



FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OF COOK COUNTY BOARD SEPARATION CIVIC FEDERATION INFORMATION SHEET

WHY CREATE A NEW BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS?

As outlined in our report, available at www.civicfed.org, the current governance structure for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County results in:

- 1) A **conflict of interest**; and
- 2) It **inhibits proper oversight**.

HAS THE DISTRICT SUFFERED BECAUSE OF THE CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND LACK OF PROPER OVERSIGHT?

Yes. Due to the structural deficiencies, the District has experienced numerous problematic situations in such key areas as financial management, land retention and land management, including:

- 1) **Failure to address the District's financial difficulties**;
- 2) **Inadequate adherence to transparent financial procedures**;
- 3) **Inadequate land management**;
- 4) **Slow rate of land acquisition**; and
- 5) **Allowance of private use of public lands**.

HAVE OTHER COUNTIES CREATED SEPARATE BOARDS?

Yes. The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County created a separate board of commissioners in 2002 after citing similar conflict of interest and land management problems in its preserves.

DuPage Forest Preserve District Board President D. Dewey Peirotti believes the separate board has resulted in numerous benefits for his district, including:

- More appropriate **land acquisition decisions**;
- Better **communication** between staff and board members; and
- More attention being paid to **land management and restoration** issues.

WHY DO WE SUPPORT THIS BOARD STRUCTURE?

- *Non-partisan*: Candidates should run on a platform of the environment, not partisan politics.
- *Unpaid*: Taxpayers should not be burdened with another layer of paid government officials. The Civic Federation and Friends of the Forest Preserves proposal **will not create a new government**. The Forest Preserve District of Cook County is **already a separate unit of government** with its own existing staff and leadership.
- *Regional Representation*: While Forest Preserve District commissioners should focus on the entirety of the preserves as opposed to just the land that is located in one particular area, we realize that equal representation between the regions of Cook County is also an important goal and believe electing Commissioners from Board of Review Districts will accomplish that goal.