

Durkin Joins Elik, Ciampoli, Prenzler to Back Reforms for Illinois

October 23 2020 8:20 AM



EDWARDSVILLE--Today House Republican Leader Jim Durkin (R-Western Springs) joined candidates Amy Elik (R-111th) and Lisa Ciampoli (R-112th), and Madison County Board Chairman Kurt Prenzler at a press conference to discuss the Madison County reform agenda to lower taxes and clean up corruption plaguing the State of Illinois.

“Ethics has and will continue to be our state’s biggest roadblock as long as Mike Madigan is still Speaker,” said Durkin, who has called for the Speaker to resign amid the ongoing federal investigation and Madigan’s refusal to testify in front of the House Special Investigating Committee. “Mike Madigan needs friends now more than ever, and he has found that in Katie Stuart and Monica Bristow. We can take a step forward on November 3rd by electing candidates that won’t come to Springfield to do Madigan’s bidding, but will make better choices for Madison County and the State of Illinois,” continued Durkin.

Amy Elik and Lisa Ciampoli have joined colleagues, including House GOP Leader Jim Durkin, in calling for the Speaker’s resignation. At today’s press conference, Elik discussed the need for tax relief in Madison County, a reform measure that she believes is second only to ethics reform in the Illinois House.

“We don’t need another tax in Illinois, what we need is responsible spending,” said Elik, who is opposed to the graduated income tax amendment on the November ballot. “As a CPA who has worked with numerous small businesses, I know that they make decisions based on taxes. With the graduated income tax amendment expected to increase taxes on small businesses by at least 50%, it will drive them out of Illinois at a time we can least afford to lose any more jobs and the revenue they create.”

With the ever increasing tax burden in Illinois and property taxes continuing to skyrocket, Elik noted her concern not only for the business community should this tax hike amendment pass, but also senior citizens. “As you are all aware, Illinois Democratic State Treasurer Mike Frerichs let it slip that the Democrats intend to use this tax as a means to start taxing retirement income, including pensions and 401ks. Seniors can’t afford that as they worry about paying ever increasing property taxes since the State of Illinois can’t get their fiscal house in order,” continued Elik, who has promised voters to stand up for businesses and seniors in Springfield if elected to represent the 111th District.

Lisa Ciampoli, candidate for State Representative in the 112th District, noted the two non-binding referenda questions on the ballot involving legislator pay raises and pension reform. The first question on the ballot asks voters if the Illinois General Assembly should enact legislation to stop automatic pay raises for legislators. While her opponent Katie Stuart has twice voted to increase her own pay in the Illinois House, Ciampoli is staunchly opposed to this practice.

“My opponent, Katie Stuart, has voted herself a pay raise for two years in a row, at a time when Illinois taxpayers can least afford it,” said Ciampoli. “Instead of working on reforms that would clean up corruption and attract new businesses to Illinois, Katie Stuart is more interested in lining her own pocket.”

The second question on the ballot urges Madison County officials to stop the practice of double dipping, which has led to higher property taxes at the local level. While these two referenda questions are non-binding, Ciampoli believes that Madison County voters can send a clear message to the rest of the state by saying ‘no’ to legislator pay raises and ending the practice of “double-dipping.”

Kurt Prenzler, Chairman of the Madison County Board, expanded on the need for fiscal reform at the local level. “With Madison County property taxes at an all-time high, the need for reforms is important now more than ever,” said Prenzler, who as Chairman has reduced the county’s reliance on property tax funds. “For the last three and a half years we have done our part to reduce the property tax funds given to local government. Right now only 7.6% of the tax bill goes to the county government, a significant decrease to previous years, but there is more that we can and need to improve on.”

Prenzler discussed an additional referendum question on the November ballot, which will reduce the maximum general fund tax rate. “Every effort we can take to reduce taxes here in Madison County and the larger State of Illinois is an opportunity we need to take,” he said. “Carrying as heavy a tax burden as we do, it’s important to make these small changes, because in the long run it’ll make all the difference.”