



# Lake County Illinois

## Legislation Text

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File #: 17-0314, Version: 2

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Resolution creating a Lake County Commission on Government Reform and Accountability.

### RESOLUTION

**WHEREAS**, the Lake County Board unanimously adopted Resolution 17-0206 on February 14, 2017 that requests legislative support to place binding referenda questions on the ballot in 2018 on reform measures, including: 1) a countywide elected chairman in 2022; 2) redistricting reform that leverages the Independent Map Amendment process; and 3) an advisory question on streamlining county government by reducing the size of the county board; and

**WHEREAS**, Chairman Aaron Lawlor believes this is a time for bold leadership and has proposed reforms to position Lake County as a model for government reform statewide; and

**WHEREAS**, these reforms provide the framework for innovative changes to county government that enhance accountability and would benefit from the creation of an ad hoc committee to facilitate wide-ranging and thoughtful input from leaders around Lake County, as well as respected, bipartisan voices at the regional level; and,

**WHEREAS**, Chairman Lawlor requests the County Board approve the creation of the "Lake County Commission on Government Reform and Accountability" as an ad hoc committee comprised of a bipartisan and diverse group of community members, current and former elected officials, faith leaders, major political party representatives, local and regional representatives of good government, political reform and voter advocacy organizations; and

**WHEREAS**, the Lake County Board prides itself on the many strengths of the County's current structure and will steadfastly protect the fiscally responsible, professional and ethical principles that have resulted in balanced annual budgets and a consistent AAA bond rating, as well as a collaborative and bipartisan culture that values relationships and commitment to service, trust in a professional staff and managerial form of government, and prohibitions against political patronage, nepotism or cronyism; and

**WHEREAS**, the Lake County Board believes it is critical that the Commission begin its work by understanding and appreciating the values and attributes described above; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission is to evaluate proposed reform measures and report on key findings based on its ability to enhance accountability to the public, provide for an effective and responsive government structure, maintain strong professional and ethical standards, and reform redistricting to mitigate political influence; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that it is the desire of the Lake County Board to create the "Lake County Commission on Government Reform and Accountability" as an ad hoc committee with

the specific purpose, charge and responsibilities limited to and enumerated in this resolution; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the ad hoc committee is specifically charged with the following responsibilities: 1) Analyze state and county governments that have transitioned to an independent redistricting system by evaluating their governance structure, methodology, implementation and outcomes. Utilize information from proposals, such as the Illinois Independent Map Amendment; 2) Study similar counties that transitioned to a countywide elected chairman by identifying key issues, including board rules, challenges, opportunities and decisions that were made to enhance the stated goals of this resolution. Identify best practices and policies used to balance authority between the County Board, Chairman and County Administrator. Prioritize models that ensure strong accountability by elected leaders to the public, maintains strong professional standards and sets high ethical standards and safeguards in line with the spirit and intent of Lake County's Ethics Ordinance and Standards of Conduct; 3) Examine similar counties' efforts to reduce the size of the board, assess and report on similar counties' efforts to reduce the size of their boards. Identify positive and negative impacts on efficiency, constituent services, policy decisions and compliance with the federal Voting Rights Act; 4) provide opportunities for stakeholders and the public to share ideas on additional reforms that could be studied in the future; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the makeup of the Commission shall reflect the diversity of Lake County, including political, racial gender, age, and socioeconomic diversity and be representative of a bipartisan group of leaders with diverse perspectives and backgrounds; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, Commission members shall be appointed in accordance with the Lake County Board's Rules of Procedure; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, terms for all Commission members will begin immediately upon an affirmative vote of the County Board and will terminate by board resolution or, if no action is taken, on the first Monday of December 2018; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, as an ad hoc committee of the Lake County Board, the Commission will conduct itself in a transparent manner that complies with the Lake County Board Rules of Operations and Procedure, Illinois Open Meetings Act and provides information on the Commission's progress on the Lake County government website; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Commission may convene meetings as often as deemed necessary by the Chair of the Commission in consultation with commission members, and not less than monthly. It is the responsibility of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission to coordinate with commission staff on the scheduling of meetings, setting of agendas and management of the Commission's work. This work should be conducted in a manner that permits a complete and timely report is submitted to the to the Lake County Board Chairman and County Board Members by December 31, 2017; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Commission shall receive sufficient staff and administrative support and resources to complete the scope and purpose defined in this resolution. The County Administrator's Office will be responsible for designating staff and/or contracting with outside individuals, firms and/or organizations to assist the Commission completing its work in an independent manner; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the County Board believes it is critical that the Commission be formed in a manner that seeks to engender a high level of credibility with the public, media and stakeholders by ensuring commission members and assigned staff act in a manner that is highly professional, ethical and free from any conflict of interest. As such, members shall comply with the Lake County Ethics Ordinance and Lake County Standards of Conduct Ordinance for the duration of their term. Commission members shall also commit to conduct their personal and professional affairs in a manner that does not impugn the integrity, credibility or ethics of the Commission by complying with all state and federal tax, elections, campaign finance and disclosure laws.

**DATED** at Waukegan, Illinois, on this 14<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2017.