

Voters Will Decide If Madison County Should Lower A Portion Of Its Property Tax Levy In November

June 18 2020 11:59 AM



EDWARDSVILLE — Madison County will place a referendum on the November election ballot giving voters an opportunity to lower a portion of its property tax levy.

The County Board voted 25-1 Wednesday night to place the binding referendum on the Nov. 3 ballot. Voters will be asked, “Shall the maximum tax rate for general county

purposes of Madison County, Illinois, be established at .18 percent of the equalized assessed value of the taxable property therein instead of .20 percent, the maximum rate otherwise applicable to the next taxes to be extended?”

Chairman Kurt Prenzler put the resolution before the Finance Committee on June 10, which unanimously passed it.

“This is the county’s way in helping taxpayers,” Prenzler said. “We feel we are doing our part in county government with everything going on right now.”

He said this marks the second time in four years taxpayers have been given the opportunity to vote on a reduction in their taxes. In 2016, a referendum to cut property taxes was placed on the ballot and voters approved it.

Board members discussed the measure prior to voting, stating how property values could drop in the future and create a shortfall in funds. They said there could be increases for cost of living allowances, insurance, retirement benefits, emergency repairs for roads and bridges, as well as other unexpected expenses, and need to make sure the funds are covered.

Some board members said the amount saved by taxpayers would be minimal at best.

“(Taxpayers) might not save much, but think what could happen if each local government did this,” Board member Chris Guy of Maryville said. “Just because (government) can raise the tax rate, doesn’t mean we should.”

County Board member David Michael of Highland said that while he understands some of the concerns raised, taxpayers should be allowed to vote on the issue.

“This only affects the General Fund,” Michael said. “The other funds (IMRF, Highway, Bridge, etc.) are not affected at all. The primary thing that this board is doing is allowing voters an opportunity to make a decision about their own taxes.”