

Dunstan says referendum would hurt public safety

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Press release issued by Committee to Elect Alan Dunstan. These views are those of the Committee to Elect Alan Dunstan.

EDWARDSVILLE – Madison County Board Chairman Alan J. Dunstan has accused County Treasurer and candidate for board chairman Kurt Prenzler with using a tax referendum petition drive as a fundraising vehicle for his political campaign, a potential violation of Illinois Election Law.

Dunstan said Prenzler's actions continue a trend of misleading Madison County residents. "Mr. Prenzler is making wildly inaccurate and misleading claims about the money residents will save as part of a tax referendum he is pushing via a petition drive. Now, we have discovered the whole enterprise is just a bait and switch for members of the public so that he can raise money for his campaign for County Board Chairman."

"If passed by voters, the referendum Prenzler is driving would hurt public safety in Madison County. It is apparent Prenzler doesn't care about public safety, his anti-law enforcement petition drive has been exposed as an attempt to deceive the citizens of Madison County," Dunstan charged. "He's using the petition drive as a great big fundraiser."

Dunstan said Prenzler has been sending out weekly emails from his campaign account to resident's email addresses soliciting contributions. The chairman's campaign released copies of emails in which Prenzler uses claims of tax relief as a way to get people to contribute to his campaign.

To correct Prenzler's inflated claims, Dunstan previously released a one-page fact sheet detailing the minimal savings the cuts would provide homeowners in Madison County. The fact sheet also addressed the serious, negative affect the cuts would have on public safety in Madison County.

Dunstan said the figures show the false promises of property tax relief will not happen under Prenzler's proposed plan. "His numbers don't add up. When you take into account the actual figures, including the Homestead Exemption, most people will save less than \$6.00 per year. In exchange for that \$6.00, Prenzler wants to force budget cuts on all the law enforcement departments that keep us safe every day of the year. I will not support any cut that reduces public safety, and that is why I oppose this measure."

"We need true property tax reform. And we need to protect the people of Madison County, not tear down the support for the men and women who protect our citizens," the chairman continued. "The referendum Prenzler is pushing would only make our residents more vulnerable to criminals."

Madison County does not levy to the maximum rate and has actually cut its portion of the property tax bill. The County Board has managed the county in a fiscally responsible way. Madison County has a balanced budget, is 100 percent debt free, maintains strong reserves and enjoys an outstanding bond rating. “The County Board effectively plans ahead and uses cash for large capital projects, saving taxpayers millions of dollars in interest payments,” added Dunstan.

“Kurt Prenzler raises funds for his political campaign by playing to the fears of taxpayers. It is all one big political soundbite for him and the opportunity to compile a mailing list used for fundraising,” stated Dunstan. “Responsible leadership is standing up to the political behavior we are seeing from Mr. Prenzler. Proven leadership is standing up for law enforcement and public safety, which I am proud to do.”

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