



Illinois State Association of Counties

POSITION STATEMENT

JANUARY 1, 2021

COUNTY BOARD AS CO-EMPLOYER

SUPPORT

Local government employers are required to bargain collectively with labor unions representing their employees. When an agreement is reached, a local government must fund any wage and benefit increases that are part of the new labor contract.

Current Law:

County boards are considered co-employers in labor negotiations involving most elected county offices. A county board does not have authority to participate in labor negotiations involving the county clerk or circuit clerk's office and their respective bargaining units or in negotiations involving the chief judge and the bargaining unit representing probation officers. The board or its designee is even restricted from observing the negotiations unless the negotiating parties agree to allow for observation. A county board is ultimately responsible for funding what is negotiated and therefore has a financial interest in the outcome.

Proposed Change:

The General Assembly and Governor should amend the law to consider the county board as a "co-employer" when the county clerk, circuit clerk and chief judge are involved in labor negotiations with their respective bargaining units. This will allow the county board, as the appropriating body, to participate in the negotiations.

**A GOVERNMENT BODY REQUIRED TO FUND A BARGAINING AGREEMENT
SHOULD BE PART OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.**