

Treasurer Kurt Prenzler calls attention to conflict of interest in Madison County Purchasing Department

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EDWARDSVILLE — **Treasurer Kurt Prenzler** is calling attention to a conflict of interest in the Madison County Purchasing Department and believes changes should be made.

“A few county board members are speaking up and questioning the purchasing process of the county,” Prenzler said. “This is a good thing. What board members may not know is that county vendors donated tens of thousands of dollars to the county board chairman’s re-election campaign and his campaign treasurer is also the county’s purchasing director – a practice that is unethical and a conflict of interest.”

Prenzler said in other Illinois counties this is a violation of their purchasing ordinance because it compromises the integrity of the county’s bidding process.

“The purchasing director has wide discretion in deciding with which vendors the county spends money,” Prenzler said.

Prenzler said the relationship between the chairman’s campaign and the county’s purchasing director has been going on for around a decade. The prior purchasing director served as the county board chairman’s campaign manager.

He thinks it is unethical for the chairman to accept any donations from county vendors

“State, federal and employees of other counties are controlled by stricter guidelines than we have in Madison County,” he said. “According to their purchasing rules what you see here is illegal.”

Prenzler said the county’s purchasing ordinance is an open door for abuse.

The county’s online check register shows millions paid to vendors who donate to the chairman’s campaign. The Illinois State Board of Elections website reports the chairman received more than \$50,000 from more than two dozen vendors.

“I have contacted the county’s ethics advisor to evaluate the purchasing director’s relationship with the board chairman’s campaign,” Prenzler said.