

Madison County Board Votes to Send Chicago Separation Question to Nov. 5 Ballot

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
April 17 2024 7:29 PM



MADISON COUNTY - During the regular Madison County Board meeting on Wednesday, April 17, 2024, the Board voted 15–7 to begin discussions about separating from Cook County.

This means Madison County voters will vote on an advisory referendum during the general election on Nov. 5, 2024. The question will read: “Shall the board of Madison

County correspond with the boards of other counties of Illinois, outside of Cook County, about the possibility of separating from Cook County to form a new state and to seek admission to the Union as such, subject to the approval of the people?”

If voters vote “yes” to this advisory referendum, Madison County will begin conversations about separating from Cook County to form a new state. Several visitors spoke during the public comments portion of Wednesday’s Madison County Board meeting, both for and against the resolution.

The Madison County Board ultimately voted to include this advisory referendum on the ballot. Michael “Doc” Holliday, Bill Stoutenborough, Shawndell Wilson, Matt King, Victor Valentine, Alison Lamothe and Nick Petrillo voted no. Bobby Ross, Mick Madison, Dalton Gray and Charles “Skip” Schmidt were absent.

This resolution came from the Government Relations Committee. During their committee meeting on April 2, 2024, the committee voted 6–1 to approve the resolution. Alison Lamothe was the sole dissenting vote, with Stacey Pace, Denise Wiehardt, Jason Palmero, Shawndell Wilson, Mike Babcock and Dalton Gray voting in favor of the resolution.

“Opponents have tried to downplay the impact of this resolution by emphasizing it is nonbinding and characterizing it as a public opinion poll,” Lamothe said before the vote on April 17. “But it's more than a poll. It's a goal to create a new state that excludes Cook County, our most populous county and also the one that produces the most revenue.”

Lamothe, Holliday, Stoutenborough and Petrillo spoke against the resolution. Bob Meyer, Frank Dickerson and Terry Eaker spoke in favor of it.

“I have talked to people in my communities,” Dickerson said. “And I can tell you there's been a couple that have stayed in the same position as Member Holliday has, but the majority of the people in my districts have told me that they deserve and have the right, in their opinion, to vote on this. And because of that, because of my polling, I am going to support it.”

Stoutenborough moved to table the resolution, seconded by John Janek. The motion failed, and the Board went on to vote in favor of the resolution.

More information will come as we learn what this means for Madison County.