair is required by Robert's Rules of Order to allow a vote on that decision. If the board overrules by appeal, the decision of the Chair that the motion is out of order made by Mr. Wesley, then that motion shall proceed.

Mr. Prenzler: This motion to postpone for 60 days moves it beyond, for PTELL to be put on the ballot, the law requires that it be voted on by the county board more than 79 days before the election.

Mr. Chapman: It can be put on in the spring. It does not take away the right to put it on the ballot. You just heard what the parliamentarian said, why do you insist on not following Robert's Rules, you're the Chairman.

Mr. Prenzler: We do have a motion, I'm going to let this motion be voted on, it's a motion to postpone but I just want to comment that because we're moving beyond the deadline, a motion to postpone is a motion not to put PTELL on the ballot. And do we not let the other county board members speak this evening?

Mr. Chapman: This is his right to put the postponement on, Kurt.

Mr. Prenzler: Ok, I will allow that motion and so we have a motion but I would also like to continue to let people speak on this issue.

Mr. Parkinson: I have a question on the motion.

Mr. Prenzler: Yes.

Mr. Parkinson: I think we have to vote on the motion to appeal unless you're rescinding. Well actually, Mr. Gibbons, could you clarify what we need to vote on first?

Mr. Gibbons: It sounds to me as if the Chairman has changed his ruling so the motion to appeal would be moot. *inaudible*

Mr. Prenzler: There's a motion to postpone and there's a second so I think it's appropriate that we have discussion. So what I would like to do, I believe...

Mr. Parkinson: I don't believe there's discussion on that, is there?

Mr. Madison: You cannot have discussion on this motion, you can after the vote.

Mr. Prenzler: Ok, we have a motion to postpone for 60 days, we have a second, roll call.

Mr. Wesley moved, seconded by Mr. Parkinson to postpone the resolution for 60 days.

The ayes and nays being called on the motion to postpone resulted in a vote as follows:

AYES: Chapman, Ms. Dalton, Ms. Dutton, Foster, Ms. Glasper, Hankins, Holliday, King, Malone, Michael, Minner, Ms. Mueller-Jones, Ms. Novacich-Koberna, Parkinson, Petrillo, Pollard, Trucano, and Wesley

NAYS: Gray, Guy, Harriss, Madison, McRae and Moore

AYES: 18. NAYS: 6. Whereupon the Chairman declared the foregoing resolution postponed.

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Mr. Prenzler: Motion carries, I would entertain a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Parkinson: I make a motion that we have no more special meetings until after 6pm on the next scheduled meeting.

Ms. Novacich-Koberna: Second.

Mr. Prenzler: We agree with that. Motion to adjourn.

Mr. Parkinson: I already have a motion and a second.

Mr. Prenzler: You know what? I'm already cancelling those meetings so that's done.

Mr. Parkinson: I have a motion on the floor.

Mr. Prenzler: A motion to adjourn is always in order.

Mr. Madison moved, seconded by Mr. McRae to recess this session of the Madison County Board Meeting until Wednesday, September 16, 2020. **MOTION CARRIED.**

ATTEST: Debbie Ming-Mendoza
County Clerk

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