



Illinois State Association of Counties

POSITION STATEMENT

January 1, 2021

DUPLICATE TOWNSHIP NAMES

SUPPORT

Counties are presently required to become involved in renaming townships when a township shares a name with another township in the state.

Current Law:

Under current law, the Secretary of State is responsible for identifying instances where two or more townships in the state share a name. In such instances, it becomes the responsibility of the county (or counties) with the township(s) that did not adopt the name first to adopt a different name for the township(s). The Secretary of State does not actively enforce this statute and duplicate township names would most likely only be an issue if the similarly named townships were located within the same county. There are currently 74 instances of duplicate township names throughout the state. In some cases, more than two townships share the same name.

Proposed Change:

The General Assembly and Governor should amend the statute to require that a county change a duplicate township name only if the duplicate name exists for townships within that county. The existence of a duplicate name for townships not located within the same county has not created any known problems. Following the letter of the law and requiring dozens of townships to change their names would impose a cost for altering signage, letterhead and any other materials bearing a township's name. Counties can remain involved, but the need for a county to intervene by renaming a township should be reduced.

CLEAN-UP THE STATUTE TO REDUCE THE INSTANCES WHERE A TOWNSHIP MUST BE RENAMED BY A COUNTY.