



# Illinois State Association of Counties

## POSITION STATEMENT

January 1, 2021

### ELECTION OF COUNTY BOARD CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

**SUPPORT**

Unless the county board chairperson is elected by voters in a countywide election, the chairperson is selected by members of the county board.

#### **Current Law:**

Under the Illinois Counties Code, a county board member is elected chairperson by his or her peers on the county board during the first meeting in the month following the month in which county board members are elected. The duration of the chairperson's term is 2 years. A simple majority of the board present at the meeting is sufficient to elect the chairperson. The vice-chairperson is elected by the same process.

When a county board chairperson vacates his or her role as chair through resignation or death, the vice-chairperson can assume the role of chairperson for the balance of the chairperson's term without the need for the board to hold an election for the position. When a chairperson is removed from that position by a four-fifths vote of the county board, the vice-chair assumes the responsibilities of chairperson only until a new chairperson is elected at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

#### **Proposed Change:**

The General Assembly and Governor should amend the Illinois Counties Code to require that county chairpersons and vice-chairpersons be elected by a majority of those *elected* to the board rather than the lower threshold of a majority of those who happen to be *present* at the meeting where the election occurs.

Additionally, the law should be changed to permit the vice-chairperson to fill a vacancy left by a departing chairperson who was not removed from that position by the Board only until a new chairperson is elected prior to the end of the original chairperson's 2-year term. Requiring an election to fill a vacancy in the position of chairperson will create more consistency in the statute with respect to how these vacancies are filled regardless of the circumstance that created the vacancy.

### INCREASE BOARD MEMBER INPUT IN THE SELECTION OF COUNTY BOARD LEADERSHIP.