



Prenzler Opposes Insurance Bill Signed By Prizker

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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EDWARDSVILLE - Gov. J.B. Pritzker signed a [bill](#) into law last week allowing the Metro East Sanitary District (MESD) to offer its board members insurance, a move met with disapproval from Madison County Board Chairman Kurt Prenzler.

Prenzler said the MESD has been giving its board of commissioners insurance in violation of state law before having the law changed. He noted that about 10 years ago, Madison County board members also used to get insurance - that practice has since stopped for the County Board, but reportedly not for MESD commissioners.

By law, both the salaries of Madison County board members and MESD commissioners are set at \$14,500. But Prenzler estimated the value of the insurance in question at up to

\$20,000 for commissioners and their families. After bringing up the issue, Prenzler said they changed the plans from being offered to families to individuals, at a value of around \$10,000.

If MESD commissioners are receiving insurance of any value, Prenzler said they are still “getting more than County board members,” since Madison County Board members no longer receive insurance. Even after changing the insurance’s value, Prenzler maintained they were “still not in accordance of the law,” before they “ran to Springfield to change the law.”

The bill was originally filed and sponsored by Rep. Emanuel "Chris" Welch (who also serves as Speaker of the House) on Dec. 5, 2022. The [original bill](#) was titled the “Local Volunteer Board Member Removal Act” and had nothing to do with insurance for Metro East Sanitary District board members. Instead, it allowed any appointed board members to be removed by the person or entity who appointed them in cases of misconduct.

Rep. Jay Hoffman became the bill’s primary sponsor on April 25, 2023. The next day, Hoffman [amended](#) the bill, removing nearly all of its content and replacing it with an amendment to the Metro-East Sanitary District Act of 1974. This amendment allows the Sanitary District to offer its employees, and members of its board of commissioners, “life, health, accident, hospital, and medical insurance, or any one or any combination of such types of insurance.”

Gov. Pritzker [signed the bill into law](#) on July 28, 2023. The law officially goes into effect on January 1, 2024, meaning it is technically unlawful for MESD commissioners to receive insurance until next year.